



GUIDANCE FROM  
SRI AUROBINDO

Letters to a young disciple

NAGIN DOSHI

VOL - II



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Nagin Doshi

Volume – II

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## INTRODUCTION

This second volume of letters consists of my correspondence with Sri Aurobindo during the third year of sadhana, 1935. The letters of the first two years, 1933 and 1934, have been collected in Volume I. As with the letters of that book, here too many are published for the first time. However, the major portion appeared in the Ashram journal *Mother India* over a number of years.

For those who have not seen Volume I it may be well to repeat here a part of its Introduction, which throws light on the circumstances surrounding the exchange of letters, because it is necessary for the reader to bear in mind that Sri Aurobindo was replying to a boy in his late teens:

"I came to Pondicherry in 1931 when I was about fourteen years old. In those days the Mother did not admit youngsters into the Ashram. It was only out of her kindness that she made an exception in the case of four children: Bala, Romen, Shanti and myself. We did not have a school here at that time, nor were there regular study classes. Before coming, my mind was occupied with only two things — study and cricket: they were my life and my world. I had almost decided to go to Europe and become a big doctor. I first visited the Ashram during my school vacation just for the sake of making a nice long journey, certainly not for taking up Yoga. I stayed for a month and returned in time for the reopening of my school. During that stay, what the Mother did within my being I could hardly fathom. But the result was that I returned home to stay for only two days, I hurried back here with the full realisation that I could not possibly live, either happily or unhappily, without the Mother and Sri Aurobindo. Till 1933 I did not know what this strange thing called Yoga was. Hence the Mother and Sri Aurobindo were to me just like my own human mother and father. When the correspondence with Sri Aurobindo started, he had to teach me everything, not only what was meant by Yoga but also what culture, religion, philosophy and morality were. He used to correct my English, too, for quite a long time. Whatever I have gained in any way is a growth from the seeds he and the Mother sowed in me during those boyhood days."

Two more years of correspondence with the Master remain, 1936 and 1937. These will appear in a third and final volume in the near future.

*Nagin Doshi*

# PART I

## THE PHYSICAL

### PREFACE TO THE PHYSICAL

In this second volume of letters, there is frequent reference to words such as inertia and *tamas*. Here these words are not intended to mean 'fatigue', 'lethargy' or 'unwillingness to act 'physically or mentally'. To understand properly the exact nature or character of *tamas* it would be good to know a little of the *sadhana* that was going on during that period.

In the year 1935 the general *sadhana* of Sri Aurobindo's Yoga had descended into the physical. So we all had to come down from the mental and vital into this darker field. To many *sadhaks* it was rather a premature descent as their mental and vital were not sufficiently prepared for this entry into an obscure plane. So the physical used to send up wave after wave of its inertia to cover up any higher or deeper activity of the *sadhana*. As Sri Aurobindo pointed out to me, "The principle of *tamas* is inertia, *aprakāśa* (obscurity) and *apavr̥ti* (non-activity) shown here by being unable to keep the *prakāśa* (light) or the higher consciousness or answer continuously to the activity of *sadhana*." In another letter he explained the fundamental cause of the rise of inertia: "This negation is the very nature of the physical resistance and the physical resistance is the whole base of the denial of the Divine in the world. All in the physical is persistent, obstinate, with a massive force of negation and inertia."

Later on, the *sadhana* descended still lower: "The most material has come up or you have gone into it." And as if this was not quite enough the subconscious too did not stay out of the battle. As Sri Aurobindo pointed out, "The subconscious difficulty is *the* difficulty now — because the whole struggle in the general *sadhana* is now there. It is in the subconscious, no longer in the vital or conscious physical that the resistance is massed together."

This triple resistance brought into full play the three most obstinate and insistent minds at work in human nature: the physical mind, the mechanical mind and the subconscious mind. They often worked in conjunction, sometimes in two's and sometimes singly, but in such a powerful and complicated way that it was a problem to find out which one or two, of the three were in prominence. They always tried to cover, or at least colour, any good movement of the mind or the vital being or of the enlightened physical.



The *tamas* or inertia did not actually tire me physically or mentally. All along I was carrying on about eight hours of physical work and two to four hours of mental work. But psychologically it influenced me heavily in any spiritual pursuits.

This difficulty becomes more complicated when one is made to deal with the second aspect of physical Nature, namely the universal. For this recurring movement, once more let me quote a letter of Sri Aurobindo's, written to another disciple. However, it should be noted that here he speaks only of one mind, the physical mind, and not of the mechanical and subconscious minds which are much more difficult to manage and master:

"It is the nature of the physical mind to be obstinate. Physical nature exists by constant repetition of the same thing — only a constant presentation of different forms of itself. This obstinate recurrence is therefore part of its nature when it is in activity; otherwise it remains in a dull inertia. When therefore we want to get rid of the old movements of physical nature, they resist by this kind of obstinate recurrence. One has to be very persistent in rejection to get rid of it.

"There are two aspects of physical Nature as of all Nature — the individual and the universal. All things come into one from the universal nature — but the individual physical keeps some of them and rejects others, and to those it keeps it gives a personal form. So these things can be said to be both inside it and coming outside from within or created by it because it gives a special form and also outside and coming in from outside. But when one wants to get rid of them, one first throws out all that is within into the surrounding nature — from there the universal Nature tries to bring them back or bring in new and similar things of its own to replace them. One has then constantly to reject this invasion. By constant rejection, the force of recurrence finally dwindles and the individual becomes free and able to bring the higher consciousness and its movements into the physical being."<sup>1</sup>

22-1-1937

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<sup>1</sup> Mother India, July 1952, pp. 2-3.

## THE NEGATION BY THE PHYSICAL

*Why is there such a mad revolt in the lower Prakriti? No one has put any pressure there for a change.*

It is probably after the progress made about the inner consciousness receiving in spite of the inertia that the tamas rose so strongly in order to assert its right to obstruct the progress.

*There is an attempt in my being to support and help the working of the Mothers Force. If it succeeds sufficiently the tamas would hardly be able to delay the journey; it would be transformed into peace.*

Yes, that is how it should happen — but it is difficult so long as the inner being is not conscious and receptive at all times and in all conditions — and it is difficult and takes time to establish such a condition.

*Yesterday you spoke about the inner being. Today when the tamas began to rise as usual it stopped it. I would like to establish such a condition for good. Shall I succeed?*

At any rate you have now the way and the power to do it.

*This morning when I woke up I found myself already besieged by the army of the lower forces. Till yesterday I had at least some periods of relief when I could retire for a rest. But since this morning the whole time has been filled with the attacks. It is obvious that those forces are marching forward.*

You do not say what the battle was about. However, whatever it might be, it has to be fought out and the main thing is to keep the inner quietude and faith.

*What is 'the battle about'? The only thing these forces mind is my inner relation with the Mother. They object to it.*

Of course they have very strong objections.

*I felt that some people around me were used by the lower forces to upset me. Was it really so?*

It may have been the lower forces working in them as well. But in what form did they come up, these lower forces?

*What is the intention of the forces in their continued inroads?*

They hope by persistence to tire you out or to get in by sheer obstinacy — or at least to delay the realisation by their attacks. That is always their method. If they can shake the faith, the peace and *samata* (equality), they think themselves richly recompensed.

*I intend to sweep out the lower forces before meeting the Mother tomorrow. Failing in it I do not like to show my face to her.*

That is a suggestion of the lower forces. They want to create an excuse for your remaining aloof like that.

*Now I find it difficult to maintain even a mental aspiration.*

It is a result of the adverse pressure.

*I think H had not to pass so many days in sheer darkness like me.*

Your difficulties are not worse than those of H or others.

*You wrote two days back: "In what form did they come up, these lower forces?" Well, I don't know that. They simply come up.*

What forces? what form do they take? *tamas*? *ego*? *sex*? dissatisfactions? wrong suggestions? Your descriptions speak only of attacks and suspension of the realisations — but what is the nature or form of the attack?

*These forces want me to remain below, that is, in their own domain of darkness.*

What is this darkness then? Is it merely a negative condition or is there active disturbance and if so, of what kind? If it is only a negative condition, then you have to go on aspiring steadily till something does come down.

*It is a condition of sheer darkness. The adverse forces did fry to introduce active disturbance — ego, sex, dissatisfaction etc. — but they could not succeed. For wherever I may be, fallen or besieged, the Mothers protection always follows me. It is there even when I do not or cannot notice it.*

If it consists in that negation alone — then you have to aspire, get back the full quietude and silence and throw out the invading unconsciousness.

*Even now I am unable to understand my present sadhana. What is the matter with it? — one after another, attacks are persistently coming. Am I pushed into a region of attacks? No sooner do I conquer one than I see already another approaching me!*

This negation is the very nature of the physical resistance and the physical resistance is the whole base of the denial of the Divine in the world. All in the physical is persistent, obstinate, with a massive force of negation and inertia — if it were not so, sadhana would be extremely cursory. You have to face this character of the physical resistance and conquer it however often it may rise. It is the price of the transformation of the earth-consciousness.

*What is exactly meant by negation here?*

Negation of deeper peace, Mother's presence, self etc. as opposed to a positive attack of lust, ego, vital turmoil etc.

*The same negative state prolongs. I was sure to overcome it. But suddenly I received threefold more work than usual. So no time to work it out.*

The negative condition should not alarm, if it is only negative, not accompanied with a disturbance. Some perseverance is all that is needed to get out of it.

*My getting up from the present fall might begin from the silence. For that seems to be the nearest branch I can catch from the ground.*

Probably you are right.

## PHYSICAL CONSCIOUSNESS AND ITS DIFFICULTIES

*Yesterday, while working and concentrated inwardly at the same time, I fell down from the stool on which I was standing. How does such an accident happen?*

Some unconsciousness in the body taken advantage of by small forces which enjoy these accidents.

Something in your physical must have been off guard and been given a push or wrong movement.

*How does the unconsciousness come into the body?*

The body is mostly unconscious or rather subconscious — it has to be made conscious.

*How is one to make it conscious?*

By bringing down the true consciousness into it and by being quiet, vigilant and conscious in the mind and vital.

*During the whole day I have been so much filled with tamas that I have not even succeeded in calling for the Divine's help. What to do under such circumstances?*

You have either to shake it off by will or to call down the force into it.

*What makes the physical so weak that it can't do without the vital's help?*

The physical is not weak, it is inert because inertia is its principle — it is meant to be an instrument.

*Sometimes when one is working, although one likes to work and the body goes on acting, the mind seems tamasic and hinders one from living in the Mother and feeling her force. If there is tamas, does it still allow one to work as usual?*

Yes, in this case it is not a tamas of the vital but a tamas of the mental physical which remains inert and passive.

*The adverse forces have pushed up the whole of my lower nature in its naked form. It is through inertia, sex, ego etc. that their attack is directed so furiously. If I were to imagine a picture of hell I think I wouldn't be able to paint it worse than my present plight as a result of these forces.*



The one thing wrong would be to allow yourself to be overcome by them. If you remain steady in yourself, you can repel the attack or else it will exhaust itself and pass. In such circumstances you learn to be like a cliff attacked by a stormy sea but never submerged by it.

*I understand how depression and dissatisfaction can enter me from the environment, but now how can the inertia be so responded to?*

Everything can be responded to. Inertia also can spread waves of itself like other things.

*Since all my present methods appear to be ineffective to deal with the attacks, would you kindly point out some that will bring an immediate relief from the inertia?*

Either to reject by dynamic means or to remain unaffected and let it pass are the two usual ways of dealing with these attacks.

*I fail to understand what there is that prevents me from becoming dynamic and fighting out the interfering forces.*

Inertia is the very character of the physical consciousness — left to itself, it is accustomed to be passive to forces and to be their instrument or give a mechanical response to them. In your external being there was always a certain tendency to inertia.

*It is obvious that, in spite of the inert character of the physical consciousness, formerly there were days when the physical was not so much in the hands of tamas, rather it was peaceful and at rest. Something has happened. A frequent response to inertia and the lower forces has come as a mere consequence. If we can discover the cause of the intrusion and enlighten it, I suppose there will be some hope of a permanent relief from the constant upsurges.*

When the mind and the vital take hold of the physical and make it an instrument, then there is no inertia. But here the physical consciousness has been dealt with. If it could have received the peace of the self into itself, without covering it over with inertia, then it would have been all right. But the vital has intervened somehow with its demand and dissatisfaction, so there has been this obstruction and inability to progress. This thing often happens in the sadhana and one must have the power either to reject it dynamically or else to remain detached until it has exhausted itself. Then the true movement begins again.

*While the purification in the physical is going on, cannot the mind and vital keep up their usual sadhana without getting upset by the reactions in the physical, since they are separate from it?*

In human consciousness they are not — they are usually all mixed up in their activities. That is the reason why the human nature is full of confusion and ignorance.

If you can catch the wrong parts that assent to the tamas and cling to it and persuade them to change their preference, that would be very effective.

*Rejection and detachment when there is a rush of difficulties are good. But I feel they are hardly enough. Something more seems to be needed; the Mother knows what it is and how to do it.*

You are always expecting the Mother to do it — and here again the laziness and tamas come in — it is the spirit of tamasic surrender. If the Mother puts you back into a good condition, your vital pulls you down again. How is that to stop so long as you say Yes to the vital and accept its discouragement and restlessness and anguish and the rest of it as your own? Detachment is absolutely necessary.

*I agree that despair or depression is becoming rather frequent nowadays. But you say that I am struggling all the time!*

If you are not struggling what are you doing? Letting it come in freely? But that is tamasic. Your letters express a helpless struggle and outcry.

*Why all this suffering of the physical being on the way to the Divine?*

It is the nature of the sadhana. The forces of the Ignorance are a perversion of the earth-nature and the adverse Powers make use of them. They do not give up their control of men without a struggle.

*The other day you wrote: "That is the ordinary release from inertia, to begin a vital activity good or bad." Does it mean that when there is inertia it diffuses itself by creating a vital activity?*

No. I mean that the Prakriti seeks relief from inertia by calling in vital rajas — that is the case in the ordinary movement of Nature.

*What is the remedy for the increasing tamas? How to get rid of it even from the external being?*

More strength and force from above pouring into the inertia and not letting it be a habit. The dynamic will to draw that down always.

*Is my sadhana dependent on the mental will alone?*

No, but it is when there is the absence of it and the non-action of the higher consciousness, that the journey seems not to go on.

*No sooner did I get up from sleep than I found tamas pressing heavily on me, as if inviting me. I accepted the challenge. Half an hour's battle brought me the victory.*

That is very good and rapid work.

If the calm and silence are perfectly established in the physical then if inertia comes — it is itself something quiet and unaggressive, not bringing disturbance. But to get rid of inertia altogether a strong dynamic calm is needed.

*In various letters you pointed out the inner means to deal with the inertia. Are there no outer ways too which could be used even when my inner separation is passive and the conscious parts veiled?*

I don't know of any effective outward means of getting rid of it. Some in hours when they cannot do sadhana, spend the time in other occupations — reading, writing or working — and do not try at all to concentrate. But I suspect what you need is more strength in the body.

*Is this type of inertia only in me or in all?*

It is in everybody — but less in some, more in others according to temperament. There are some who only feel it incidentally because of the great activity of mind or vital.

*The other day you wrote that some people have less of this tamas because of the good activity of their mind or vital. In which way good?*

I do not remember to have written 'good' — but maybe I meant people who have either a clear and strong activity of the mind (the intellectuals) or an energetic vital being which rejects tamas. I was not speaking of anything moral or spiritual.

*When one's inner peace and silence are not disturbed, then how does the inertia intrude into the physical and work so freely there?*

It is not a question of the inner being, even of the inner physical. It is a question of the physical consciousness. The habit of tamas manifests itself in the very fact of the constant alternatives of experience and inertia. The principle of tamas is inertia, *aparakāśa* and *apavṛtti* shown here by its being unable to keep the *prakāśa* of the higher consciousness or answer continuously to the activity of sadhana — also by the rising up when it comes of sex etc. in a mechanical repetition of old ideas and feelings. It may be from the subconscious, but if the physical had not that habit of responding, it would have no hold. You would not be affected or feel yourself invaded or the sadhana stopped.

*I don't know why the action from above is not always there. A suggestion comes saying when certain things are worked out the Force withdraws until one becomes ready to receive further its fiery action. Is this suggestion from the Light?*

Yes, it is right. Everyone has these alternations because the total consciousness is not able to remain always in the above experience. The point is that in the intervals there should be quietude, at least in the inner being, no restlessness, dissatisfaction or struggle. If that point is attained, then the sadhana can go on smoothly — not that there will be no difficulties but there will be no disquietude or dissatisfaction etc., etc.

## INERTIA

...It (inertia) was because of the nature, because the tendency to tamas is there: the outer being is not yet sufficiently transformed. When the inertia rises you have to keep your inner being separate from it and perfectly calm and not to acquiesce in any nervousness or accept any suggestions or allow yourself to lean towards any active resistance or dissatisfaction with what is written to you or done for you. If in addition you find it possible to use any of the active means suggested in past answers, it is well — but if not this at least — what I have written above must be done. And always the aspiration firm and steady — not eager and excited — for the descent and the transformation of the whole nature must be preserved intact.

*When the outer being is so totally obscured how to keep an aspiration?*

One can always have an aspiration in the inner being, if the inner being keeps its separateness.

This difficulty is due to old habits of the physical mind and vital, which still have the power to repeat themselves by rising from the subconscious and as your physical mind and vital still respond you are not able to stop the disquietude. When they respond no longer, then there will be no disquietude.

*Certain adverse forces are trying to create an active protest.*

So long as that is possible as a result of the inertia, the inertia will always insist — for to create an active resistance or protest and so break and not merely retard the sadhana is the main object with which it is brought up.

*Now I see that a period of no-effort also comes during the course of sadhana. It is when we cannot make any active effort against the inertia in spite of our knowledge and will. We have got to accept this as a stage (though not a pleasant one), because we are dealing with the physical, the most degraded part of the human nature.*

*And yet the spirit of confrontation must be kept alive.*

The period of no-effort is usually when the physical consciousness is uppermost — for the nature of that is inertia, to be moved by the higher forces or to be moved by the lower forces or any forces, but not to move itself. One must still use one's effort if one can, but the great thing is to be able to call down the Force from above into the physical — otherwise to remain perfectly quiet and, undisturbed, expect its coming.



*Due to the excess of inertia, I am not able to live even in the outer mind. I cannot think, write or read anything spiritual or intellectual. The inertia is felt within as well as all around me. It is as if the inertia has replaced the ether itself!*

It means that you are at full grips with the subconscious physical. However heavy and tedious the resistance you have to persevere till you have got the Peace, Knowledge, Force down there in place of the inertia.

*There is a suggestion that our efforts in sadhana bring an undesirable reaction. But is not the suggestion really due to excess of inertia?*

Yes, it is that. The suggestion is put in order to discourage the dynamic effort and keep one inertly passive.

*My capacity of taking food is being reduced more and more. Is it an accompaniment of the inertia?*

You must not let that movement go too far. It is one of the dangers of the sadhana, because of the ascetic turn of the Yoga in the past that as experiences come the suggestion comes that food or sleep etc. are not necessary and also there may come an inclination in the body not to eat or not to sleep. But if that is accepted the results are often disastrous. It is no more to be accepted than the inertia itself.

*I heard a voice: "In spite of your efforts you find no fruit. The inertia will either disappear or change only when your whole body consciousness not only rejects it but also remains unaffected."*

That is the truth.

*The voice also said: "The more you make efforts the sooner the physical will be capable of controlling the whole subconscious."*

That is also extremely true.

*The last thing the voice said was, "Be happy and joyous even in the heaviness and tediousness of the inertia period. That indeed is the true nature of the hero and a true lover of the Mother"*

Right.

## FACING THE PHYSICAL RESISTANCE

*How to meet this inertia which is increasing in quantity and quality?*

It is only by a more constant dynamic force descending into an unalterable equality and peace that the physical nature's normal tendency can be eradicated.

The normal tendency of the physical nature is to be inert and in its inertia to respond only to the ordinary vital forces, not to the higher forces. If one has a perfect equality and peace then one can be unaffected by the spreading of the inertia and bring down into it gradually or quickly the same peace with a force of the higher consciousness which can alter it. Until that is there there can be for long the difficulty and fluctuations with a preponderance of inertia such as you are now having.

*After such a long struggle I am somehow accustomed to the physical resistance. But the present weight of the inert pressure astonishes me.*

As one goes deeper into the material consciousness the weight of the physical inertia may increase.

*Are there many sadhaks here who are under the same spell of inertia as I am?*

Yes — it is a natural result of the consciousness's descent into the physical and the struggle with the subconscious resistance. Only its form varies with different people.

*Something prevents my ascension in spite of the fact that the lower nature can best be dealt with from above.*

It happened in the same way with myself. I had to come down into the physical to deal with it instead of keeping the station always above. Of course if you can keep the station above so much the better, but as almost everybody is down in the physical, it is a little difficult perhaps.

*Up to yesterday there was but sheer inertia, so the struggle was of a passive kind. But now the adverse forces seem to prepare for an active revolt.*

Once they have succeeded with the inertia they always proceed to press for the active revolt.

The inertia simply prepares the ground — when there is the inert passivity, the adverse Force tries to take advantage of it to push in its own suggestions.

*Which part of my nature is directly affected by the inertia?*

It is always the more external part that is inclined to the inertia and especially the physical part.

*How is it that the mind believes that at the present juncture the will-force can't be used freely and easily? It is said there is no stage when the use of one's will is barred. Why then this experience?*

It is due to the influence of the physical consciousness. The physical consciousness or at least the more external parts of it are, as I have told you, in their nature inert — obeying whatever force they are habituated to obey, but not acting on their own initiative. When there is a strong influence of the physical inertia or when one is down in this part of the consciousness the mind feels like the material Nature that action of will is impossible. Mind and vital nature are on the contrary all for will and initiative and so when one is in mind or vital or acting under their influence will feels itself always ready to be active.

*The mind and vital have hardly any experience during this inert stage of the sadhana. But the body has begun to have states of peace, silence and Force. Is it not a rather strange phenomenon?*

No, it is not strange. It means that at such times the whole working is in the body separately and that the peace, silence, Force is coming down there by degrees, though the mind is not conscious of the process of descent.

*You wrote yesterday, "the whole working is in the body separately." A few days back you had said that it was the subconscious that was mostly dealt with. Well?*

A great part of the body consciousness is subconscious and the body-consciousness and the subconscious are closely bound together. The body and the physical do not coincide — the body-consciousness is only part of the whole physical consciousness.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> According to Sri Aurobindo the physical consciousness includes the physical mind and the physical-vital as well as the consciousness of the gross material body. Therefore, the last-named does not coincide with the whole physical consciousness but is only a part of it.

If the inner being keeps separate then it is all right. The inertia will be worked out of the external being.

*Since the working was directly on my physical, how is it that I was not conscious of it till it began to have peace and Force?*

When the working is on the physical direct, not through the thinking mind or vital level, one cannot see the results without being aware of their process. That happens also in the earlier progress of the sadhana before the inner mind is awake.

*When will all our difficulties be over?*

That cannot be said. The difficulties are not likely to cease until the material resistance has been entirely conquered in principle.

...I meant that the difficulties in the physical (generally speaking, not in a particular case) could not be entirely absent so long as the material resistance to the supramental descent had [not] been overcome in principle. In principle means in essence, not in every detail of the coming development.

*A time comes when one can't read, write or think of anything intellectual. One gets confined either to the physical consciousness or to the higher spiritual living.*

It happens like that usually at this stage. The illumination of the physical consciousness is probably needed before that alternation can stop.

*You said, "The physical did not surrender so easily. A long process was going on. Now the same process is put in the subconscious." If the present difficulty is of the physical, would it not mean that the physical has withdrawn its surrender?*

The subconscious rises up into the physical and restores the physical inertia. Besides the surrender of the physical cannot be complete without its enlightenment and a certain penetration of the material which is relatively subconscious.

*The dullness, heaviness, darkness, have reached the extreme point.*

I suppose the most material consciousness has come up or you have gone into it.

It is, I suppose, the full Inertia that has come upon you. Now you have to get the true Energy down into it.

The whole nature when one reaches material bedrock becomes quiescent. One has to bring down the Force from above into the physical consciousness down to the material.

*There is an entire cessation of any kind of activity of the mental, vital and physical consciousness.*

That happens. All depends on how you take it. If you get discouraged, simply thinking "Things are getting worse and worse", it will remain a long time.

*Is it our own material being's resistance that comes up or the resistance of the whole material Nature?*

One's own material being responding to material Nature. It is the inability to react that you must get rid of.

*You once said about the physical, "It was at that time something quite below. Since then you have come down much deeper into the physical and the inertia rises accordingly." Was this coming down necessary or could it have been avoided?*

It has to be done at one time or another.

*Could it then be taken as a step towards perfection?*

It is not a "step towards perfection" but it is a thing that comes on the way. When it comes, one has to pass through with faith, patience and courage.

*You wrote to me, "I suppose, the most material consciousness has come up or you have gone into it." Does this reaching the material consciousness mean that all the layers above it (like the physical, vital etc.) have been conquered already?*

No, but they have been penetrated in your case by the peace and by some light of knowledge; the higher parts of course more so than the lower, but that is always the case.

*There is somewhere in the being a strong neutrality which annuls all efforts.*

It is the neutrality of the physical consciousness which says, "I move only when I am moved. Move me who can."



*Will the parts, like the material and the subconscious ever change?*

Until they aspire or at least assent fully to the aspiration and will of the higher being, there can be no lasting change in them.

The fight with the ego is part of the fight with the physical nature for it is the superficial ego in the physical consciousness irrational and instinctive that refuses to go.

*If there is no vital interference at present, what prevents my full dedication to the Divine?*

It is the quiescence of the vital and the obscurity and inertia of the most physical consciousness which is now dominant and the absence of any descent of the higher consciousness to change all that.

*Facing the inertia all the time tires the body. So I propose to keep three or four periods a day for a steady concentration. For the rest of the time I want to relax the mind by taking up some intellectual activity.*

It is all right.

*I am glad you have shown me the mistake committed in the past sadhana. In future I shall be more careful. Perhaps at that time it was necessary to stay above as much as possible detaching myself from the lower human nature?*

I have not said that you made a mistake. I have simply stated what happened and the causes. If you had been able to remain above and let the Force come down and act while you were detached from the outer nature, it would have been all right. You were able to go up because the Peace descended. You were not able to remain above because the Peace could not occupy sufficiently the physical and the Force did not descend sufficiently. Meanwhile the inertia rose, you got troubled more and more because of the vital suggestions in the outer nature and the rise of inertia, so you were unable to keep detached and let the Force descend more and more or call it down more and more. Hence the coming down into the physical consciousness. In saying all that I am not giving any blame or saying you made a mistake or acted against the Mother's Will. These notions of mistakes or not doing the Will are your own, not mine.

*Once you used the expression: "allowing the revolt to come through the physical consciousness". How was the revolt allowed?*

It is through the physical consciousness and its inertia and its mantra of “I can’t, I can’t, I can’t” that it is able to come in.

When the physical mind acquiesces and says “I can’t will, I can’t do anything against the inertia, I can’t prevent the revolt”, that is allowing it to come through the physical consciousness.

*Force or strength is not enough under the present circumstances. Rejection or even a quiet aspiration is often obstructed.*

Nothing can obstruct a quiet aspiration except one’s own acquiescence in the inertia.

It is a suggestion of the tamasic forces that insist on the difficulty and create it and the physical consciousness accepts it. Aspiration is never really difficult. Rejection may not be immediately effective, but to maintain the will of rejection and refusal is always possible.

This is not enough by itself, — there must also be the steady will for transformation.

*Now the higher pressure is there, the aspiration and will are revived. Why then does the sadhana not proceed as before?*

The physical obstacle in itself is obstinate — the physical consciousness moves slowly and with great difficulty and much resistance. One has to be very persevering and quietly persistent to overcome it.

*How is it that now the lower vital is able to surge up after it has once stopped troubling?*

Now it is the physical mind that is active in you and the physical mind gives a value and therefore a power to the lower vital which it did not have before.

It is the physical consciousness that has to change, so that the physical mind and physical vital may also change.

*When the physical is enlightened, may one expect it to take the lead and liberate even the mind and vital?*

The physical cannot do that — it is not meant to be the leader. It can by its own regeneration become the fit instrument of the higher powers.

## EXPERIENCES IN BODY CONSCIOUSNESS

*While concentrating, sometimes I get the experience of gathering different lights and forces on the head at the same time. I am surprised.*

I suppose the physical consciousness is not accustomed to the play of lights and forces.

*What an emptiness, as if all the energy is drawn out from my mind and vital, and all the bones and organs are removed from the body. I feel the physical movements act as out of Nothingness — Shunya — and they have no connection with my personal volition.*

It is a well-known experience — when even the body consciousness feels only the self-existence.

*Till lately my physical being was all void — as the emptiness had entered there too. But now the Mother's Force seems to have begun to occupy it.*

Very good.

*My lower vital is putting itself into the Mother's hands. However, the subconscious still resists. I find it very difficult to bring it under a permanent control. But with the cooperation of the vital the process will now be easier.*

Yes, but it is not enough that the lower vital should put itself into the Mother's hands. The whole physical and subconscious and everything else must do likewise.

*Sometimes I feel that there is an essential change in my ordinary mind. But then how is it that the tamas is still rising up?*

It rises in that case not from any mind level but from the essential physical consciousness itself (environmental as well as personal).

*During the morning meditation, all my parts were filled with so much inertia that it was with great difficulty that I could maintain the aspiration. Then suddenly the body consciousness emerged from the darkness and took the lead. Would you believe me, it even instigated and directed my mind and vital! It made them stir up from their stupor — their long sleep of inertia. I wonder how the body consciousness can act like this.*

It is very possible when one reaches a certain stage. The Force acts directly through the part needed for the action.

*This was how the subconscious disturbance of the last two days was dissolved and the consciousness again turned towards the Mother's light.*

It is because the subconscious being just below the physical, the enlightened physical can act on it directly and completely in a way in which mind and vital cannot and by this direct action can help to liberate the mind and vital also.

*At present the body does not resist sadhana but it is very weak. It cannot support the movement the whole day or a continual experience.*

Do you mean physically weak? To support the whole day long is not easy even for a strong body — the physical consciousness tends always to a relaxation.

*Do you not think that every sadhak has a certain capacity for holding the experience when it is supported by the body?*

For a time, yes. It is only when there is a big or complete descent that it can be held all the time.

*I feel various experiences in different parts of the body. Sometimes they become quite tangible. Is it not a successful preparation for the final change?*

Yes.

*The physical has deep experiences, which the vital and mind miss at present. I wonder why then the inertia and fatigue are not on the decrease?*

These are as yet only experiences, not the settled realisation of the divine peace, force and light.

*What I see as inertia at present may be perhaps coming from the subliminal consciousness; otherwise how can my physical repose in peace and silence in spite of the inertia?*

It is evidently in that case the subconscious inertia.

*The Mothers Light flows in my forehead. I am surprised to see that it works with a tranquil intensity, while the whole head is completely filled with it.*

Good.

*At times I feel in the midst of an experience that the physical form of the organs where the experience is going on does not exist at all.*

That kind of non-existence of the body or of some part of it is a frequent experience in sadhana.

*The flesh is in a quietude and the cells are at rest.*

That is very good.

## THE SUBCONSCIENT

*The subconscious is to be emptied in the course of the sadhana and not filled up with new things. But I see that I have been filling it every day! Does it not mean that I have been dealing with these things in such a way that they are getting stored there?*

All that one does and thinks leaves its trace in the subconscious.

*At a certain stage of the sadhana it is usual that the subconscious becomes the main source of trouble. It becomes freely active and releases all its stored up stuff for realising it. A sadhak sees all his past life before him as if on a cinema screen. And if he is not sufficiently vigilant he may take all that as real and vivid.*

Yes, that happens.

*The thoughts, desires etc. go down into the subconscious when rejected from the conscious parts. Then they gather force and stay there as if in their own home. It is very difficult to dismiss them from there. Is that correct?*

It is not so with all — with some it happens like that, others pass away without getting a hold.

*Is it true that the nearer the descent of the Supermind the greater will be the difficulties of those in whom it is to come down first?*

It is true, unless they are so surrendered to the Mother, so psychic, plastic, free from ego that the difficulties are spared to them.

*An Ashramite says that at present the Mother and you have started to send us down into the lower nature (for the purpose of transformation). Is it true?*

We are sending nobody nowhere. The sadhana itself has come down into the depth of the physical and subconscious to make them open to what has to come down from above. That is all.

*Since the vital has consented to change can we not take up the subconscious now?*

It makes it more possible but the subconscious has a resistance of its own which must be overcome.

*Why is the subconscious so active during my sleep while it tends to be quiet during the day?*

What else can it do, if it can't be active by day? The dream consciousness is its normal field.

*Getting up from sleep early in the morning, tamas rushes up everywhere. It is so difficult to get back to my usual state of consciousness. You might say that this is a normal result of sleep. But have we not decided to break down all the old usual and 'natural' habits?*

Certainly, but the usual and natural have a great habit of recurring — even when they are not wanted.

*The subconscious inertia is rising more and more every hour. It has enveloped almost all my active or conscious parts.*

Keep the knowledge secure — do not allow that to be clouded.

*Forgive me if this subject is repeated once more. I notice that all my difficulties seem to be massed together in the subconscious. I see no way out.*

The subconscious difficulty is *the* difficulty now — because the whole struggle in the general sadhana is now there. It is in the subconscious, no longer in the vital or conscious physical that the resistance is all massed together.

*The subconscious is throwing its dirt on many parts of the being. Is it because a detachment from the mind itself is necessary that the difficulty seems greater than that of vital and physical activities?*

Certainly, without detachment from the mind that movement would be difficult to get rid of.

*The outer parts of my being that were protesting and resisting all the time have now started to help me on the path. Even the body consciousness observed a silence during the whole morning.*

The same must happen with the subconscious.

*The subconscious is still very active and takes more space in my consciousness than ever before. I suppose that is due to the Mother's higher light which presses on it more and more for change. But it does not seem to accept the change so easily as other parts have done. Perhaps it is waiting for some more hammer strokes.*

The other parts or at least some of them were also very recalcitrant before. They yielded afterwards easily because of the long work done on them. It is now the subconscious that is going through the same process.

*Still from 1 to 4 p.m. the subconscious does not respond to the Mother's pressure.*

It is a difficulty of adaptation which will be overcome in time.

*The subconscious's resistance has begun to affect the physical itself which it had not done up to now. It imposes its conditions on the body. Would you kindly make the matter clearer.*

There is nothing to make clearer. It is simply that the force of the subconscious tamas has increased as the physical consciousness accepted it. That was what I had said already.



## SLEEP

*Is the time come for me to start becoming conscious of my nights? My normal sleep is filled with unconsciousness.*

It does not matter much at present. Put your waking consciousness right.

*The sleep-consciousness has to be changed quickly as it is a fundamental basis. Otherwise whatever is gained during the day after so much tapasya gets devoured during the night!*

First you will have to get the capacity of getting it back as soon as you rise.

*Most of my nights are spent in very ordinary dreams. That is why I don't prefer to sleep much. Nineteen waking hours are passed with a close intimacy with the Mother and five hours with a close contact with the dark obscurity of the earth.*

By not sleeping enough you weaken the forces of the physical consciousness — and so the physical basis of the sadhana is less strong than it should be. It gets more open to the forces of inertia.

*I don't have enough sleep nowadays. Even when I stay in bed longer it escapes me. I must have at least eight hours of sound sleep, mustn't I?*

Yes, sleep is needed — when it does not come, you should keep yourself in a very still quietude till it does. In that way there will be at any rate rest.

*Someone spoke to me that when the peace descends into the inner vital much sleep is no longer necessary.*

That someone announces a most dangerous doctrine. To sleep enough (not too much) is essential.

*From early morning till 9.30 a.m. my consciousness has a difficult time regaining its higher station. No amount of concentration has any effect on this habit. This happens even when my nights are filled with good dreams.*

It is one of the fixed habits of the subconscious which do not yield easily to pressure. One day it will go.

*Even during the night I get attacks. Consequently I do not get sleep. I suppose this shows sadhana going on.*

Often the attack comes in the night because it is hoped then that the consciousness will be lowered and off guard.

Getting attacks at night is not sadhana — the proper sadhana at night is sleep.

*I want light during my sleep state.*

It is the most difficult of all because there the conscious will is in abeyance. Sometimes the waking will can act in the sleep consciousness; but to be always conscious in sleep needs a change in the subconscious itself — in its very stuff.

A certain intensity of Force must come into the waking consciousness which will be strong enough to persist in the sleep.

*Only a few days back I requested for a change of my sleep consciousness. Now the Mothers grace has responded. Bad dreams have begun to be replaced by good ones. However, I am not satisfied with that only, I want my daytime sadhana to be extended to sleep also.*

It is a good step forward at any rate.

## DREAMS

*In a dream I came across the flower plant named by the Mother 'Supramental Plasticity' (Marigold in orange colour). I plucked one flower and put it in my mouth. Strange to say, it tasted sweet. Actually this kind of flower is not tasty. Next morning when I went for Blessings, the Mother offered me the same flower in the same colour. Do you think this means something for me?*

I suppose it simply meant that you were absorbing a force of plasticity.

*During last night's dream I brought home some mud for the garden. After the work was over there was a little surplus which I put in a basket and left in a corner. Then I went in and lay down on my bed. Suddenly I saw a small thin serpent running out from my head. How do you explain it?*

Probably some small vital forces brought in by the uncleanness.

*Which uncleanness do you mean here?*

The uncleanness entered in the dream by the keeping of the basket with mud in it. It was symbolic of some tamas and want of cleanliness in the consciousness.

*Shanti was flying a kite in my dream. It got stuck in a window of a big bungalow. Our elder brother, who was standing there, told Shanti: "Unless you fulfil my conditions I will not loosen your kite." Shanti was perplexed and did not know what to do. I, who was just behind him, showed some trick, so Shanti pulled the thread connecting the kite in such a way that the kite got freed by itself. It then began to fly as easily as before. All that took place in a moment, before our elder brother could make out anything.*

The elder brother is some part of the physical Nature and the kite is Shanti's aspiration that got stuck.

*How to understand that dream about helping Shanti? In reality we do not even discuss each other's sadhana.*

It may have only represented a will on the vital plane to help him.

*In yesterday's dream-experience, I plucked five flowers, three in a bunch and two loose of 'The Supramental Light in the subconscious' (Copossandra). In the dream all other things, like the background, plants and the rest, were as if non-existent. The whole scene seemed to have been created for me only to pluck the flowers. But how could it be true of the supramental light descending into my subconscious?*

You were doing it on the supraphysical plane for a future effect.

*Yesterday's dream: A monkey threw something at me thrice and I caught it well all the three times. But my attention was fixed on the eyes of the animal and therefore I did not know what it gave me. Maybe it was grace rather than any material thing it bestowed on me.*

The monkey may have been of the Hanuman type — Hanuman is a symbol of Shakti and devotion.

*My sleep consciousness seems to be much influenced by the lower forces. Last night, during sleep they took me to my native place Bhavnagar. I found myself among my relatives. But I told them, "I cannot stay here. Nothing here interests me. I must go back to Pondicherry." This proves that my inner being, though veiled during the present difficult period, is as firm in its enterprise as ever.*

That is clear and it is very good.

*I was travelling with a friend when we saw two boys as we were passing a tree full of mangoes. We collected some of the fallen mangoes. Seeing that, both the boys got angry and ran after us. My friend was overpowered by one boy while I ran away. But the other boy pursued me till the end of the dream, though several times I caught him and beat him. Later on I was dead-tired and did not remember what happened afterwards.*

The boy obviously represents some lower force and it is some weakness in the being (indicated by running away) that allows him to trouble you.

The running away is the drawing back and allowing it to gain more and more ground — not facing and destroying it.

*With the Mothers Grace, during today's dream I have been able to do what you had wanted. A witch in the form of a very beautiful maiden was going down a street.*

*People, especially young boys and girls, were running and hiding themselves in their houses on hearing about her coming. Her influence was believed to be so evil that a mere glance from her could kill. To save myself I too was running around during the whole night-long dream. But she followed me madly. Then I resolved to fight, and simply kicked her down!*

That is what should always be done. Running away is useless.

*While washing the big flower-vase of the Reception Room, one part fell from my hands and it broke. This particular work I do every day. So may I take this dream as prophetic?*

One sees many things like that which are not necessarily prophetic (rarely they are), but only suggestions, formations etc. on the vital plane.

*The Mother came into a large room, where her children were assembled for the Pranam. On this day she decided to do something different from what she was doing daily; she first asked some of us to retire from the room. Afterwards she and I met at some other place. "My son," she said, "there was some special reason for my asking you to go out of that room." O Lord, what a love I felt for her then; such a love I have never experienced in the waking state. It was like a separated child meeting his mother after many years. There was a sweetness even in her hand which I was holding and pressing to my heart. Then she said, "My child, I want to tell you a most secret thing. So come with me to a solitary room." While going to another place I left behind something which I had been holding in my hand. We both entered a small secluded room. She had something of metal in her hands which she arranged in such a way that it expressed: "My son, I am going to bring down into you the Divine Truth within the shortest possible time." There were two more metallic pieces on which also there was some clear writing, but as it was in a foreign language I could not read it. This whole dream was so precise, clear and living that it still stands out vividly before my eyes. What do you say about this dream?*

There is always some truth behind such dream experiences.

*The Mother was seen seated on a royal throne and the Pranam ceremony was proceeding. All of a sudden an unknown man entered. Immediately he began to complain to her that she was partial and that he could not bear it. When asked to leave the Pranam Hall he did not obey. So she ordered the watchman and some*

*sadhaks to force him out. But before they could do it he escaped. They pursued him, overpowered him and returned victorious.*

Evidently he stands for the Force that is always suggesting to the sadhaks that Mother is human and full of defects.

*Two little girls were on a journey. When nearing their mother's house they were attacked by people who began throwing stones at them. However they reached their destination quite safely.*

*I sent you the above dream yesterday but you did not comment on it. So I presume you want me to interpret it myself. Well, I shall attempt it. The two little girls represent my psychic being and my self or spirit. Marching from the world of strife and struggle, darkness and falsehood, they were going back to their Mother-Soul. People's stone-throwing may indicate the resistance of the earth-nature. But nothing can touch those who are guarded by the Mother's Grace on the way. When the girls were near to their goal something from above fell on one of them. That something could be taken as a crown upon the one representing the self. For my psychic being is as yet behind the progress of my self. Well?*

It may very well be the true interpretation.

*While waking from sleep, it was found that between the waking and dream states there have been more thoughts than actions and happenings.*

Your sentence is very vague. If you mean that there were more thoughts than happenings that is quite natural in a state in which the mind has already begun to work but is not yet turned on outward things.

*In the dream S and I went to a shop. Just outside the shop a carriage stood with three horses. Inside the shop also we noticed two similar carriages. But those were not real, only painted on some big pots.*

*In real life, we never come across a carriage with three horses. It is either one or two or more but always in pairs.*

*My mind interprets the dream thus: The one carriage outside the shop may mean one of the three higher planes already in manifestation and in full dynamism. The other two carriages which are not real, only pictured, indicate the last two highest planes yet to project themselves, that is to say, to descend.*

*Now the carriage (with three horses) may be taken as the psychic being which controls and guides the three lower powers (horses) of my nature, mind, vital and physical.*

*What do you say?*

It may be, but why a shop? And which three higher planes?

*It is rather myself who wanted to ask you the above questions!*

You spoke of the three higher planes. I simply wanted to know what planes you meant.

*As there were three carriages my mind interpreted them as three planes.*

But you say that one of the carriages is the psychic. That is not one of the higher planes. The higher planes are the higher mind, illumined, intuitive, overmind, supermind. The psychic, mind, vital, physical belong to the ordinary manifestation.

*I am afraid my interpretation of the carriage with three horses as the psychic and the triple lower being was not true.*

It may be true. But all the details are not clear.

*Here I send you three dreams. I had them one after another last night.*

*The first one: The morning Pranam ceremony was going on. A visitor had already been to the Mother and received her Blessings. At the end of the function he demanded a second Pranam. As even the Ashramites are not permitted twice, he was refused. Neglecting the Mother's command he approached her to satisfy his desire. So she got up from her seat and gave him a slap. This slap made such a profound change burst within him that he immediately realised his mistake. Consequently as a self-punishment he slapped himself!*

*The second: The Mother talked with me about the flowers of Tenderness of the Divine (Aloe Vera) which I had offered to her. She admired them and inquired if I had some more. I replied, "I have offered all I had."*

*The last one: At the end of the second dream the Mother, with some of us, went upstairs. Leaving us in her room she went to another room and brought some big and some small packets. A small packet was presented to each of the three persons, while two big ones were given to me.*

*What type of dreams are these?*

These are small dream-experiences on the vital planes; it is often difficult to find out the precise symbolic significance of the details.



## ILLNESS IN YOGA

### SCIATICA

*Poor Nature! When it found it impossible to disturb my sadhana by some subtle psychological means it resorted at last to physical means — pushing up my dormant sciatica!*

I hope it will soon be pushed out — meanwhile it need not disturb anything in the inner realisation.

*I feel the pain only in the lower abdominal parts and the thighs.*

That is all right then. Sciatica is of course an illness of the lower part of the body — the legs especially. But it should go out from there.

*The pain is increasing. I have started using the Mother's Force on it.*

If you get rid of it by the Force, so much the better, but if it increases like that then physical treatment will be necessary.

The difficulty is that there is no known remedy for sciatica except perhaps hot sulphur springs which don't exist here. We shall have to cure it by constant application of the Force, but it is very obstinate.

*Shall I take Prasad<sup>3</sup> for the cure of sciatica?*

It is not necessary — we will see for a few days more before resorting to any physical means.

*What about work during sciatica?*

Do the work when you can — i.e. when the sciatica is not too strong for you to work.

Rest has to be taken to avoid overstrain due to the pain — but it does not cure the sciatica. So entire inactivity may not be good.

*Last night the sciatica-pain shot up suddenly at three o'clock waking me from sleep. I struggled hard, but in vain to control it, and then got up from the bed. After this*

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<sup>3</sup> Food given by the spiritual guru which contains his Blessings and Power.

*the condition became worse, for the pain reached up to the brain and I almost fainted!*

It was evidently a result of the pain on the nervous system. The nerves communicate with the brain and the pain must have gone up there. It seems to me something might be done at least to diminish the pain. The Mother says some medicines have come from France and she thinks there is something for sciatica among them. These medicines are new discoveries and some of them have been found to be extraordinarily effective. You might consult Nirod about it.

It won't do to go on like this (with the sciatica in such an acuteness). I am writing to Nirod to go and see you. If he can do something to get rid of this attack, we will see afterwards.

I told you to consult Nirod because the sciatica was becoming so acute as to send the pain up in the brain, not to speak of its interfering with the sleep and the sadhana.

*Could you kindly tell me what makes the sciatica appear so suddenly and also withdraw automatically?*

It is quite usual for an adverse Force once it gets hold to take up a rhythm like that.

*How is it that the sciatica persists so much in spite of the application of the Force?*

It is evident that the body has been allowing the opposite Force to take possession of it.

The difficulty is the body's habit of replying to the contrary Force. Everybody has that habit, so there is nothing strange or unusual about it.

*Some strong suggestion came, announcing: "A powerful and violent attack of fever is already on the way."*

Such suggestions should always be rejected. They are meant to make admissions for the illness easier. If they are rejected, there is less chance of the illness coming.

*There is no improvement in my constipation and sciatica. Continuing for a year they seem to be stabilising! This is really too much.*

Obviously. The first thing to do is to get rid of the constipation. Perhaps you could try Ambu's asana, if your sciatica allows?

*Could I leave the constipation to be cured by the Mother's Force or just forget about its weakening effects and go forward?*

If it persists you have to work on it yourself either by asana or otherwise.

I have told Nirod he can treat for constipation. Continued constipation is the root of all sorts of diseases and cannot be allowed to continue. Chronic constipation (you told Nirod; he says, it has been there since you came here) cannot be cured in two days by the Force. The habit of this kind takes long to be changed.

*My diet has gone down much. Dr. Nirod says what I eat is too little. But if I eat more some trouble starts in the stomach. I have become very weak. Even taking my daily bath tires me.*

All that is itself largely due to the constant constipation. If you eat so little, especially at your age, weakness can easily come.

If one's fatigue is really physical, then there is no use straining; if it is psychological in cause, it is better to react.

*Since I can't take more solid food may I take some extra milk?*

That you can do. But it is an increase of the ordinary food that was suggested. What is the illness that forces you to decrease the food? Neither sciatica nor cold demand a decrease of food.

*Could you kindly tell me what are the psychological reasons for fatigue in my case?*

It is not a question of psychological reasons, but whether the fatigue is proper to the body or whether it is only due to a psychological state — e.g. the consciousness not supporting the body etc.

*The doctor is repeatedly advising me not to be very active.*

That is his remedy for everything. But I am not sure that increasing inactivity is good — whether it might not help to eternise the sciatica.

*Is there no outer means for curing the sciatica?*

There is no outer means. Sciatica is a thing which yields only to inner concentrated force or else it goes away of itself and comes of itself. Outer means at best can only be palliative.

If you cannot get rid of the sciatica by inner means, the medical remedy (not for curing it but for keeping free as long as possible) is not to fatigue yourself. It comes for periods which may last eight weeks, then suddenly goes. If you remain quiet physically and are not too active, it may not come for a long time. But that of course means an inactive life, physically incapable. It is what I meant by eternising the sciatica — and the inertia also.

*Why the outer means?*

The outward means had to be used because the body was not responding to the Force — on the contrary the sciatica was increasing.

*I am not so particular about taking medicine for the sciatica unless of course it is the Mother's will.*

It is not a question of the Mother's will. It is a question of finding some means to cure a persistent state of ill health. I don't see why you should not use the medicine.

*You once wrote about the passing of the Force through the body (to cure the sciatica). Is it impossible now?*

Not if the body lets it pass.

*For curing the sciatica shall I try the method of detachment?*

If you can cure by withdrawing so much the better. The sciatica has often tried to fall on the Mother and on myself — we have always found that it cannot resist the force quietly and persistently applied. Other illnesses can resist, but sciatica being entirely tamasic cannot. The application of Force does not yet, probably, come natural to you, so it brings a sense of struggle, not of quiet domination, hence the restlessness etc.

You must arrive at a complete separation of your consciousness from these feelings of the body and its acceptance of illness and fix that separated consciousness and open the body. It is only so that these things can be got rid of or at least neutralised.

It is a detachment of even the physical mind from the pain that makes one able to go on as if nothing were there. But this detachment of the physical mind is not so easy to acquire.<sup>4</sup>

*Even when the soul does not identify itself with the nature-parts, why are there so many difficulties, sufferings, revolts at present?*

Because the mind does identify itself. If the mind as well as the soul kept separate, the higher vital would follow suit, and these things would become again suggestions only which could be repelled from the lower vital and physical consciousness.

*You wrote yesterday about a complete separation of my consciousness from the feelings of the body and its acceptance of illness. But, when the whole head is affected by the pains, sciatica, cold etc. how can there be any separation?*

There can. I do not agree. It is part of the tamas in you that you allow yourself to be obscured and overwhelmed by illness and naturally the hostile Force takes advantage of it.

*My brother says that during sleep I put my hands on the thigh where the sciatica is. When the sciatica was in the right thigh, the hands were there. When it changed to the left, the hands also shifted their position! Is there any meaning here?*

It is a natural movement of the hands to go where pain or uneasiness is felt. If one has force in the hands (vital or other) it may even have some palliative or curative effect.

*Can a thing like sciatica persist even when the Force, peace and silence descend into the physical?*

A special force is needed for that and the response of the physical.

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<sup>4</sup> Although I tried all sorts of medicines, injections and even asanas, my sciatica was not cured for three years. So I gave up attending to it and, during the periods it was not active I just forgot that I had it. I don't know when exactly it got cured. I found how total the cure was when once during a cyclone I worked outdoors completely drenched in rain without any bad effect. I realised that to turn the consciousness away from all concern about a disease and living just in the faith that the Mother could take care of everything, was more effectual than even offering it to the Mother by a remembrance of the disease. To take away even the thought of the illness from the physical mind was a powerful help. This mind is a very important medium for both getting and curing illnesses.

*Very often there is such a pull for the inner sadhana that I cannot lie down on my bed. Due to the sciatica-pain, it is difficult to sit on an ordinary chair. Could I be given an easy chair so that my body can rest while I follow the movement of the sadhana?*

Mother does not believe much in an easy chair sadhana. In fact there is, I think, no easy chair but all the same you can ask Amrita.

What the Mother meant was that this meditating on an easy chair which is so common in the Ashram is a new thing to her and she finds it rather a tamasic habit. There can be no objection to a long sitting or to resting when you need it.

*The sciatica-pain is up to the knee. I am given an easy chair but it has no foot-rest. It will be a relief if I can stretch my legs on something. Could I have a foot-rest?*

Yes. But don't let all these concessions to the physical prevent you from reacting against the tamas, otherwise you will become like an aged invalid thinking of nothing but his pains and maladies and unable to move.

*During the present period why do so many fall sick in the Ashram?*

It is part of the physical struggle.

*Does not my throat pain denote a strong resistance of the physical mind, the throat being the centre of the physical mind?*

Evidently, in its origin it must be due to that.

*I sometimes despair because of the constant weakness of the body which, even when there is no sciatica, does not allow me to do prolonged physical work.*

That also is tamas. If you throw off the idea of weakness, the strength would come back. But there is always something in the vital physical which is pleased with becoming more weak and ill so that it can feel and lament its tragic case.

*But what about my enlightened inner parts? Why do they tolerate such a weak and sad state?*

When the physical inertia came and suspended the higher experience, the vital demand awoke, the demand for the physical love and its satisfaction, so the awakened inner part

of the vital could not act and the confusion increased, all became passive and helpless and there was no aspiration, inner action or reaction against illness and inertia.

## PHYSICAL CONDITIONS AND YOGA

*My friends wonder why I take so little food. But why should I eat much just to satisfy the body's appetite?*

Food is necessary for the maintenance of the body which is the instrument of the sadhana, so it must be taken in sufficient quantity for that. It is not to satisfy the appetite but for this purpose that you must take sufficient food.

*I think you said some time ago that the absence of my appetite was due to the inertia and the resistance of the lower vital. I wonder what sort of connection exists between the appetite and inertia.*

All ill-health is due to some inertia or weakness or to some resistance or wrong movement there, only it has sometimes a more physical and sometimes a more psychological character. Medicines can counteract the physical results.

*Could I have two more spoons of sugar as I get one extra cup of milk!*

Mother does not approve of 12 spoons of sugar as so much is bad for the health. 10 spoons is already a lot. She can give you some Nergine<sup>5</sup> to put in your extra milk in place of sugar. One spoon in each cup (not more than two in a day). Nergine is very strengthening.

*Somebody referring to the Ashram food said, "We cannot eat such vegetables. They are not meant for human souls. The people in charge ought to know that we are not divine souls. We pass our outer life just like worldly men, but the food is not like what they eat. In other Ashrams, people feel a glow of renunciation, owing to sannyasa; therefore they don't mind what they eat."*

Does the human soul eat vegetables? If they don't want to be divine souls why are they here — or if they have no aspiration? Aspiration to the Divine ought surely to give a glow sufficient for not minding about vegetables.

*On the same day my friend N's pain in his toe began to decrease, there entered a similar pain into the corresponding toe of my foot. Is it not rather interesting?*

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<sup>5</sup> A French preparation, something like Bournvita but less tasty.



Yes, but that kind of experience should not be pushed too far.

*At times I watch the Mother's Force lifting my body-consciousness to a higher level. I become unaware of the contents of the body — like the bones, flesh, etc. Then any trace of illness, even of a violent pain, vanishes!*

To be able to do that is very good.

## HEAD-COLD

*When there is a cold in the head, the thinking mind becomes passive and impressions and impulses come up from the subconscious, and the mechanical mind goes on.*

What you describe happens very usually during a cold in the head, as ordinarily one depends upon the brain cells for transmission of the mental thought. When the mind is not so dependent on the brain cells, then the obscuration by the cold does not interfere with clear seeing and thinking and one is not thrown back in the mechanical mind.

*Regarding detachment from the head: it is particularly difficult if not impossible, as the head is the centre of my sadhana.*

You can do it by not identifying yourself with your head or any part of your body.

*The cold has already entered my head! I wonder what made it do so?*

Well, turn it out.

*There is a cough, perhaps as a result of the cold. This cough has brought about a throat-pain, which has become so acute that it is difficult to swallow food. Such physical resistances are hindrances to my rising above. After some effort, once I did break through them and flew upwards. But the pressure of the pain pulled me down quickly.*

These things are largely nervous suggestions to the physical vital which it accepts and materialises. You can never be free from these attacks if you do not learn to disbelieve and resist against these suggestions.

They must be repelled quite as much as the sex or ego suggestions.

*During the intensity of the pain how to be free from such suggestions?*

It is nothing more than what I told you — the suggestion of the adverse Force and a mechanical habit of response in the outer consciousness during the periods when it is not lifted up and exalted. Even in such intensity it must be able to reject these things.

*The present cold appears to be of an abnormal type. It has not only prevented the sadhana, but created a disorder in the body. It has affected my head, stomach, eyes*

*and caused a resistance in the throat, which means the physical mind. I want to get out from this mess immediately and prepare myself for the coming occasion (15th August Darshan).*

Whatever it may be — the power of illness to prevent the sadhana ought not to exist. The Yogic Consciousness and its activities must be there whether there is health or illness.

*The coming of the cold in the head has encouraged my outer consciousness to rise above! For, if it remains calm and concentrated above, the cold gets veiled. It appears again only when the consciousness comes down and is diffused.*

It is the only final cure for the habit of illness, when the whole outer nature becomes part of the consciousness above.

*How is it that in spite of my foresight I could not prevent the cold from getting in?*

Something in the physical admitted it.

*It seems several people caught the same cold suddenly yesterday evening. Was there then any general attack on the physical mind?*

There may have been. Attacks are always going about and sometimes several people become susceptible to them at a time.

*If several people together become sensitive to the same attack of cold at a time, has it anything to do with the inner working?*

What inner working? Why should the cold have any connection with an inner working. A cold comes from an outer attack.

*Why are all sorts of things coming into me? Can nothing be done?*

If you shake off your sense of helplessness and call down the Force or let it pass, then something can be done.

## EYE-STRAIN

*There is a strain in my eyes. Reading has become difficult. What to do?*

For the eyes you can try boric acid lotion; it should at least take away the pain.

You will have to be careful about your eyes. Reading by night (too much) is unadvisable. There are two suggestions of the Sun-treatment man which I have found to be not without foundation. First, one should blink freely in looking at things or reading and not fix the eyes or stare. Second, palming gives a very useful rest — palming means keeping the hands crossed over the closed eyes (without pressing on the eyes) so as to shut out all light.

Nirod says there is nothing the matter with your eyes except a little congestion. It must be due probably to too much straining of the eyes, especially reading at night.

*What type of eye-pain is this that it never ceases?*

It is overstrain with insufficient relaxation of the gaze in reading and writing etc.

*Two years ago I had a strong strain of the eyes. Medical treatment gave no result. So with your consent I left the matter to the Mother to cure it. Those days I did not even have faith except in some vague mental form. I resumed my reading and writing which had been given up earlier. And lo! I was cured. Why do I not have the same result now?*

One gets often a result more easily when the consciousness is in the mental plane than when it is down in the physical.

*Why is there no abating of the external troubles like the sciatica, stomach-upset and eye-strain?*

It is like the rest — part of the general physical resistance and its inertia.

*The eyes' condition is much worse than before. Has this increasing resistance of the body any connection with the psychological state?*

No, except in so far as a state of inertia predisposes the body to non-resistance to physical ailments.

## SEX AND ITS CONQUEST

*Sometimes it is noticed that the mere presence of a woman is enough to raise the sexual sensations in us. How does it happen like that?*

It is quite usual — just as the smell of very nice food may awake the desire of the food.

*I notice that there are many sadhaks who mix with ladies quite freely, while I can't. Does it mean that they do not feel the sex-difficulty?*

Some may not feel, others may not care whether they feel or not.

*Today I had neither sexual sensations nor thoughts while in the presence of ladies; and yet there was something in the mind which I failed to understand.*

Probably some pressure or presence of the sex force indeterminate and without form.

*Am I more open than others to the universal forces so as to receive any bad influence from anywhere?*

You have the same suggestions and invasions of these forces as others have.

*While reading a famous man's biography I found that a sexual sensation came into me. How did this happen?*

It comes in because it has been the habit of the vital to admit such movements.

*In what way does the vital being partake in matters of sex?*

By desire, joy, personal attraction, passion and in many other ways.

*When one becomes more and more aware of the vital-physical, is sexual sensitivity a necessary stage in the sadhana?*

No — but since it has come, you have to face it and get rid of the sexuality.

*I see a lot of imaginations and formations of an ambitious type. With them the sexual thoughts enter in a great number. At present their form is rather negative so they don't affect me much. They come and pass away. Do they come from my subconscious or from outside?*

From outside — at least as far as the ambitious imaginations are concerned — probably the sexual thoughts also.

*When I am in the Purusha consciousness there are no sex sensations, but the thoughts do trespass. Where do you then locate the defect in me?*

It must be either the vital or physical mind that brings them in.

*If the sexual thoughts also come from outside, how is it that I do not feel them as such, in the way I feel other kinds of thoughts, and why are they in a greater number than before?*

I said that probably they are from outside — that is from the play of the forces of the Nature, it is not therefore surprising if they are more in number than before.

*What is the connection between the sexual sensations and the inertia?*

They come more easily when there is tamas. You have only to turn them out as soon as you feel them.

*What I meant yesterday by my question about sex, inertia and the physical was this: is sex as much a principle of the physical as inertia?*

The sexual sensations do not 'become' a principle of the physical consciousness — they are there in the physical nature already — wherever there is conscious life, the sex force is there. It is physical Nature's conscious means of reproduction and it is there for that purpose.

*I was sitting on the staircase and quietly reading. There came a sadhika<sup>6</sup>; she sat a few steps below me. I paid no particular attention to her and continued my reading. But then the sexual thoughts at once began to run about me. They were so strong I could not rid myself of them by mere mental effort. So I had to withdraw within. It was only when I came out that I saw who the woman was. I wonder why this time the thoughts were so obstinately insistent.*

Some persons have more sex influence in them than others.

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<sup>6</sup> A woman-disciple

*Nowadays I have begun to reject the sex-movement. And yet I can see clearly that some part of the vital takes interest in women — either in an explicit or in an implicit way. How else could this movement be explained, for, though I was not off my guard I still could not keep myself detached from the attraction of R? Or was it possible that her vital too enjoyed the attraction?*

Even without any response on her part it is possible. It is evident that part of your vital does not care at all for your mind's refusal — it goes on replying to the sexual suggestions.

*The sexual notions still rise up. But now they seem to be more from the subconscious; there is no real substance, push, desire behind them, merely half-formed thoughts coming in a haphazard way. Well, what is to be done about them?*

They have simply to be either quietly thrown aside or else not attended to.

*The subconscious has now begun to push up the sexual stuff. But I do not accept it as mine since it has nothing to do with my conscious parts.*

If these things are felt as belonging to the general nature, the question is what is the response of your own nature.

*Coming across a woman all sorts of sexual thought-imaginings, sensations and feelings rise up. This happens sometimes even when I am alone in my room. Is there no immediate way out of this weakness?*

What immediate way? The way is dissociation and a quiet but firm rejection. Also to turn the mind away to other things if these thoughts try to occupy it. If they are indulged or taken pleasure in, they increase.

*It happens that during a certain stage of the sadhana the higher Force tackles the subconscious also. In reaction this nether part comes up with full activity. We then have to be on guard not to allow old sexual stuff to rise, spread and form into new or fresh outlets. Simply to be detached and pray to the Divine to turn sex-energy into ojas.*

Yes, that is it.

*Talking with sadhikas I still feel uneasiness. Does this not show that the sex basis is still there?*

Yes, it ought practically to be forgotten that they are sadhikas.

*To see no difference between man and woman except physiological and grammatical is one of the steps towards the purification of the sex centre.*

A very important step.

*Would you kindly explain why sex is so very active at present?*

It is part of the attempt of the old vital nature to regain possession.

*Is there any general working from above for the transformation of sex and is that why so many suffer from it?*

No. It is nothing new; except perhaps that in some it has been reinforced by the upsurging of the subconscious.

It is the result of the general working going down into the subconscious.

*The sex difficulty is still strong and insistent. You wrote that there was no special action on it (for change). Why then is it so active and prominent?*

Of its own accord. Special action is not designed to make it active, but to remove it.

*If so, why is it more active now than before?*

I suppose because it thinks it has a better chance.

*The inertia has come up and is trying to stain the lower vital and the sex centre. Is it not rather unusual that those parts should allow themselves to be influenced?*

When one is tamasic the sex plays very easily — that is not at all unusual.

*I do not mind so much the difficulties like inertia, desire, ego etc. They do not trouble me like sex which has become awful.*

If ego cannot trouble the being why should sex trouble it? It is because your consciousness accepts it and does not accept ego. Or why the difference?



*I hear A suffers too much from the sex uprising. What means does he take to face it?*

I don't know that he takes any; he goes on suffering.

*The other day you wrote to me: "If ego cannot trouble the being why should sex trouble it?" Is it not possible that one may be disturbed by one and not by the other?*

They are both rajasic forces of vital nature. It (ego) is a difficulty as sex is a difficulty. The inner being can put both out and regard them as foreign things.

*For a long time, my consciousness did not come across sex-imaginings. However, I did not know how far progress was carried on in the conquest of sex. Today at the end of the Pranam ceremony a few of those imaginings did try to clash with me. But there was no response even from the lower parts of the being.*

Good.

*I have written to you that it was possible to detach myself from the sex difficulty to some extent. But there is no total overcoming it.*

What you are able to detach yourself from does not so much matter. It can wait for final removal. It is the physical difficulty that must be overcome.

It is not a question of overcoming, but of detachment — not being identified with it or seized by it.

Detachment is the first step. If you can detach yourself from the sex suggestions even when having them as you say, then they do not matter so much as the tamas, inertia etc. which interfere with your sadhana. They can wait for their final removal hereafter.

## SEXUAL DREAMS

*While I am getting some control over the sex impulses during the waking condition, there is absolutely no change in my dream state. How is that?*

It is absolutely necessary to get rid of sex interest. But the night dreams will only disappear after the waking mind is perfectly free.

*In last night's dream some vital being took the form of a near relative of mine, so that she could approach me easily and request me to accompany her. When we reached her room she expressed her sexual desire. I refused her emphatically and ran away from her. She became furious and pursued me. When she found that my real relatives were coming she became quiet. Have you anything to say about my sex difficulty?*

No. Except that it has to be got rid of sooner or later and meanwhile kept at arm's distance at least. To fight and conquer is best, but to refuse and run away is also good.

*Nearly every night I have to get up at midnight for passing water, even when I do not have any sexual dream. Has it then any connection with sex?*

Sexual dreams are sometimes the result of the pressure of undischarged urine on the organ.

*Can the sexual dreams bring out urine on the bed itself?*

Sexual dreams usually bring out the semen or the seminal fluid, not the urine.

*I informed you about sex and urine during the sleep state. Now during the day also there is a constant pressure on the organ for passing water, almost every ten minutes. Has it any physical or psychological cause?*

There must be some physical reason connected with the kidneys; perhaps the cause is connected with the sciatica (rheumatic tendency in the system).

*You wrote that the pressure for passing water has 110 psychological reason. What then is the pressure due to?*

It may be due to some weakness in the action of the urinating parts or to something in the system that the organs want to discharge out of it or to any other physical cause.

## LEAVING THE ASHRAM FOR SEX EXPERIENCE

*If one is in the Ashram from childhood, does one get over the sex difficulty without bothering about it?*

The staying in the Ashram is not enough.

*This period seems to be a difficult one. Some Ashramites who were here for long are going out with the Mother's permission for experiment. It is said they found it too difficult to manage here with their ego and sex. I doubt if they will succeed with the experiment.*

It is well understood that the permission given does not exclude the possibility of the experiment ending badly. But the experiment becomes necessary if the pull of the ego or the outer being and that of the soul have become too acute for solution otherwise or if the outer being insists on having its experience.

*After our staying for so many years in the Ashram, how are these old difficulties surging up so powerfully?*

With many sex, demands etc. after a long discontinuance come up with a rush and they find it too difficult to overcome.

*Even some good people cherish their bad habits in the hope that when the transformation is done they will drop off themselves.*

That is the mistake of many in the Ashram.

*And others say: "Why bother with them at all? They do not come in the way of the sadhana."*

Some even say: "What is the need of suppressing these things? I get experiences without suppressing them. They are a part of life."

*Once a strong sexual push comes up, is it really better for one to go out and make an experiment?*

It is especially when the outer being rejects the Truth and insists on having its own life and refuses the rule of the spiritual life that the experiment becomes inevitable. I have never said that it is recommendable.

*Does that push really become so violent that in spite of knowing its nature and the result of its satisfaction one cannot control it remaining in the Ashram?*

In some it is too strong, they have to go and see for themselves. That does not mean that everyone has to go whenever he feels a difficulty. These are exceptional cases.

But supposing a man's sex-pull becomes so strong that he indulges it in the Ashram; will he not have to go back to the worldly life and take it out there?

*Will all be well returning to the Ashram after pacifying the push? Do such desires, once satisfied willingly, leave him at peace for the rest of his life?*

If the external being is too strong for him and its desires increased, then it means his realisation is postponed. But then there is no other choice. For the only other alternative is a life in the Ashram itself which would be soon a public scandal.

*What brings about such hopelessness after one has already entered the spiritual path?*

There is no hopelessness except where the will chooses the worse path.

## PART II

## THE VITAL BEING

*How to liberate myself from the vital strife and struggle?*

Allow no demand of the human vital to rise up — clamour of egoistic revolts — or if one rises see that you or no part of you identifies itself with it.

*How is it that in spite of my rejection the suggestions are still troubling me and even stopping the sadhana?*

There must be something in your consciousness (probably the vital physical) in which these things can still find a response, otherwise they would be felt but they would not stop all sadhana.

*Does the cause of the fall from the state of light and truth belong to my own vital or is it from outside?*

It is from outside but acquiesced in by part of the external vital. If there were no acquiescence anywhere, you would not feel it as your own and it would have no force.

You must get rid of the vital demands altogether — otherwise they would enter into the love and make a mess.

*What to do when the vital refuses bluntly to assent to the true movement?*

It must be made to assent — and the first thing is to detach yourself from it and refuse to accept its revolts and despairs as your own.

*You said, "The tendency to be miserable is a matter of habit in the vital. It can come up at any time so long as the habitual movement has not been entirely disallowed." Or was it due to the Force entering the lower vital to change it and the latter bringing out its resistance?*

It may have been — but very often the lower Nature pushes these things across an experience in opposition to the working of the Force.

It is the obstruction of the lower consciousness that rises up as is its nature, to obstruct what is coming down.

*Let us see if vital difficulties improve tomorrow. Otherwise I shall have to throw the last dice tomorrow. If tolerated still further, I think they may create a worse condition for me for good.*

(Sri Aurobindo underlined with pencil the last twelve words.)

That is just the kind of idea to which you should never give acceptance. On the contrary you should regard all difficulties as only passing obstacles on the way.

*Why does my nature tolerate the suggestion since it has no reasonable basis? It only creates a disturbance.*

Because the vital nature from which the suggestion comes wants to be disturbed and creates a fictitious excuse for disturbance when no good reason (good from the vital point of view) actually exists.

The opposition of the vital is never reasonable, even when it puts forward reasons. It acts from its nature and habit of desire not from reason.

*My present life has become so dull. Nothing interests me. It is as if there is no use continuing life like this. What are these life-feelings?*

What life-feelings? What you describe is their absence, the entire quiescence of the vital. It is when the vital is inactive or non-cooperates and no higher force replaces it, then there is the feeling of absence of interest in everything.

*What makes the vital inactive?*

There are two conditions in which it becomes like that; (1) when its ordinary (ego) actions or motives of action are not allowed to it, (2) when one goes very much down into the physical, the vital sometimes or for a time becomes inert unless or until there is the Force from above.

*What difficulty did the higher strength meet in its descent into my physical consciousness?*

There was a rajasic element which you did not get rid of, though you kept it outside you. When you got into the physical consciousness and the inertia arose, the suggestions of this rajasic element became strong and between them and the inertia you came down from the right attitude.



*Is not my vital itself affected by the inertia and do not the suggestions still enter because of this?*

Yes, it is a certain effect of the inertia on the vital that makes it feel unable to throw them out.

*It seems to me that so long as the vital does not join with the sadhana it will be difficult to throw out the inertia altogether from my system. The vital cooperation will make it easier for me to meet the lower resistance.*

Certainly it is better if the vital is brought to the true movement — renouncing its wrong movements and asking only for growth of the self-realisation, psychic love and psychicisation of the nature. But it is possible to get rid from above of the more active forms of obstruction even with a neutral vital.

*How do the small forces and beings of the vital plane come in just at the right time to interfere with one when he is about to achieve something in sadhana?*

They act at all times when they see anything in the mind, vital or body off its guard.

*I doubt if such a vital as mine can ever be changed.*

It is no use saying it cannot be changed, it has to change. It is only a twist taken by the vital. It does not come from the psychic and is not a truth of the sadhana, only an obstacle.

If you can get rid of the inertia it is best, because then you will better be able to see what is wrong in the vital and deal with it.

*Only a few weeks back the tamas was no less than now. And yet the Pranam was an occasion from which I derived so much joy and felicity that always strengthened and encouraged me whenever I was tired of fighting with the lower nature. And now what a change!*

At that time the vital demand was kept in abeyance at the pranam and the other part of the vital which wanted the inner contact and not anything else was able to act and open the being to the inner experience.

When the physical inertia came and suspended the higher experience, the vital demand awoke, demand for the physical love and its satisfaction so the awakened inner part of the vital could not act and the confusion increased; all became prone and

helpless and there was no aspiration, inner reaction or reaction against illness and inertia.

*I can't say I have become hopeless, but the vital feels that now the Divine does not love me and therefore there is no sense in continuing the sadhana.*

It is a feeling that contradicts your former attitude and amounts to hopelessness. When you say that you have not become hopeless it means that the higher being in you has not, but something in you has broken up the attitude all the same.

*The lower vital has begun to hate the yoga. It prefers ordinary life to sadhana. But I don't care for its preferences and shall teach it what is to be hated and what is to be loved. Could I be informed how far the transformation has progressed and when it will be completed? When will the true consciousness be established?*

If the vital is so strong in its reactions, we cannot speak of transformation having progressed or how long it will take until the true consciousness begins to work and drive it out.

*At times the vital opens itself to the Mother and at other times to the ordinary human nature. Like this it goes on for long.*

It is two parts of the vital. One becomes quiescent when the other is offering itself up.

*Looking back, I may say that the higher working began years ago. Its first pressure was on the vital for change, and the vital always refused to budge. Is this long and laborious toil all in vain?*

Part of the vital was still open to the suggestions and demands of the vital Nature, but your mind and higher vital were not accepting them. The lower vital was divided. All that was not useless. But if your mind consents to the outer vital invading and coercing and dominating the rest, it will do so, until you throw off this inertia and complete the work that was left unfinished.

*The present absence of demand, struggle or despair is not because my vital has adopted any right attitude.*

*The point round which the condition revolves is this: "I can't have any demands, very well, I abdicate." Or, "How can I have any right of demands since I do practically no sadhana etc." Is it not so?*

It may be. The first is vital non-cooperation. The second is the usual vital reasoning; for the vital sadhana is only a basis for demands, satisfaction of pride, ambition or desire. But this is just the attitude which leads to shipwreck in the end, if not corrected.

*Instead of adopting a true attitude I am afraid the vital ego might turn to pure neutrality or indifference, that is, no delight, no depression. Some central part of my being may accept this as an alternative to a constant struggling and despair.*

It is certainly better than dissatisfaction, despair and depression. The main point is that the sadhana seems to refuse to go on on a vital basis and the vital or at least a part of it refuses to participate in the sadhana except on a vital basis.

*People say that a dry and indifferent heart, feeling neither joy nor sorrow, is undesirable. Why then do you write: "It is certainly better than dissatisfaction, despair and depression?"*

It is dangerous to have a heart insisting on its own vital emotions. Not to be the slave of the vital joy or sorrow is a condition one has to pass through in order to arrive at true Ananda. If people are right then there can never be any equality and we have even to say that equality is a bad thing. If so, then the whole of the Gita is a mass of nonsense.

*Do most of the people, when they start sadhana, begin with a vital basis?*

Many do. But in all there is a mixture — one has to get rid of the mixture either by silencing the vital or by purifying it and psychicising it.

*Why does the Divine allow it? Can he not make us wait till we have the psychic as our basis?*

Why should the Divine do miracles contrary to the conditions of the nature? Man has a vital and he brings it with him to the sadhana. In the course of the sadhana one has to transform it. You are asking the Divine to transform the vital without sadhana and then start the sadhana. As well ask him to dispense with sadhana altogether and transform the whole nature in the twinkling of an eye.

*My heart and vital are really under a great stress. Although they do not enjoy it they go on suffering.*

They remain suffering because they do not want to change their attitude.

*Why do I miss real delight and joy in my life?*

Because of the lower vital which wants other joys and does not care for these (true delight and inner joy). And being now very much in the physical mind, you are giving a value and therefore a voice to this vital which it had not before.

*Should I take this period as a necessary condition for arriving at the true Ananda, leaving behind the vital joy and sorrow?*

It seems the only thing to be done.

*When the vital is repeatedly refused its demands and 'indulgences', it feels that the Divine is cold, cares little for our suffering. Instead of saving us from agony He leaves us to our wretched fate. All such thoughts and feelings affect our mind which results in obsession and doubt. Unless the psychic light comes to our rescue it would be a fall into an abyss. Is this not correct?*

Yes, of course. The mistake of the vital is to think that the Divine exists only to satisfy its demands and indulge its desires. From that false premise it draws logically the conclusion that, if it is not satisfied and indulged, the Divine is not there.

*The vital is much irritated, as it feels that the Mother does not respond even to its surrender.*

What is this surrender to which there is no response? Surrender and demands don't go together. Evidently the vital is not afraid of thinking illogical and self-contradictory nonsense. So long as the vital heaps up its demands, these things will come.

*Could the higher experiences change the vital?*

They must come down before they can change it.

Probably it wants something else and not higher experiences.

*Could you not put strong pressure on my lower vital and turn it to the higher light as you have done with some other parts of my being?*

Yes, certainly. But no support should be given to it by any part of the mind. It must always receive the answer of the higher Knowledge.

*I don't care if the inertia continues for years together. Only I can't stand any active resistance against the Divine in any part of my being.*

That of course ought not to last — especially if the vital has once surrendered to the Divine.

*My vital seems to have realised that its demands, desires, dissatisfactions etc. are not good to hold on to — no one is going to fulfil them, and if it still clings to them suffering will be the only result.*

I hope it has done that finally. If it has, then the next step is to get it to join entirely in the aspiration of the higher being.

*What about the vital quiescence? Has not the vital decided yet what side to take — right or wrong?*

If the sadhana is coming back it should mean that the vital quiescence is diminishing.

*My vital was so particular up to yesterday about its bargaining attitude of 'give' only after 'taking'. Today, I don't know how it has changed so suddenly. It has now decided to offer itself even if the Mother does not seem to give anything in return. Is it not a great victory?*

Yes, it is very good that the true movement in that respect has begun in the vital.

*What lower stuff my vital emptied out of itself seems to have-become stored up in my physical or subconscious.*

It is so probably. Only you have to see that it does not come in again, but remains outside.

*I was under the impression that when my vital opened to the Divine Mother it would bring in heroism, enthusiasm, intensity and total and passionate self-giving, not only of itself but of all my human nature. And that it would no longer remain a mere witness as now, and let the outer being act through it.*

The higher vital can be that but only when the true vital manifests itself — always calm, strong, ready for any action of the higher Force.

*To express love and joy is a usual movement of the heart. How is it that now I experience this as if it were springing out from my navel centre?*

It means that it is spreading through the vital.

*During the morning meditation I felt a strong working on the navel centre. Was it not an action from above on the vital through the psychic?*

Yes.

## THE LOSS OF BALANCE

*I don't know why there is now a special inclination for dying in some sadhikas here.*

The resolving to die is nothing new. Several sadhikas did it from time to time and started not eating for the purpose.

*Work is usually considered a field where human beings forget their miseries and sufferings. Don't you think people get the impulse of dying because their minds are not sufficiently preoccupied with work?*

Those who get this are doing plenty of work. It is not the attempt at sadhana that makes them like that, but a want of vital balance which the adverse forces use. Even if they were doing no sadhana it would be the same.

*About 'loss of balance' and the adverse forces using it in some sadhikas here: Will you kindly elaborate your statement?*

Loss of balance produces disorder in the consciousness and the adverse forces use that loss of balance for attacking and wholly upsetting the system and doing their work. That is why people become hysterical or mad or filled with the desire to die or go away.

*What I actually wanted to know was: How does a loss of balance in the consciousness come about? I suppose it happens only in the women.*

More easily in the women than in the men but in some of the latter also. What produces the loss of balance is an inability to control the vital movements by the reason and an instability of the vital itself so that it sways from one feeling to another, one impulse to another without harmony or order.

*What produces the loss of mental balance?*

The loss of mental balance is due to...exaggerated ego, exaggerated sex, acceptance of a hostile force etc.

## THE EGO

*Instead of rejecting its weaknesses the vital goes on suffering inwardly. Or else it withdraws into neutrality which is not a healthy thing, as it makes the tender parts of my being sad and dry.*

Obviously all that must go — it is the old vital egoism of the human being always preoccupied with itself, so that the being cannot give itself simply and unquestioningly to the adoration of the Divine.

*Is it not really difficult to offer oneself to the Divine when he seems to give no return?*

It is the only way to a real self-giving — otherwise the ego always remains in spite of experiences and progress.

*What is the part in us that demands a special attention even from the Divine Mother?*

It is the ego that wants the satisfaction of being the first or specially singled out. It is this egoistic vital demand with all its consequent results and disturbances that made it necessary for the Mother to limit the physical manifestation of nearness to a minimum.

*My place at the Mother's feet will not be shifted even when I become fully supramentalised.*

Good — that keeps one to the Truth and keeps out the megalomania of the ego.

*Once the lower vital agrees to the hostile suggestions and accepts the demand, we are finished — from the high peak we fall rolling down below.*

It is very true. Ego and its desires were at the root of all the falls that have taken place.

*I thought that after attaining a certain stage of perfection in sadhana none can consciously do even a small action which is not in conformity with the Divine.*

Yes, but what stage? The state of complete surrender of the ego.

*Am I right in thinking "the whole present trouble lies in the ego and is due to the ego alone"?*

It is due to the persistence of the lower nature of which the ego is the chief motive force.



*I heard that the Mother put her Force on some sadhak because he wanted to change his vital. Well, I too wish intensely to change my vital and my ego. They will naturally refuse change as is their right. But what does it matter? My soul and mind are in earnest about it and that should be enough for the beginning.*

It is not the *right* of the vital and ego to refuse, it is only their habit.

*"I roamed and roamed, sought in each niche and corner, broke through here and there, explored this way and that, but alas! met nothing that could satisfy my desires. All my energy was wasted and now I lie fallen and depressed. The world is all maya..."*  
*So says my ego!*

Well, if it has discovered that the world is all maya, why does it not give up its desires and let the soul have a chance?

*But now what is to be done with the ego?*

There is nothing to do but to refuse to accept it — unless you can use the Force on it to make it go or else change.

*Has the ego to go or to change?*

In its place there must be the true being.

*Some part in the vital wants to make an experiment: to come frequently in physical contact with the Mother to shake off the ego.*

I don't see how that could get rid of the ego.

*Once when the Mother was showing love, the vital being felt it should surrender itself to her. Now it keeps hankering for a bit more of the same thing.*

It is the ego that is showing itself in its true character. Formerly, it was associating with the sadhana because it either got something of what it desired or had great expectations. Now that these things are held back and the demand for the true attitude is made on it, it resists or non-cooperates, saying "No value in such a sadhana." In all the sadhaks here, the ego (in its physical or vital physical roots) is proving to be the stumbling-block. No transformation is possible unless it changes.

*The ego seems to be throwing up strong suggestions against the manifested personality of the Mother.*

That can hardly be the ego. Such suggestions also come from the Adversary.

*I am aware that I did not guard myself sufficiently against inertia. But was I really so careless about the ego?*

You left it to be dealt with by the Force while you remained above — and if you would have remained above, it would no doubt have been dealt with.

*Has my two years of serious sadhana brought no change in the ego? Was what I considered a selfless surrender all a mere illusion?*

It was not shared by the ego, evidently, — otherwise such things as vanity, jealousy etc. would not be there, for these things are the negation of selflessness.

*After the evening meditation (with the Mother), a powerful struggle took place in the vital against the ego. Is there any strong part of the higher light that fights the ego?*

There necessarily must be if there is a strong struggle.

The fight with the ego is part of the fight with the physical nature, for it is the superficial ego in the physical consciousness, irrational and instinctive, that refuses to go.

*After a long introspection I discovered that the ego or the vital being rises up on its own and not because of outer reasons.*

It rises because it is its nature to do so; it wants to keep hold of the being which it considers its property and field of experience.

*I heard that some sadhaks have a gigantic ego like H and P while some have a fat ego like N. Could I be told about the form of my ego?*

Your ego is small and not gigantic — not tall and vehement and aggressive like P's, but squat and inertly obstinate — not fat completely, nor thin, but short and roundish and grey in colour.

*What do these symbols of the ego stand for?*

Squat = short in stature but broad and substantial, so difficult to get rid of.

Not tall and pre-eminent or flourishingly settled in self-fullness.

Roundish = plenty of it all the same.

Grey = tamasic in tendency, therefore not aggressive, but obstinate in persistence.

But these are not symbols, they are the temperamental figures of the ego.

*Are there many egos here which are "flourishingly settled in self-fullness"?*

Plenty of them, but they are not all fat.

*What is the solution to the problem of the ego?*

You have to throw out all the forms in which the ego shows itself.

*Is it not possible to rub out the ego completely by a continued application of the Force?*

It is possible if your consciousness associates itself with the action; then at least one can get rid of its major action and leave only minor traces. To get rid of the ego altogether, however, comes usually only by the descent of Consciousness from above and its occupation of the whole being aided of course by the rule of the psychic in the nature.

*I am not sad to learn from you about my defects, imperfections etc. It is better to be conscious than ignorant.*

Yes. But there was a part of you that did not like to have any defects suggested or pointed out and it is this part which is vexed now and supporting the vital disappointment and refusal of sadhana.

*You wrote: "If ego cannot trouble the being why should sex trouble it?" But the ego is not the same thing as sex. Is it not possible to have control over one and not over the other?*

They are both rajasic forces of vital nature. Ego troubles with vanity, ambition, desire for the satisfaction of ego, anger, depression etc., when it is not satisfied. Because it is not the "same thing as sex", it does not follow that it cannot trouble.

*Today, the ego did not revolt under the normal circumstances. What then made it so quiescent?*

It has to be seen by experience; whether it is quiescent or expelled or eradicated. It is certainly a great thing gained if it is the last.

*Even when there is no active revolt, the ego keeps the heart or vital on the wheel of suffering, saying: "The Mother does not love you at all!"*

Obviously, such feelings and reasonings are just the things to impede the action of the Force and prevent or spoil the sadhana.

*If the ego determines its revolt according to the Mother's failing to smile or to put her hand on our head, how is it that at times it can remain quiescent in spite of her failing to do so?*

The ego acts according to these things when it dominates; when it does not dominate or is not present then these motives can have no effect. The whole question is whether the ego leads or something else leads. If the higher consciousness leads, then even if the Mother does not smile or put her hand at all there will be no egoistic reaction. Once the Mother did that with a sadhika being herself in trance — the result was that the sadhika got a greater force and Ananda than she had ever got when the Mother put her hand fully.

*Now I see that the ego is not likely to go so easily. But why does the vital turn against the Mother's Force?*

Where is the ego if not in the vital?

*On this topic could I submit one more question? Since you had perceived this defect in me, why did you not point it out to me at once? If you had simply written that it was only my ego in the physical that insisted on asserting its views, the present disturbance might have been avoided altogether!*

The ego would not have accepted it like that and would not have understood.

Your ego does come up from time to time without your seeing that it is the ego. It comes up not in your higher parts but in your physical mind and consciousness and you think that because your higher parts are clear, this also is clear.

*That is very true. Not only did I think but I believed it to be so! And that was why I was surprised even to see the thing back which was supposed to have been thrown out long ago.*

It was quiescent for a long time under the influence of the higher being.

*Among all the parts of a sadhak, the ego seems to be the toughest in not submitting to the Divine. When the other parts have surrendered can they not impose their surrender on his ego?*

Yes, his psychic being, his mind and will, his heart can do it, provided they are conscious of the ego and strictly reject it in all its movements.

*The other day you said, "You must get rid of the ego activities." Will you please point out to me which ego activities I am still fostering consciously?*

That you must know. For when you say ego comes and stops everything, it must be in some form or other — that form is what I mean by activity. Ego by itself is nothing — there must be an egoistic thought, feeling etc.

## THE TAMASIC AND RAJASIC EGO

Tamas and tamasic ego are implied in each other. When one yields to tamas one indulges the tamasic ego.

*For the last few months nearly all the parts of my being have felt that there is no need of living on earth. Interest and joy in life are now gone. Once the Divine thought of making me His instrument and therefore there was some sense and delight in going ahead. Because of my constant tamas and illness He seems to have lost that hope. Now I am only a burden to Him.*

These are the feelings of the tamasic ego — the reaction to a disappointment in the rajasic ego. Mingled with the true attitude and experience or running concurrently along with it was a demand of the vital “What I am having now, I must always have, otherwise I can’t do sadhana; if I ever lose that, I shall die” — whereas the proper attitude is “Even if I lose it for a time it will be because something in me has to be changed in order that the Mother’s consciousness may be fulfilled in me, not only in the self but in every part.” The lower forces attacked at this weak point, made demands through the vital and brought about a state of inertia in which what you had clung to seemed to be lost, went back behind the veil. So came the tamasic reaction of the ego, “What is the use of living, I prefer to die.” Obviously it is not the whole of you that says it, it is a part in the disappointed vital and tamasic physical. It is not enough that the active demands should be broken and removed; for this also is a passive way of demand “I can’t have my demands; very well, I abdicate, don’t want to exist.” That must disappear.

*What is the tamasic ego?*

The tamasic ego is that which accepts and supports despondency, weakness, inertia, self-depreciation, unwillingness to act, unwillingness to know or be open, fatigue, indolence, do-nothingness. Contrary to the rajasic it says “I am so weak, so obscure, so miserable, so oppressed and ill-used — there is no hope for me, no success, I am denied everything, I am unsupported, how can I do this, how can I do that, I have no power for it, no capacity, I am helpless; let me die; let me lie still and moan” etc. etc. Of course not all that at once or in every case; but I am giving the general character of the thing.

It is now that the tamasic ego has been manifest, it showed itself in the tone of what you wrote about your illness, helplessness, also the recent suggestions of hopelessness and dying etc.

*In spite of my vigilant eye how on earth could the ego get in?*

So long as you had fully the attitude of surrender, the rajasic ego could only take the form of suggestions from outside, uprisings from the subconscious. It was suppressed in the vital. When the inertia rose and the energy of will receded, it began to try to come in again.

*I had thought that at least the rajasic ego had been eliminated!*

Do you mean to say that you never had any rajasic element in you? There is not a human being who has not got it in him so long as he is not divinised in his vital. What were all the vital suggestions coming to you so insistently always, except appeals to the rajasic ego? When you threw out sex, jealousy, vanity etc. what were you throwing out but the rajasic ego? What was the demand at the pranam or the disturbance caused there but a movement of the rajasic ego? Some of these things you threw out successfully — others still kept a response.

*Since you saw wrong things entering me and myself being unconscious of them, why did you not warn me about them?*

Here again is the rajasic ego in you, dictating to us what we should have done and showing us our mistakes.

## THE EGO AND THE HIGHER PLANES

*Some sadhaks say that as one enters into higher planes one meets with a greater ego, ignorance and falsehood. How can this be?*

It is because they go higher and higher in the same plane of consciousness as before and do not rise beyond — e.g. higher and higher in the realm of vital-mental formations — not higher beyond mind into the planes that lead to the full supramental.

*Before or while rising to the higher spiritual ranges, often we imagine that the ego has been dropped altogether. But we must not be careless. For it cannot completely disappear before the Overmind border is crossed.*

Even if there is no consciousness of ego in the higher parts where oneness of all things has been realised, it does not follow that in the lower parts ego has been abolished. It can on the contrary become very strong and the action can be very egoistic even while the mind is thinking "I have no ego".

*People speak of the "spiritual ego". The question is: "Is there really an ego on the higher spiritual planes?" Certainly not. There is absolutely no element of ego there. For they are all (from the Higher mind to Overmind) divine planes of consciousness.*

On the higher spiritual planes there is no ego, because the oneness of the Divine is felt, but there may be the sense of one's true person or individual being — not ego, but a portion of the Divine.

*Some travellers of the overhead ranges ask: "Even we do notice ego here and there and sometimes even in greater mass than below. How is it so?"*

*The ego they perceive there is not the inhabitant of the spiritual heights. But the thing is, man being a mental being, when he ascends he carries with him subtly or unconsciously the ego of the lower nature. And as his consciousness is naturally heightened and cosmicised in the spiritual planes, the ego too feels extended and enlarged! But there is no such thing as "spiritual ego".*

*All the same a sadhak cannot wait to be egoless before he attempts the higher flights. For it is impossible to have a complete annihilation of ego at such an early stage of sadhana.*



Although there is no ego in the spiritual planes, yet by the spiritual experience the ego on the lower planes may get aggrandised through pride and wrong reception of the experience. Also one may by entering into the larger mental and vital planes aggrandise the ego. These things are always possible so long as the higher consciousness and the lower are not harmonised in the being and the lower transformed into the nature of the higher.

*In effect, a poet sadhak, H, sang to the Mother:*

*"One day from my begging condition I shall grow divine*

*And sit beside Thee on Thy throne!"*

It is a dream of the ego hoping for its own highest possible (or impossible) aggrandisement.

*Those who consciously carry in them ambitious ideas about developing in sadhana and becoming equal in status with the Divine Himself or with one's guru may be detained long, if not in the larger planes, at least in the Overmind, so long as the ego is there.*

They cannot get beyond unless they lose it. Even in these planes it prevents them from getting the full consciousness and knowledge. For in the Overmind cosmic consciousness too ego is absent, though the true person may be there.

## WORK AS SELF-DEDICATION

*I fail to make out why my feet remain constantly fatigued even after sleep. Is not sleep a means to relax everything?*

I think you had forced yourself too much physically by mental will and vital insistence on the body — the present fatigue is partly at least the result.

Forcing means not giving yourself sufficient sleep. I had already written that enough sleep was important.

*Why does not the Force come down to help me in the work? I am getting restless.*

So long as you are in this restless condition, there is no use in the Force pressing to come down. You must get rid of these things (fatigue, restlessness etc.) first.

*Today I cannot write to you anything more as I am in a disturbed state.*

At this rate the best thing would be not to force yourself in any way for sadhana or anything else, but to rest as much as possible, read, do ordinary but not excessive work, sleep well and get back the right equilibrium of the physical consciousness in which the deeper quiet can come back.

*Let me explain to you why I have forced myself to a good amount of work. It was for five reasons. The first is: I see that there are so many sadhaks here who work hard and nearly for ten or twelve hours a day — workers like Khirod, Rishabhchand and others.*

These men and others are born workers. But even so the Mother has had to discourage this excessive tendency to work with many because their bodies could not bear it.

*The second reason: I was told that there is always a tendency to inertia in my external being and therefore I decided that the only way to get rid of it was by making the body work more and more for the Mother.*

Overstraining only increases the inertia — the mental and vital will may force the body, but the body feels more and more strained and finally asserts itself. It is only if the body itself feels a will and force to work that one can do that.

*Thirdly, I presumed that by working more and more I would be able to bring out love and rasa<sup>7</sup> in the work.*

You cannot bring love and rasa merely by increasing work. These are inward things and depend on the inner being.

*Fourthly, it is said that for fatigue or inertia the best thing is not to indulge it by allowing the body to rest more, but to work and work until it goes.*

It may be so — by working more and bringing more force in the body — but not by working too much which only increases the fatigue.

*The fifth and last reason: I heard that fatigue comes because there is in our nature some unwillingness to work, for otherwise how is it that many people work day and night and yet are untouched by exhaustion or tamas?*

Because they feel the force for work.

*You suggested to cut down my work. But to my eyes each of the activities is equally important.*

It is better to cut it down somewhat than to be constantly fatigued and unable to go on with the sadhana.

*The fundamental cause is after all the weakness of my body. It has been so since childhood. Even a little extra activity exhausts me.*

The weakness of the body has to be cured, not disregarded. It can only be cured by bringing in strength from above, not by merely forcing the body.

*I neglected all the defects of the physical, leaving them to be dealt with by the Mother and engrossed myself in her work as if I were a strong man. In a spiritual Ashram, should not one be full of an adventurous spirit, ready to take up even a stupendous work?*

*It was towards this ideal that I was trying to develop my physical self. But, really, I was not aware that my attempt had only a mental will and vital insistence in its push. Please give me your guidance.*

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<sup>7</sup> Deep or inherent delight.

The first rule is — there must be sufficient sleep and rest, not in excess but not too little.

The body must be trained to work, but not strained beyond its utmost capacity.

The outer means without the inner is not effective. Up to a certain point by a *progressive* training the body may be made more capable of work. But the important thing is to bring down the force for work and the *rasa* of work in the body. The body will then do what is asked of it without grudging or feeling fatigue.

Even so, even when the force and *rasa* are there, one must keep one's sense of measure.

Work is a means of self-dedication to the Divine, but it must be done with the necessary inner consciousness in which the outer vital and physical must also share.

A lazy body is certainly not a proper instrument for Yoga, it must stop being lazy. But a fatigued and unwilling body also cannot receive properly or be a good instrument. The proper thing is to avoid either extreme.

*The higher consciousness keeps contact only through my passive self and if I do more work some part in me feels disturbed.*

It is always so with everybody unless one feels the Mother's Force working through one in the action.

It is possible to work through the passive state even, provided one feels that one is not doing the work but it is being done through one.

*Since I am in a confused state, should the work be put aside for a time? I mean, till the outer nature is quieted down first? And what about meditation?*

Work should not be abandoned entirely.

Both meditation and work should continue. Only the body should not be strained and become fatigued.

*There are some sadhaks who exaggerate the value of work and do not consider meditation a necessity.*

There are some who cannot meditate and progress through work only. Each has his own nature. But to extend one method to all is always an error.

*The higher pressures have become very sharp and powerful. They impose a silence upon the entire being. Especially my bug-extermination work disturbs the inner and*

*higher working which is going on very strongly now. In spite of all that if you want I will continue the work.*

If you could continue it would be better. There is a way of doing such work without breaking the pressure, only keeping it as a force above and behind the working mind — if you can get that it would be better than stopping the work.

*But how to attend to work without cutting off the higher pressure?*

You can do it by not identifying yourself with your head or any part of your body.

*My consciousness does not need to come down as before for doing any physical work.*

That is very good.

*I see that the Mother is carrying me now to an ultimate Silence in which the action and the silence will be fused into each other and become one.*

Yes, that is the perfect state.

*Suddenly there surged in a stilled Silence, a condition in which the very stuff of the mental consciousness sank into muteness. But how to carry out the physical work when the whole being is in an absolute motionless state? The Mother's Grace came to my rescue and touched the stillness — that gave it the power to persist even during external action.*

It is very good.

## CONTROL OF SPEECH

*While talking, there is a basis of peace and silence, but no conscious remembrance of Mother throughout. Only at the end is there any recollection. How to get the constant remembrance?*

That is difficult. If you have the peace and silence undisturbed and the recollection, it is enough for a beginning.

*Usually it is the outer being that is talking. But it is rarely reasonable and it speaks a lot and of useless things. So I want my inner being to take the charge of speech.*

Yes. The speech must come from within and be controlled from within.

In talking one has the tendency to come down into a lower and more external consciousness because talking comes from the external mind. But it is impossible to avoid it altogether. What you must do is to learn to get back at once to the inner consciousness — this so long as you are not able to speak always from the inner being or at least with the inner being supporting the action.

*How is one to know whether one's speech is coming from within and is supported and carried on by the inner being?*

If one is aware of one's inner being at all, one knows. It is an automatic result of consciousness. Of course if one has no inner life or spiritual experience then the question does not arise since then everything, thought, feeling, speech is external.

*I don't think I am without inner being or spiritual experience. Why then do I miss the inner contact and support for speech?*

If you had no inner being and no spiritual experience then you could have no descent of silence or peace or any pressure of force or anything else. But even those who have a strong inner life, take a long time before they can connect it with the outer speech and action.

Outer speech belongs to the externalising mind — that is why it is so difficult to connect it with the inner life.

*What is lacking in my self-control is an ability to remain detached during talk with others.*

That is always difficult to get.

*I am still not able to control my speech. The ordinary forces make me talk on unnecessary subjects. This tires me and I get depressed. Is it not a fall of consciousness? If this defect continues, I am afraid, I shall have to observe mauna.<sup>8</sup>*

Mauna is seldom of much use. After it is over, the speech starts again as in the old times. It is in speech itself that the speech must change.

It does not matter if you talked. It seems to me that you are making too much of ordinary things and regarding them as falls from sadhana.

*Do you allow me to retire for a week?*

Certainly not. Neither retirement nor silence. In your present condition they would be most unhealthy for you.

Be simple and natural about things and don't erect everything into a mountain of difficulty.

*My consciousness seems to be passing through a state of extreme sensibility. Anything new I hear or talk about goes on recurring mechanically for a long time even long after the conversation is over.*

You need not enter into unnecessary conversations — but the best thing is to overcome this mental habit.

*My friend said that when he talks with Narbheram he gets depressed. Could mere talking with another person bring in such a lower state?*

It is quite possible for one person to get depressed by talking with another. Talking means a vital interchange, so that can always happen. Whether they have observed rightly in a particular case is another matter.

*At present if I speak more than a few sentences at a time my peace is disturbed and the inner being is fatigued. This happens even when my talking is a necessity.*

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<sup>8</sup> Enforced silence.

That happens very usually. Talking of an unnecessary character fatigues the inner being because the talk comes from the outer nature while the inner has to supply the energy which it feels squandered away.

*A sadhak told me that when he passes from one plane to another there come very powerful vibrations which would disturb others if they sat near him. So a short retirement is necessary for him. Is this right?*

Retirement is not necessary for passing from one plane to another. It is needed only in rare cases and with certain temperaments for a time.



## GENERAL SADHANA

### GENERAL ATMOSPHERE

*To take interest, as some sadhaks do, in the general nature movements in the hope of getting some help for my own sadhana, does not seem to be my present stage. Not only that, I should even avoid such contacts till a strong and unshakable peace is established in me.*

What do you mean exactly by the “general nature” movements — or help from them for the sadhana? The movements of the general nature are not usually helpful to sadhana, not at least until one has established such a basis in oneself that all is taken in the right way, the spiritual way, and then all can help in the growth of the consciousness — but that is not so at an earlier stage.

*What I meant by “help from the general nature movements” was that perhaps by knowing what is going on in the general nature or atmosphere I can remain more vigilant towards the attacks from them and react before they enter.*

That might be when one has developed sufficiently in peace and knowledge to react with sureness. But at this stage it is much better to keep yourself separate and look with a certain indifference at the doings of the others. If you have the peace and this equal and indifferent attitude, it is usually a sufficient defence.

Every part of the being is ignorant and opposes with some obscure element in it from time to time. One has to go on quietly and steadily till all the obscurities disappear.

Everything comes by a quiet development. It is no use being in a hurry and agitated because this or that has not yet come.

*If people’s affections touch us even when we do not want it, how to remain free?*

When one cannot keep oneself free, one must remain quiet and push the intruding element out.

*I come to hear many things which are better avoided, because they disturb me. Should I resolutely avoid them? And why am I disturbed by them?*

Because you pay attention to them and let them take hold of you. Unless you wear cotton wool in your ears or shut yourself in a closed room, you can't help hearing all sorts of things. You have not to be affected by them or think about them, that is all.

*For the last few days I have not been able to get enough sleep. Once I remained awake until 3 a.m.! Is this not due to some inner cause?*

It is rather an outside influence. Do not open so much to those you mix with.

*I wonder how an outside influence could have an effect on my sleep?*

Why should it not? What is there to prevent it doing that? An outside influence can bring depression, disturbance, doubts, everything else. It can affect the health, the sleep, everything.

*Among the people I mix with I do not know whose influence is adverse for me. Would you kindly point it out?*

You have to find that out for yourself. There are people you mix with who have doubts, suggestions, depressions, jealousies, dissatisfactions with the Mother's action. They can easily throw that on you without intending it. These influences are all around in the atmosphere. It is not sufficient to avoid this or that person. You have to learn to be on your guard and self-contained.

*This morning a strong wave of depression and despair vehemently knocked at my environmental consciousness. I felt as if it came from the atmosphere.*

Evidently these things come from the atmosphere — especially when somebody is being upset it can try to come.

I did not say you were upset. I meant when somebody in the Ashram is much upset, then the forces become strong and go about trying to upset others.

*The famous dancer X came here and I went to D's place to see him and also to see him dance. Such great artists usually do not visit the Ashram. The reaction of that event on my sadhana was the lowering of my consciousness. Was there any disturbance in the air?*

Probably it was not altogether individual — it was in the air.

*You wrote, "If you felt like that why did you want to go?" I admit it was a mistake, probably it was my vital which made me go. My inquiry was about the general rather than the individual effect.*

The general effect was a quite absurd vital excitement rather than dullness — the Mother attached no more importance to X's being here than to any other being here. Also he refused to dance. So what was all the excitement and pother about? Certainly not D's singing, for there is nothing vital in that. Then?

*Were not those who avoided the function also affected?*

Not all. Some felt nothing but astonishment at the general excitement over nothing.

*As I look back at the dancer's visit here, it becomes clear that I unnecessarily opened myself to the general atmosphere and its turmoil. The lower vital enjoys such excitements and novelties which are harmful to the sadhana.*

Yes. Whatever the state of the general atmosphere, there was no reason to open yourself to it. If one keeps on the peace and calm of the consciousness, no turmoil in the atmosphere can disturb it. You have only to keep yourself separate.

*My immediate need is to strengthen my vital so that nothing from outside can get admittance. I feel that this strength is not so difficult to acquire.*

Most of the sadhaks don't seem to find it easy. They go on admitting all the time.

*My request to the Mother is to build a protective wall around my environmental consciousness, so that nothing of the general atmosphere intrudes on me. Whatever arises from my own lower or subconscious nature I will manage by her help.*

Very good.

## HIGHER AND LOWER ACTION

*During meditation, at times I experience as if my lower consciousness (the vital, physical and sexual) were taken above the head and there connected with the higher consciousness.*

Yes, that is a normal movement of the sadhana.

*Today the above movement was repeated. In addition I became aware, for the first time, of the actual action of the higher consciousness on the ascended human consciousness.*

Usually when these things happen it is something that rises up and has to be worked on for its change. After it has risen up the working for its change comes.

*Some tamasic feelings rise up at times; when I reject them they surge up again.*

Each thing rises in its time and has to be rejected and thrown out thoroughly.

*During the movement of transformation, I find the lower nature has a freer play in the emptiness than in the fullness.*

In all, the lower nature plays easily. It can bring its mixture into the fullness — it is not only in emptiness that it arises.

*The inertia has begun to occupy more and more space in me. Is it due to any mistakes I have made unconsciously?*

I don't suppose there is any mistake. There are often such uprisings of tamas in the action and reaction of the forces without anything having been done to bring them.

*I would very much like to know why the working in the vital takes place in the morning only and disappears in the evening.*

There is no "why" for these things that can be specifically stated. It comes out of the total condition of things in the play of forces.

*Would you please explain to me this important process of sadhana — the play of forces between the higher and the lower?*

There are higher forces and lower — the lower have to be worked out by contact with the higher and in the working out sometimes they rise, sometimes they disappear till they are done with. It is not necessarily due to some mistake or fault that they rise.

*Does your reply indicate that whatever is happening in me is as it should be?*

Yes, what is happening is simply due to the working out of the forces in the nature.

*You wrote about the lower forces: "In the working out sometimes they rise, sometimes they disappear." Cannot the lower forces be worked out easily in their own field without their rising up and disturbing the whole being? I suppose, H's sadhana could be cited as an example.*

I am not aware of any case in which the lower forces did not rise up. If such a case occurred I fancy it would be the first in human history.

*Could it be made possible if we left the sadhana wholly to the Mother's Force?*

It is possible — when one has learned how to do it. But till then they rise.

*In fact I have tried it myself. So long as the remembrance of the Mother was maintained nothing undivine could touch me from within or without. The only difficulty is my carelessness or forgetfulness to do that continuously.*

And what does the carelessness come from? It is because the habit of the lower nature makes you forget. That is an action of the lower force. It is only by the higher force meeting the lower forces and there is pressure on it (this is the contact) that the habit of forgetfulness disappears.

*Why am I not able to fix my consciousness on anything? Is it due to inertia?*

I don't suppose it is the strength of inertia, but simply the habitual movement of the consciousness oscillating between a higher and lower condition.

*The inertia decreased when the Mother came down for Blessings. Then I gathered Force merely from her physical presence and detached myself from the inertia. Not only the inner but the outer consciousness as well was taken up into the higher realms. The whole of myself tasted the sweetness of the spiritual peace and silence. When I was up above, often the inertia tried to stir things below and then slowly and cleverly to pull me down. But this state itself had a control over the inertia by*

*dynamising my will! The experience continued nearly for two hours. Then the body felt fatigue and I came down.*

Exactly. 'The body felt fatigue' — that is what I mean by the habit of *tamas*. The body cannot bear the continuous experience, it feels it as a strain. That is the case with most *sadhaks*. But in your case the obstacle seems to develop in great intensity when it comes. I have already told you the means of getting rid of it, but it cannot be done in a day because it is a fixed habit of the nature and a fixed habit takes time to remove. But it can be done in not too long a time, provided you don't get disturbed when it comes and deal with it firmly and steadily.

*Can nothing be done about this fatigue?<sup>9</sup> One does not get such an elevated state so easily and so often. If it had been prolonged sufficiently something fundamental could have been worked out below.*

If you can remove this fatigue by the will force, then that can be done.

*What sort of will force?*

The quiet but strong will that calls down the higher consciousness and force.

One can bring down the strength, but it is also necessary to see that the body has sufficient food, sleep and rest — absence of these things strains the nerves and if the nerves are strained the body feels fatigue — becomes tired.

*You wrote about unhappiness: "it may have come in from outside". How did it return once I had thrown it out of me?*

You threw it out of your environmental consciousness and it comes back from there if you allow it.

*If a thrown-out thing comes back like that what is the use of throwing out the thing that gives one so much trouble? After all, rejecting is a tiresome process!*

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<sup>9</sup> This fatigue is of a different type from what is normally known as tiredness due to excessive physical or mental strain. It is psychological in its character and affects the vital-physical sheath. To give an example: when we are forced to listen to a long, boring lecture we feel lethargic. It is this kind of fatigue that is experienced here.

The throwing out into the environmental is a necessary stage — but obviously it cannot be final, as it can come back from there.

*Would you kindly give me some indication as to what I should report to you in my correspondence at present?*

State what happens. It is not necessary to say that this is finished and will never happen again. You can say that I feel liberated from this or that, but you need not declare that it is final.

*Is it not surprising that today an ascent became easily possible in spite of so much restlessness below? What was the meaning of this occurrence?*

No, it simply meant that there was nothing surprising about it. It is not inevitable that the consciousness should be either all on the heights or all in the depths. It is often mixed.

Every conquest makes future conquests easier.

*Why have I to keep fighting out all that is lower? The old things constantly return. What is all this?*

If you allow the lower to come back again, you have to fight it out again.

It is the habit of responding to the old things and giving it when it insists the same consent as you give to the Mother's force when you are clear. Passivity to the contrary force — that is the only answer to your "what is all this".

## PRESSURE AND RESISTANCE

*What was there on the head that pressed so powerfully?*

The power from above.

*Why was it doing so?*

It must have been to make a fresh opening.

It is something in the higher consciousness evidently that is pressing.

*What has created such a strong resistance?*

When there is a pressure for a fresh opening, there is often a strong resistance from below.

*Which part of my being is interfering with the action of the Mother's Force?*

It is always the same — the lower nature admitting the contrary pressure from below.

*There was some restlessness in the physical mind, so I started studying. Then the pressure came from above. It pulled my concentration away from studying and put it on the physical. I don't understand why it did so. Afterwards there was so much restlessness that I had to read a drama to quiet it!*

The restlessness was not created by the pressure but by some resistance to it in the physical. The only pressure that could bring restlessness is the pressure of the Tamas.

*What did it want me to do by shifting my attention in that way?*

I don't know that it wanted you to do anything except allow it to come in.

*Is it not strange that it should bring me out of the mind (study) and put me into a state in which I could read only stories?*

That was due to the restlessness, I suppose, not to any bad intention in the pressure.

*If the pressure really wanted me to meditate at that particular time instead of studying why did it disappear as soon as I prepared myself to submit to its will?*



What is the will of a pressure? I presume it was some state of your mind when studying that brought the pressure. We cannot assume that the pressure 'wanted' you to stop studying and did this and did that; it may have been only your mind that reacted in that way.

*How does a pressure on the vital create confusion or restlessness?*

The pressure is of the higher consciousness. To the "how" there could be no mental answer. It depends on many factors which vary constantly and cannot be put into a mental formula.

But restlessness, confusion etc. are signs of some resistance somewhere.

You spoke of this vital pressure producing restlessness, confusion etc. A pressure from the Mother cannot by itself produce that. There must be a struggle going on for such effects to come about.

The more one yields to the resistance, the more it is likely to grow.

Resistance to pressure creates a struggle.

## SUGGESTIONS AND ATTACKS

*All sorts of hostile suggestions are thrown on me from outside to create a wall between the Mother and myself!*

The one thing to be avoided is all identification with these lower forces or acceptance of their suggestions — for it is only that that can really interfere with the sadhana.

*As S cannot write to you on Sundays, he requests me to insert his question in my letter. Was there any general violent attack (in the Ashram atmosphere) on some sadhaks? Are we not rather in a difficult period of sadhana?*

I am unaware of a special new condition of things. The difficult period began long ago and even that is only an intensification of old difficulties, nothing new.

But attacks have long been there. The atmosphere is sometimes thick with them, sometimes clear to some extent.

*I feel as if some furious forces have either entered or come up in the general nature. Is it so?*

Yes, it is true — the general attack has deepened.

*There is an intimation that at present you are working directly with the supramental Power. That is why the resistance here is so stormy and the attacks violent. Is it true?*

I suppose so. Only that must not be accepted as a reason for passive acquiescence.

*Every first of the month at a particular hour my general consciousness is pulled down from the heights. What is the cause of such a regular habit?*

There are always these formed habits of the subconscious — originally there may have been some vital or other reason, afterwards it is only the habit of lending part of the consciousness to the old movement.

*In the morning I wrote to you that I had got out of the dark field of suggestions and attacks. But in the evening the whole thing came back. Why so?*

It is nothing more than what I told you — the suggestion of the adverse Force and a mechanical habit of response in the outer consciousness during the periods when it is not lifted up and exalted. Even in such intensity it must be able to reject these things.

*The suggestions say that because of my present bad condition the Mother is really displeased with me and has changed her attitude towards me. How to deal with such strong and insistent suggestions?*

All that is quite irrational and groundless. There is no displeasure and no change in the Mother. You must yourself reject these things. To parley and discuss with an irrational outer vital is useless — a flat and downright rejection of its suggestions is the only course.

The whole thing is a suggestion of the vital forces and has no reality — so long as you listen to these suggestions they will naturally go on and obstruct your sadhana with vital desires and vital dissatisfaction.

Don't admit them. Turn your attention upward for the Force to descend.

*Some time back I informed you that every first day of the month I get an attack of adverse suggestions. Why does the difficulty linger so long?*

The attack on the first is only a bad habit of the physical consciousness due to a long standing association in the mind which you ought to get rid of.

*Why am I singled out by the difficulties? Any error on my part?*

Everybody has his full share of difficulties, except those who do not mind what difficulties they have.

Difficulties come from the old nature trying to rise up — they need not be the result of any error.

*What is this struggle really about?*

It is between the old lower nature supported by the hostile forces and the new consciousness that began to descend — the struggle is always that.

*You say the struggle is between the old and the new consciousness. But then what is special in it now? Does it not begin from the beginning of the sadhana and*

*continue till the sadhana is completed? Whether it is active or passive, strong or weak is a different matter.*

That makes all the difference. Besides everybody does not have the struggle, though most pass through it.

*You used the word 'most' and not 'all', which would mean that there are some who do not even need to pass through the difficulties. What is special in those few lucky ones?*

It is something in their nature that is poised, calm, open, refusing to let the Nature forces disturb their settled inner attitude, clear mind and will and strong balance. Also a prominent psychic with a quiet vital and a clear physical mind will ensure a calm progress.

*How to be free from these difficulties?*

If the peace of the higher self and the force from these higher levels or the Knowledge that is there descends sufficiently.

The suggestions seem to be frequently with you and the acceptance of the inertia and the unwillingness or inability to supply a steady will also. Under these conditions the oscillation of the consciousness between experience and a depressed state is inevitable. Even when the condition is good, it is not possible to keep the consciousness always at the same height, but then the depression does not come.

*How to explain the simultaneous occurrence of the experiences and depression?*

They take place in part of the being — the depression and struggle belong to another part.

Inertia, dissatisfaction, depression! What should be done against them except to refuse to harbour them and use the will steadily against them?

It is a part of your being that responds to the suggestions — otherwise they would have no power over you. You would feel them separate and unable to stop your progress.

*What is the solution and how to get out of this mess?*

There is only one solution and that is to refuse to accept all these suggestions and to use your will against them with an absolute determination to get rid of them.

Keep your faith, call in the Mother's Power.

The thing you can do is not to remain passive, to refuse to identify any part of your being with these things and to reject it all with decision and force and to allow constantly the Mother's Power.

*What is the present stage which has deprived me of all my peace and joy? I feel no interest for the sadhana or even for the outer work. Whatever help and protection the Mother sends me stops before it can enter into me. What is the reason for all that?*

The reason is quite clear from what you write. There is something in the consciousness that wanted the letters and answers not simply for the help in sadhana but as a personal satisfaction with egoistic elements in it. Also it wanted nice, pleasing and elaborate answers. All that is the usual wrong attitude of the vital which is the stumbling-block for so many sadhaks and prevents true psychic love from developing, replacing it by the vital kind full of demand, ego, jealousy, revolt etc. and it has been the ruin of some. All that you had thrown out of the higher parts and quieted it elsewhere, but it remained sticking somewhere and when correspondence was suspended, the hostile forces took advantage of the fact that you were not allowed to write every day as before to raise up these feelings and you did not repel them with sufficient force to put an end to the attack. Hence they continue.

*I could bear anything with equality except this stopping of the sadhana. I feel it like a deep wound in my heart. Without it how can I get back my peace and silence and a relief from the heavy fatigue which the lower forces and the hostile attacks impose on me?*

How can you have peace and quiet when you are always thinking of "lower forces" and "attacks" and "possessions" etc. If you can look at things naturally and quietly, then only you can have quiet and peace.

The worst thing for sadhana is to get into a morbid condition, always thinking of lower forces, attacks etc. If the sadhana has stopped for a time, then let it stop, remain quiet, do ordinary things, rest when rest is needed — wait till the physical consciousness is ready. My own sadhana when it was far more advanced than yours used to stop for

half a year together. I did not make a fuss about it, but remained quiet till the empty or dull period was over.

*From your recent answers I now deduce that I have been misusing the terms "lower forces" and "hostile forces". What exactly is the difference between the two?*

There are natural movements of the ordinary human nature in the material consciousness which take time to get rid of. Of course we call them forces of the lower nature but one must not regard them as hostile, but only ordinary. They have to be changed but it usually takes time and it can be done quietly. One must be more occupied with the positive side of the sadhana than with them. If one is always thinking of them as hostile things, getting disturbed when they come, considering them as hostile possessions, then it is not good.

The things that are really hostile are few and must be distinguished from the ordinary movements of the nature. The first must be repelled, the second dealt with quietly and without getting troubled or discouraged by their appearances.

*I have decided to give full rest to the body. May I now resume the sadhana without taxing the physical?*

There is no objection to doing the sadhana, but it must be done quietly without this constant struggle and disquietude — not minding if it takes time, not getting into a constant rhythm of struggling against difficulties. That is my point.

You have to recover the energy and power of the will.

*In pulling down the sadhana what are the forces at work — the hostile or only the lower?*

It is the lower forces at work; but the Hostiles are there behind pushing and ready to take advantage if they find the sadhak accepting or identifying himself with the suggestions. That is why one must be immediately on guard if there is the least movement towards any such thing.

*After recovering from the critical period of darkness (attacks, depression, helplessness etc.) this fact comes out: I have exaggerated rather too much my difficulties. The adverse forces seem to have used a double method to regain their lost territory. First they got in by the back-door and when they were thrown out they*

*used the second: throwing in suggestions, suggestions of depression for having allowed them to get in in the first place!*

That is the real truth of the matter. They are small things in a small part of the nature, which become big in appearance only because they are given an undue importance.

*The adverse beings pointing out partiality in the Guru will gradually lead the sadhak to revolt and that will bring a fall and a full stop to his sadhana.*

Yes, that is their aim — for it is their one short cut to success, to separate the sadhak from his soul.

*Today for the first time inertia invaded the body. That means the whole being is now affected by it. There seems to be some possibility of the passive resistance becoming active. Is the subconscious also involved in this trouble?*

I have explained to you already that the being (outer mind, vital etc.) is still capable of responding to the suggestions that rise from the subconscious. If it were not so the suggestions would be felt as perfectly foreign to you and there would be no question of any possibility of the passive resistance becoming active.

Mere passivity does not seem likely to succeed, it could only do so if it brought the Force down, but the passivity is too tamasic to do that.

The difficulty is due to old habits of the physical mind and vital which still have the power to repeat themselves by rising from the subconscious and as your physical mind and vital still respond you are not able to stop the disquietude. When they respond no longer then there will be no disquietude.

*Now I see that one has to accept a period of no-effort in spite of having the knowledge. Can one still make the effort?*

The period of no-effort is usually when the physical consciousness is uppermost, for the nature of that is inertia, to be moved by the higher forces or to be moved by the lower forces or by any forces but not to move itself. One must still use one's effort if one can, but the great thing is to be able to call down the force from above into the physical — otherwise to remain perfectly quiet and undisturbed, expect its coming.

*We should know that often the adverse forces magnify our difficulty by their mere power of suggestion. They now tell me it is impossible to come out dynamically.*

Yes, it is that. The suggestion is put in order to discourage the dynamic effort and keep one in the passive.

*How to come out of such a powerful suggestion?*

It is difficult to get rid of a suggestion when the consciousness itself accepts it. The idea of helplessness, of not being able to reject has to go.

*How long will this dark period last?*

All depends on how you take it. If you get discouraged simply thinking "things are getting worse and worse," it will remain a long time.

*Sometimes it happens that certain general functions of the Ashram, instead of becoming an occasion for joy and happiness, make us rather unhappy. This must be due to something wrong in us of which we are not aware as yet.*

It is the old vital with its ego which comes up again and again. It refuses to follow the higher being and be as the true bhaktas who ask nothing and are content with all that the Mother does or does not do, because whatever she does must be good, since she is the Mother.

*I am aware that there is a small part somewhere in me which keeps itself aloof from the present working of the transformation. It harps on its egoistic attitude — "unless the Divine loves me I cannot love Him."*

Is it a part of your nature that clings to these things or is it a movement of the general nature which forces itself in and the truer tendency in this part is overpowered for the time by the invasion? If it is an invasion the will and the psychic must attack it and fling it out. If it is a part of your nature that is unchanged, the light of the psychic and of the higher consciousness must press on it to change its attitude.

*What should be our proper attitude when confronted with obstructions, attacks and revolts on the way?*

Keep yourself separate always from all attack and revolt, regarding it steadily as the not-I — for these things do not belong to the true self, the true being.

*This afternoon I met H. A short talk with him had a profound effect on me as he is always full of the Mother's love and joy which he spontaneously communicates to*



*others. But after sometime I was annoyed and depressed with myself because I could not receive the Mother's love and joy in the same way at this stage of my sadhana.*

There is no need for sadness. Everyone has his difficulties and it is a mistake to desire the state of another.<sup>10</sup> One must follow the movement of one's own heart and self and psychic without looking elsewhere.

If nothing in your mind identified with the vital (it need not be the whole mind) the suggestions would not interfere so seriously nor would you feel them as your own at all. They would present themselves as things passing through or rising and falling away. There must certainly be something in the physical mind that accepts and probably affects the vital mind also.

*From my personal experience I make a general statement on how to face a period of adverse suggestions and attacks. (1) Carry on with faith and surrender. This guards us from any danger or serious fall. (2) Whatever the Gurudeva does is for the best. (3) Give all and ask for nothing. (4) Do not waver regarding the goal we have accepted.*

All the methods are quite the right ones. If one has these things fixed in the attitude or even some of them, then one cannot fall — on the contrary each attack will leave one more forward and stronger than before.

*I am told that when the struggle is strong there intervene some forces of light against the ego and the vital being. May I be told what forces of light are concerned with my present condition?*

Forces that try to bring the true consciousness and to replace these stupidities of the ordinary vital nature (ego, sex, jealousy, envy etc.).

*The intervention of these forces is from above (and therefore conditional). But do not our individual souls or jivatmans do something when such powerful struggles are going on in their instrumental being?*

They usually do if the personal will makes itself their instrument.

*Can we not turn the attacks into a help in our progress?*

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<sup>10</sup> I soon found out that H's difficulties were much more serious than those of many of us. Finally he left the Ashram for good.

It is true that if one has the true basis, then after every attack one finds oneself further advanced in progress.

## PROGRESS

*I am not clear about the present sadhana. My consciousness seems to be coining more and more downwards. What is the matter?*

There is nothing new, it is always the same thing. It is clear that the contrary forces are using the remnants of the old Nagin to prevent the progress of the sadhana. So you have to change that.

*I see that the progress of the outer being is practically at a standstill. But what about the inner being? In my unawareness is it still rising up or has it fallen like the external being?*

I suppose it is neither — but is being prepared for a fresh advance.

*Each part of my being seems to be going its own old way. Is the long and laborious sadhana the Mother did in me dispersed?*

No, it is waiting for the solution of the physical difficulty. Nothing has been lost.

*Instead of my waiting for that solution cannot the past progress be of any help to me?*

It is a future progress that is needed, not the past.

*But what can I do under the present clouded circumstances?*

Get rid of the "what can I do" mentality. That is the one thing to do under any circumstances.

If you shake off your sense of helplessness and call down the force or let it pass, then something can be done.

*Are you sure I am still on the right path of the sadhana?*

You are on the path, but stopped for the time being.

*I fail to understand this. Since my sadhana is stopped, how could I still rise to the higher consciousness for some periods of the day?*

'Stopped' is a relative term. It is not able to go farther or even to complete the descent that was taking place, because the vital has not yet consented to the necessary change.

*I think the sadhana by itself does not refuse to go farther. It is some part of our being that determines the action of the sadhana.*

If so then there is no need of any other force than the sadhaka's own. My own experience is different, that the sadhana very often does refuse to go on except under certain conditions or until those conditions are realised. But yours may be different.

*The other day you wrote, "It was simply that what was not done before during the first descent of peace and knowledge has to be done now." You have not mentioned what exactly was not done which is to be done in the future progress of my sadhana.*

Peace and silence full and lasting in the whole consciousness including the physical, — permanent separateness of the inner being so that the suggestions of the lower nature cannot cover up or invade or get a response, — establishment of the psychic basis so that ego, sex etc. may be eliminated.

*What is the place of competition in the yoga?*

All that has to be dropped off if any real progress is to be made. The spirit of competition is contrary to progress in yoga.

*In the beginning of yoga, often we continue to use the same method of progress as in the worldly life. That is, from the outer to the inner. But by that method we shall never reach the truth. It is only through the light of the inner or higher consciousness that we can know and realise the truth of the exterior movements.*

Yes, that is the truth. It is because people live in the vital and physical mainly that they cannot progress.

*For the last two days, the Mother seems to be introducing me to a new dimension of consciousness. Most of the old experiences appear to be of less importance and they are not so much in front as before but seem to have been shifted into the background. In addition to the pure-existence and pure-consciousness something new seems to have entered. Am I not correct?*

It is quite natural that new things should come. The sadhana once begun is a constant state of progression.

## SADHAKS

*“Is it really possible to bring Narbheram back to a right attitude in his sadhana — your Force using me as an instrument?”*

*Are not the above suggestions stupid? You have often warned me that such ideas are formulated by the outer being and that they are usually inspired by a subtle delusion of the human ego. Why then do they still insist after my denials?*

Of course such suggestions are meant to wake the ego. I suppose they persist because they still have a hope of waking the ego. Even when one is quite free all kinds of suggestions can come. One either takes no notice of them or else gives a glance to see whether there is any fragment of ego still lurking somewhere.

*Those who could really help others, in the matter of sadhana, will not do it until they become a conscious channel for the Mother to work through them. Otherwise it is rather our vital ego that is prominent.*

Quite right. One can be a channel for the Mother’s help but the idea of oneself helping others comes in the way and so long as it is there one cannot be a truly effective channel.

The idea of helping others is a delusion of the ego. It is only when the Mother commissions and gives the force that one can help and even then only within limits.

*Is it good for the mind and vital to perceive the movements of others?*

Not unless there is a quiet and dispassionate perception, correct in its seeings.

*Before one gets this perception, one may let the attempt go on and afterwards try to correct the result and finally ask you to give the right view.*

No. That is no use, it merely encourages the passing of mental judgements usually of a personal kind.

*If a sadhak commits a mistake in his sadhana why do others bother about it? They are not here to enlighten him.*

It is certainly superfluous to intervene in another person’s sadhana — but you should receive all remarks and criticisms about yourself with a quiet mind and without any reaction against the critic.

*What is this prevalent talk about the 'advanced sadhaks'? Is it not nonsense, since we are all quite incapable of knowing who is more or less advanced in yoga?*

Yes. The talk about advanced sadhaks is a thing I have always discouraged — but people go on because that appeals to the vital ego.

But who are these advanced sadhaks? How is an advanced sadhak known from an unadvanced one?

*You said, "If you can keep the station above so much the better, but as almost everybody is down in the physical, it is a little difficult perhaps." A sadhak brings me the news that some sadhaks like Pavitra and Anilbaran live constantly on the intuitive plane.*

I am not aware that they or anybody lives constantly on the intuitive plane. All are at grips with the difficulties of the physical consciousness at present — though of course to one like Anilbaran the suggestion of revolt cannot come — at least it has never done so up to now.

*It is a bit of a surprise to learn that there is only one sadhak to whom a suggestion of revolt cannot come. I thought there were some more, like Khirod, Dyuman, Pavitra.*

Khirod was not mentioned so I did not speak of him. As for the others they may get suggestions but do not yield to them.

*You referred to M. as having strong desires. Is it not rather unusual to have them especially after coming here?*

No, most people have strong desires of one kind or another.

*Even in the absence of justifiable reasons why do people become angry?*

People do not get angry for reasons, but because of their ego.

*I am told that the exterior life of V. is very ordinary. Is this true?*

The exterior life of many here is very ordinary.

*What about the dejects of others? Should we watch and judge them or simply close our eyes to them?*

One has to see, but not judge (i.e. not condemn, simply observe). Each is driven by his nature, so long as he does not consent to change masters and be driven by the Divine.

*May I have your permission to resume my classes with P?*

P's contact is not always very helpful. If it is only for learning language etc. it may be done, provided you do not allow anything from him to impress you.

*Is it possible that his personality may influence me without my knowing it?*

An influence like that can always act if one is not on one's guard.

*An impulse of jealousy came into my consciousness, the jealousy of another sadhak's progress. But my vital itself rejected it, realising that if he advances faster my own perfection will be accelerated, for one sadhak's progress automatically helps others.*

Exactly so. A sadhak ought always to rejoice in the progress of another, as if it were his own.

*I wonder how Z could get such high experiences and realisations with a nature so full of insincerity and ego-centredness.*

One can realise certain things in the inner being (especially the inner mind) without transformation of the outer nature. Z's inner mind once it opened proved to be extremely receptive — but his inner vital and physical only opened for a while then closed, the outer man prevailed and the outer man in Z is of a very disagreeable kind.

*In that case was there no attaining of higher perfection, as he was always boasting of doing?*

No. There was no attaining of higher perfection after he definitely yielded to his lower nature. There was only a repetition of former things whenever he happened to be able to withdraw from his lower nature.

*I suppose you would admit that he advanced so quickly because his vital and ego were helping his sadhana, as he wanted to be a great yogi, a superman. With us, the vital and the ego are the two greatest stumbling-blocks all along the path.*



I admit nothing of the kind. He went quickly because the inner mental being had a great receptivity and the vital a great ardour. But the ego was a stumbling-block from the first and the ambition a great hindrance.

He wanted to indulge his lower nature in many ways and disliked the Ashram discipline.

*Before he actually left the Ashram did he have many ups and downs like most of us?*

During the last year he was having ups and downs but finally his ego and lower nature got the upper hand.

*You said, "Z was sincere and open to the Mother for about a year, making strong attempts to keep down the evil in his lower nature. Afterwards he deteriorated." I am at a loss to understand how such a fall could come about when he was so open to the Mother. Had he then not accepted her as the Divine?*

On the contrary he began more and more to make a distinction between the Mother and the Divine and to say he had no need of help or any outer intermediary; he claimed to be identified with the Divine, not with the Mother. That is his present attitude.

*It is said that the disappearance of the ego is so necessary for the psychic manifestation. I wonder then how Z could keep his psychic being so much in front during his first year's stay here, though he had plenty of ego which he never thought of giving up.*

Z's realisation was not psychic, it was a realisation of calm and peace and of regions above his head. He developed a certain amount of love for the Mother in one part of his being — the other was always menacing it and whenever it rose up reviling and mocking at her and at the whole affair. In the first year, he kept this part down, so was able to receive from her many experiences.

*Z has claimed to have seen, experienced and even realised so many deep and high things. All that appears to be doubtful, for a realised thing becomes a fact of life that will bring a permanent change in at least some part of the human nature, which we never noticed in him.*

He had genuine experiences received directly from the Mother; but they were always in the higher mind and affected his mind and vital mainly by influence and reflection. At

one moment there was a chance of establishing them up to the heart level, but his insincerity (unwillingness to change) prevented them from enduring. Naturally, he made much more of them in his poetry than what they really were.

*What is exactly meant by "genuine experiences received directly from the Mother?"  
Could a sadhak here receive experiences indirectly or independently of the Mother?*

Directly means in meditation with her, not only in his separate meditation. About the genuineness of these directly received experiences there can be no doubt, for what the Mother gave was genuine and could not be his own mental creation or poetic pretence.

*When I spoke about Z's experiences I did not actually mean that all of them were not genuine. Many of them were genuine but he had also some which were not true but rather imaginary and inspired by the ego! He often wrote about his experiences and visions of the Supermind, he smelt its descent! He was even sure that he would be among the first batch of the Supermen!*

Others beside Z have assumed that they had the Supermind because something opened in them which was "super" to the ordinary human mind. It is a common mistake ... I see no reason to doubt that Z saw things in vision (hundreds of people do) or had experiences.

*By the way, have I the same insincerity, unwillingness to change, as Z?*

There is certainly a great unwillingness in the vital to change and no sufficient will of the inner being to compel it to do so. Z's, however, was a conscious insincerity, a will to cling to the lower parts of his nature and give them satisfaction whenever he felt like doing so.

## PART III

## ASPIRATION AND PRAYER

*As soon as I got up from the subconscious sleep, I was attacked by the lower forces. I tried but could do nothing about the mad invasion. It continued till I was completely exhausted. Then my inner being gathered some of its scattered threads by concentration and aspiration.*

That is what you should do always.

*As soon as some energy was collected I fought back furiously. But before those forces could be totally driven out, my energy was exhausted.*

Remain quiet, open yourself upward and call or aspire.

*My mind could not understand why the accumulated energy was used up so quickly, within a few moments before the objective could be achieved.*

You should have gone on collecting forces first. If the energy brought down is sufficient, then it does not get easily exhausted.

*After the last attacks it was found that my heart's prayers were not of the right kind. And you asked me not to allow the heart to manifest them. The next question is, how then will the heart open and bring forward the psychic being? What should be its right prayers?*

Prayers should be full of confidence without sorrow or lamenting.

*You wrote, "It is very often when one thinks a particular resistance is finished and is no longer in the vital that it surges up again." Well, when it sinks down into oblivion would not the mind naturally say, "It is gone forever"?*

The mind need not say, "It is gone for ever" — since that may not be true. It must keep simply the steady resolution to get rid of it, not to allow it if it comes back.

*I wonder why our little human mind wastes its energy in thinking out how much is established in us, and how much is still to be done.*

The mind cannot know; it can only expect or hope or fear or think it is established or not established. What one has to do is to observe, aspire, persist until the thing is

permanently done. When it is done it will be known by the fact that nothing can shake what is established for months and years even together.

*During the difficult and clouded journey of my sadhana I must not miss that golden stick held out by my soul: "Give everything and ask for nothing." Letting it slip would mean a fall into an abyss.*

Yes, that is the way.

*The solution of the present difficulty that I seek from the Mother is not a fulfilment of my egoistic desires, but a strong pressure on my vital to give up its stupidities and surrender itself to her.*

If you keep to that, the whole difficulty will fade away.

*During these dark periods what do you suggest that I do?*

There are always two alternatives, either to remain calm and detached and aspire or pray or else to use the Will or other active means as you used to do sometimes before.

*What is it that exposes me so often to attacks from the forces of dissatisfaction and desire?*

It is the weakness in the vital which enables them to keep up their attack. Instead of allowing the weakness, revive your will and aspiration and love and let them throw out this egoistic darkness.

*Why does the sadhana seem to have been delayed so positively for two days? Anyway I keep up my faith and confidence in the Divine.*

You have first to take care not to be disturbed by the interruption. Remain quiet and confident till all opens again.

If you do not give up faith and confidence, there may be delay but there is no danger.

*It is again our ego which makes us think that on the higher spiritual planes there would be no need of aspiration. Even our sweet Mother prays day and night — we can feel it distinctly when she plays on the organ!*

Yes — All that is very true. It is a prayer or invocation that Mother makes in the music.

*It is true that I ought to be aware of my inner movements. But in the present condition, I am so perplexed by different movements that I am obliged to ask you: to what aim will the present sadhana lead me?*

The question has no meaning. The sadhana is supposed to lead through whatever difficulties towards the Divine. What other aim could it have?

*Once when I asked whether I should draw the Force as much as I could, your answer was: "Let it come in." Should I let the Force enter by its own choice?*

I mean that you need not pull it down, but you should aid its entry by your full aspiration and assent.

*When I wrote, "Aspiration, rejection, will are becoming more and more difficult", you replied: "That is the suggestion of the tamas." In that case, have they not actually become more difficult than before?*

They need not be. It is suggestions of the tamasic forces that insist on the difficulty and create it and the physical consciousness accepts it. Aspiration is never really difficult. Rejection may not be immediately effective but to maintain the will of rejection and refusal is always possible.

A sanskar [a formed habit, a reflex] is created by the forces that aspiration will bring restlessness and, once the physical consciousness gets convinced of the connection, it no longer wants to aspire.

*If I feel loneliness or anything not so spiritually healthy, I call out for the Mother and she responds at the level of my head (self) or heart (soul).*

Good.

*But what is this calling business? The Mother's presence must be established in me in such a way that calling would not be necessary. This is probably what she is trying to bring about.*

Yes. So long as that is not done, one calls.

## MENTAL PUSH IN ASPIRATION

*Even aspiration seems impossible now!*

Perhaps your aspiration was associated with some mental push — a quiet aspiration or will is always possible even in the worst inertia.

*Was it not a mistake on my part to associate aspiration with a mental push? What is the remedy for it now?*

I did not say it was a mistake — only that there can be a still aspiration without the mental push.

*Is a mental push necessary in everybody's sadhana, particularly in the beginning?*

There generally is a mental push from the beginning of the sadhana.

So long as there is not a constant action of the Force from above or else a deeper Will from within, the mental will is necessary.

*Will you not teach me how to aspire properly so that there may be no mental push in it?*

A quiet prayer or remembrance of the object of aspiration without a pull for results is the way for doing that. If along with that, there is a faith that it is sure to come, it is the best for this condition.

*Is it wrong to make an effort to respond to the light that is pressing to descend?*

No, but when you make the effort you will naturally become conscious of whatever resistance there may be to the effort.

When there is the free flow there is neither effort nor resistance.

## OPENING TO ADVERSE ATTACKS

*How is it that, in spite of remaining aloof from people, one is still open to the ordinary ignorant forces of Nature?*

One is always open so long as there is not the final change. If things do not come in, it is because the consciousness is vigilant or the psychic in front — but the least want of vigilance or relaxation can allow something to enter.

*I wonder how the adverse things coming from outside appear to us as if they were our own — part of ourselves.*

That is what they always do — if anything responds. If one feels them as wholly outside, that means no response has been given.

*Should we not clear ourselves of the lower elements in our nature before expecting a great descent?*

They must certainly go out — so that when the Force descends it may not get mixed up with these things.

*But what can one do when the difficulty seems overwhelmingly great?*

If you cannot do anything else, you must at least remain detached — there is always a part of the being that can remain detached and go on persisting in calling down the Force from above.

*I see that some sadhaks here are not much attacked by the adverse suggestions. Is it because a higher pressure for change is not put on them, so that the hostile forces do not bother them, and therefore they are free from any resistance?*

Whether a pressure is put or not the adverse forces can always make suggestions — but there are a few who do not receive them.

*Why does our being sometimes resist actively, sometimes passively?*

When the struggle is there, it always does like that — there is a fluctuation according as the inner consciousness reacts or not, but that reaction is not always on the surface.



It is when one identifies oneself with the exterior consciousness (so that one can say, "There is no hope for me, I can't do anything") that the trouble comes.

*How is one to deal with such an obstinate inertia?*

The first means is not to get upset when it comes or when it stays. The second is to detach yourself, not only yourself above but yourself below and not identify. The third is to reject everything that is raised by the inertia and not regard it as your own or accept it at all. If you can do these things then there will be something in you that remains perfectly quiet even in the greatest inertia. Through that quiet part you can bring down peace, force, even light and knowledge into the inertia itself.

*There is a revolt in the being. Why has it come about? There are also lots of suggestions.*

It is because of the struggle in the physical and because there is still something in you that feels the struggle and so the adverse Forces want to press till you revolt.

But how is it that any part of you gives any value to the suggestions? If no part gives any value then surely they must seem to you too laughable and contemptible to have any effect or power to make you revolt.

If you attach no value to the suggestions then, there may be the inertia still, but not this.

*Since the sadhana is obscured and seems stopped by the inertia how could my physical being have peace and force?*

Only by the obstruction being penetrated or dismissed either by the inner will or by the Consciousness from above.

*It is only today that I became aware that my sadhana up to now was based on the vital. And what I thought of having done, a selfless surrender, was purely a display of the vital. The vital nature seems to be full of disguises and devices, is it not so?*

It is. Your mind saw the necessity of a selfless surrender and your psychic and mind together imposed it. But there were also vital and ego elements which hung on and these raised themselves as soon as the inertia came. When asked to disappear or change they refused and are still refusing.

*Do you really think that surrender will change these vital defects?*

A steady attitude of self-giving is bound to cure and transform. The working may take some time.

*Can sadness help one cure dryness in the vital being?*

I do not know that sadness has the power to cure. I have myself followed the Gita's path of equanimity — but for some the psychic sadness may be necessary. But I think it is more an indication of a mistake than a cure.

Tamasic indifference is one thing and the absence of sorrow is another. One has to observe what is wrong and do all that one can to set it right. Sadness in itself has no power to cure what is wrong, a firm quiet persistent will has the power.

## TAMASIC SURRENDER

*The weakness of not being able to detach myself at once from the ordinary nature and its actions is obvious. It is lessening, though, after reading your answer, "Detachment is absolutely necessary." But even during the engrossed state, my inner consciousness was rarely allowed to lose itself and suffer. Perhaps there was always one part of my being that kept itself separate. I pray to the Mother to see the plight of her child, and know how much he is depressed by being dragged away from her, to feel his heart and know how the vital has filled it with agony and pain. How long shall he have to remain in such a burning separation? Will she not take him again into her heart? It is because of that hope that his body is still on the earth. Who says that the bitter tears shed by her child are in vain?*

I wanted to stress two things, that is why I have written so much about them.

(1) There must be no tamasic (inert, passive) surrender to the Mother — for that will bring as its reaction a passive inert helplessness before the lower or hostile forces or suggestions, an unresisting or helplessly resisting acquiescence or sufferance of their inroads. A passive condition can bring much peace, quietude, joy even, but it disperses the being instead of concentrating it in wideness and the will becomes atrophied. Surrender must be luminous, active, a willed offering to the Mother and reception of her Force and support to its workings, at the same time a strong vigilant will to reject all that is not hers. Too many sadhaks cry before the attacks of their lower nature "I am helpless, I cannot react, it comes and makes me do what it wants."

This is a wrong passivity.

(2) One must not get into the habit of a state in which one is always in a struggle with suggestions and forces. People very easily fall into this and make it a habit — the vital part takes a sort of gloomy satisfaction in crying out "I am attacked, overborne, suffering, miserable! How tragic is my fate! Why do you not help, O Divine? There is no help, no divine Grace! I am left to my misery and downfall etc. etc. etc." I do not want one more sadhak to fall into this condition — that is why I am calling Halt! before you get entangled into this kind of habit of constant struggle. It is what these forces want — to make you feel helpless, defeated, overborne. You must not allow it.

*What is the cause of my present state of helplessness and hopelessness? What is all this?*

It is the habit of responding to the old thing and giving it when it insists the same consent as you give to the Mother's Force when you are clear. Passivity to the entering force — that is the only answer to your "what is all this".

*What is the connection between the inertia which is a static tamasic state and the hostile forces which are dynamic powerful things?*

The inertia simply prepares the ground — when there is the inert passivity, the adverse Force tries to take advantage of it to push in its own suggestions.

*"Surrender of oneself and all one is and has on every plane of the consciousness."  
Kindly explain the last five words.*

The mind, psychic, vital, physical etc. are different planes, among them also there are several different planes.

*Is not surrendering oneself to the Divine a process? Is not a complete self-giving achieved only when the sadhana is sufficiently developed?*

It is never too early to make the complete surrender. Some things may need to wait but not that.

## WILL TO OVERCOME DIFFICULTIES

*What makes good conditions for sadhana?*

Aspiration, untiring will, steady calm and detachment, make the best conditions.

*Today I could control for a while the lower forces that were bothering me, but later on they prevailed over me.*

It is the nature of the sadhana. The forces of the Ignorance are a perversion of the earth-nature and the adverse Powers make use of them. They do not give up their control of men without a struggle.

The one thing wrong would be to allow yourself to be overcome by them. If you remain steady in yourself, you can repel the attack or else it will exhaust itself and pass. In such circumstances you have to be like a cliff attacked by a stormy sea but never submerged by it.

*What part of my being responds to the difficulty?*

As I have written there must be something in your consciousness (probably the vital physical) in which these things can still find a response, otherwise they could be felt but they would not stop all sadhana.

The thing you can do is not to remain passive, to refuse to identify any part of your being with these things and to reject it all with decision and force and to call in constantly the Mother's Power.

Keep your faith, refuse the suggestions, use your own will, call in the Mother's Power.

*People say that when will-power is used on the fatigue, the fatigue sometimes increases.*

It is not the right kind of will-power then, probably they use some fighting or effortful will-power instead of the quiet but strong will that calls down the higher consciousness and force.

The adverse forces feel that there is something in you that is discontented and restive because of the continuance of the inertia and they hope that by pressing more and more they will create a revolt. What is important for you in these circumstances is

to make your faith, surrender and samata<sup>11</sup> absolute. That is as great and essential a progress as to have high experiences etc.

*You have said, "It is a matter of the most external consciousness being sufficiently fortified so that there should be no disturbance even there." Could you say in what way it has been fortified, if at all?*

I meant that it has to be fortified — it is the faith, surrender, equality that bring the strength into it, if they can be made complete everywhere.

They (faith, surrender and samata) have to be put into every part and atom of the being so that there may be no possibility of a contrary vibration anywhere.

*Even a simple aspiration is not easy — could you kindly point out some active means to overcome the present difficulty?*

What do you mean by active means? The power to refuse, to reject is always there in the being and to go on rejecting till the rejection is effective.

Nothing can obstruct a quiet aspiration except one's own acquiescence in the inertia.

*My present condition has become very shaky, restless and too passive. Certain things have surged up which were not there before.*

What are these certain things? This kind of restlessness will not do. You must exert your will to throw it aside.

*I think you would agree that the going down of my consciousness into a still lower and darker plane is due to the need of the sadhana. It is to open and expose my lowest nature for the Mother's Force to transform it.*

That is not enough by itself; there must also be the steady will for transformation.

*You said that it is the ordinary oscillations of the consciousness between two forces — the higher power and the physical inertia. On what do these oscillations depend? At times when the peace and silence are in front, it is not because I have aspired for them. When the inertia is prominent, it is not that I have wanted it.*

Of course not. It depends on the play of forces in the consciousness itself.

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<sup>11</sup> equality.

*If the play of forces does not depend on us, what is the use of our aspirations?*

It does depend on you — your consent or refusal which has to be developed till it is master of the forces.

*The struggle between the higher and the lower forces goes on within in the same way. Even when the mind is detached I find no difference. What to do then?*

Nothing can be done except to keep yourself detached, unless you can recover the use of the knowledge and the will or else bring down the Mother's Force.

## SUNLIT PATH

*After passing through a lot of attacks, falls, depressions, some part of my inmost being seems to have a fleeting glimpse of what is called the sunlit or golden path. Once on this road no hostile being can touch the inner being. Darkness or ignorance (unwillingness to change) is worked out in the part itself without the necessity (as is normal) of its rising up and veiling the elevated or illumined parts of the being.*

*Revolts, doubts or even suggestions fail to break the luminous environment of this pilgrim. Not that these anti-divine things do not attempt to approach him. They do pursue him a long way. But he only looks at them, smiles and journeys on. To keep up with the sunlit path requires a watchful eye and one-pointed concentration, which does not heed what lies on the side-tracks. His soul secretly companions him throughout with its peace, joy and love. Does such a path truly exist somewhere or is it only a visionary idea?*

There is such a sunlit or golden path, but it is difficult for man with the pull of his lower nature to follow it.

*Difficult no doubt it is, but is it really impossible for the human being to tread the sunlit path?*

It is not impossible. But only one or two have been able to do it — which proves that it is not easy.

*Can't one do something for a smooth transformation of one's external nature with no serious revolts, attacks or falls?*

Yes, but it is not easy. It needs either a calm resolute will governing the whole being or a very great *samata* to have a quite smooth transformation. If they are there, then there are no revolts though there may be difficulties, no attacks, only a conscious dealing with the defects of the nature, no falls but only setting right of wrong steps or movements.

*About some sadhaks who do not need to pass through the struggle of the sadhana, you said, "It is something in their nature that is poised, calm, open." Do you think there is anything like that in my nature?*

There is a possibility of it, it is an element, but there was also too much *tamas* for it to dominate the whole nature.



*Before I came down into the physical from the higher consciousness, I had the belief that I could remain always on the sunlit path. Was it wrong?*

It was not wrong but a part of your being, the tamasic part has not allowed you to realise it all through. You have what many people here lack, a capacity of poise or balance. It is again the inertia that allows the vital attacks to dash against it and create a suggestion of revolt — for with the perfect balance any tendency to revolt is impossible.

*Since my being wants the sunlit path, kindly enlighten me how to make it possible.*

It is possible if you (1) can get free of the vital demand, (2) regard the difficulties of the nature calmly and dispassionately as if some defects of a machine that has to be set right, the being that uses the machine remaining fully dedicated to the Mother.

## MOTHER'S ROLE IN OUR SADHANA

*Why do we hear that the Mother experiences this or that? Has she still to go on experiencing?*

Experiencing what? She has her own experiences in bringing down the things that have to be brought down — but what the sadhaks experience she had long ago. The Divine does the sadhana first for the world and then in others.

*Sometimes a sadhak feels as if not only he but also the Mother goes through a certain experience in us. The poet Harin often speaks of such a happening as "I am thrilled by Thee and Thou art thrilled by me. I am happy by Thee and so Thou art by me", etc. I cannot understand how such experiences take place.*

Naturally, the Mother does the sadhana in each sadhaka — only it is conditioned by their need and their receptivity.

*I request a little more elaboration of your answer: "She has her own experiences in bringing down the things that have to be brought down..."*

I have said that the Divine does the sadhana first for the world and then gives what is brought down to others. There can be no sadhana without realisations and experiences. Both myself and the Mother have done sadhana. The Prayers and Meditations are a record of Mother's experiences.

*Is not the Mother far above what we feel as experience?*

The Mother is not an "experience", she is the Being and the Consciousness and the Power that contains the experience.

*At present my inner being wants to impose one simple and straight attitude on my outer being — "Accept heartily whatever the Divine Mother does." This indeed is a very essential thing to be realised if any real or lasting progress is to be achieved.*

Yes, it is essential.

*Early in the morning, among the flood of ideas, particularly this one flashed through me very clearly: "Your inner being should now adopt this attitude to any difficulty, fall or attack: 'It is not of your own nature, it belongs to the general Nature.' One*

*who is accepted by the Mother gets an automatic protection from such things. Be always at ease and one with the Mother."*

Very good — it is the attitude I wanted you to take.

*The waves of subconscious tamas rose up today. Becoming detached I invoked the Mother's help. Then I watched her Force fighting it out. This experience proves the deeper urge of my Prakriti: "Whatever the confrontation with the lower nature, it will be met by the Mother. And I shall remain as a dynamic and luminous channel."*

Quite right.

*One who is sincere and open exclusively to the Divine Mother would refuse to believe that this Yoga is the most arduous and difficult. It is so for only those who refuse to take her as their all. When she is our all, she travels with us and saves us from hardships and falls which are of our own making. Is it not so?*

Of course; but most do not find it easy to take the Mother as their all.

*I wrote to you the other day that after some time the dark and the ignorant part of my subconscious would also come under the Mother's control. Some people would perhaps laugh at such a premature prayer; but then is it not true that when a child cries for his Mother she always comes to him? Moreover, this Mother is not merely a human mother, but a Divine Mother, who is more sensitive to the crying of her child than any human being could be. She is always eager to remove him from the grip of the ordinary nature and lift him wholly into her light. The ordinary human being is under the impression that it is only he who feels such an unbearable separation from her. And he thinks too that it is he who is doing the entire sadhana in order to reach the Divine while she just remains above and aloof. We sadhaks should realise this most important truth: that it is she who first does the sadhana for us, for each one of us, that without her there would be no sadhana done — at least not the supramental one.*

*The anti-Divine forces are always trying to throw thorns on our path; and yet how is it that we find it clean and luminous? It is just because the Mother has done the sadhana first for us that all the obstructions and darkness have been swept away and the path made clear.*

*Some people who have fallen into the habit of struggling may well ask: "Why do we then find the journey full of difficulties, gloom and despair? All sorts of*

*suggestions and attacks surround us from all sides to drive us out of the path." They undergo all these because they take an indirect road, not the one made ready for us by the Mother. After a long strenuous labour she has hewn a special path, which leads more or less straight to the goal. Not that failures, depression etc. never approach those who tread it; but these difficulties do not trouble them very much, as they are clearly seen to be foreign to this path — as if coming from the side like some solitary gust of sand.*

Yes, that is the right Knowledge.

*Beside the path prepared by the Mother, there are many sidetracks which try to attract the seeker of the Truth. They use deceptive means to pull the sadhak towards their side, separating him thereby from the Mother, his true Guide and Light.*

Quite right.

*What is the Mother's physical touch if not a self-giving to each of us? But its importance is lost to our ordinary consciousness because, when it is given often, this consciousness turns every opportunity into a habit or a mere formality.*

That is what most have made of it.

*With the Mother I seem to be stationed over the head, floating or rising all the time, while below the body hangs like a coat.*

It is very good.

*What is meant by becoming the Mother's instrument if not to think, move and act as she makes one think, move and act?*

Yes, that is right.

*When the Mother's higher action came over all my head I began to lose my balance and merge in her consciousness.*

I do not know what you mean by losing the balance. To merge in there one need not lose any balance; though one may become unconscious of the physical body.

*After the meditation, I found my consciousness filled with the Mother's inner gifts. Does it not indicate that she is making up for my lapse of the last four days when I was so much externalised?*

Very often the working begins more strongly after a period like that.

*I would very much like to know about the nature of the Mother's action on the sadhaks here. The human vital is so stupid and self-centred. In the beginning has she not to start working by slightly allowing the vitals indulgence and then slowly put some pressure either directly or indirectly for its change? Are these notions at all valid?*

You attributed too many motives — e.g. that the Mother tries to allow the vital by indulging it in the beginning. She has no such intention. She behaves naturally and simply with the being — whatever change there is is in the vital's impressions about her action rather than in the action itself — except in so far as there is a change necessitated by the change in the consciousness.

*Many try to judge the Mother from her outer actions without some inner or higher basis. This method would obstruct us from arriving at the right destination.*

Yes, that is the mistake all the sadhaks make. How can they understand the Mother's actions unless they are united in consciousness with the Mother, have in fact the same consciousness as hers?

*When a certain aspect of the Mother is powerfully prominent the other aspects withdraw into the background. In fact that was what happened to me yesterday. With the arrival of a powerful muteness the love stood back. This, I suppose, happens in the early stages — afterwards it will be possible to feel all the aspects together and at the same higher pitch.*

Yes.

*This withdrawing of one or more aspects into the background is, I think, to give prominence to one particular aspect, so that it can carry out certain important things.*

Yes, that often happens.

*My psychic feels that whatever be our condition — be it full of difficulties, darkness or attacks — all will evaporate as soon as we get the Mother's physical touch. Why then do so many disciples say that they return from her with the same bad state they had before approaching her? Is it not because of their lack of faith in her divinity?*

Naturally, when there is not the opening they will feel nothing, for the consciousness will not respond — the force then works behind the veil to prepare things, but gives no immediate visible result.

*What are these stupid waves moving about the Ashram atmosphere? They say: Non-pranam day<sup>12</sup> means a day of rest for the sadhana. Does marching on with the Mother bring fatigue? As for the 'rest' do we really need it?*

It is the ordinary attitude of the physical consciousness — but once the fundamental consciousness is fixed, there is no reason why the sadhana should stop for a single day or need rest.

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<sup>12</sup> During this period the Mother used to give us Pranams every day except Mondays. So Monday was called a non-pranam day, when she used to wash her hair and then walk on the small terrace above Dyuman's room in order to dry it.

## ABOUT PRANAM

*So many sadhaks are not able to understand the Mother's seriousness at Pranam. Could you not kindly clarify the real cause of the seriousness?*

It is the wrong idea that if the Mother is serious it must be because of some personal displeasure against 'me' — each sadhak who complains of being the 'me'. I have repeated a hundred times to complainants that it is nonsense, but nobody will give up his idea. It is too precious to the ego. The Mother's seriousness is due to some absorption in some work she is doing or, very often, to some strong attack of hostile forces in the atmosphere.

*But everybody is not conscious of any such thing in the atmosphere.*

It does not matter whether he feels an attack or not — the attack is there. In fact for the last several months the atmosphere is full of the most violent attacks threatening the very existence of the yoga and the Ashram and the sadhaks personally or the body of the Mother. If he is not touched that is a matter for which he ought to be grateful to the Mother instead of his vital getting upset because she is doing her work.

*Is not the wrong reaction at Pranam due to my own little ego?*

It is doubtful whether that is the personal ego. The ideas, demands etc. about Pranam are usually suggestions of the hostile Force. They come to each person in the same form.

It was the vital ego that once took pleasure in these reactions and indulged them — but once they have been rejected by the vital as you have recorded, they belong no more to it. Still a hostile Force brings them back by suggestions and represents them as your own, trusting to the old habit to accept the suggestions or at least vibrate and make a response.

*Why is that hostile Force allowed by any part of my nature?*

Force of habit of old nature responding to these things. But they do not come any more from the nature itself. They come from outside — only the outer nature is still unaccustomed to resist the impact so as to feel it as absolutely foreign.

*What is the aim of the hostile Force in saying, "The Mother does not love you and therefore you cannot love her"?*

Obviously, it is in order to destroy the sadhana and get you under its control. These suggestions are made to many in the Ashram and a few are from time to time possessed by them — and become dark and revolted, stop eating, threaten suicide etc.

*Which are the parts that accept those suggestions?*

The outer mind and vital that were accustomed to think and act according to the ideas and feelings of the Ignorance.

*The hostile Force says: "All your sadhana is useless since the Mother does not love you."*

Exactly. It is what it says to each person who will listen.

*Is it not possible to throw out such suggestions of the hostile Force?*

It should be possible. If such suggestions come — for one cannot always prevent suggestions — they should be outer and passing things only which one notes with a perfect contempt and indifference.

*It is a realised fact that at Pranam the Mother could offer us all that we need for our spiritual life in a moment. For in the inner or higher worlds our earthly time does not exist. There, we can see or feel a lot of things within the fraction of a minute. To see the same things we may need here several days or even years.*

Obviously, the time has nothing to do with it. One hour's touch or a moment's touch — as much can be done by the one as by the other.

*It is when the advanced sadhaks approach the Mother that she is more at rest. For she knows that whatever is granted to them the reception will be spontaneous. She does not need to press anything on them as their opening widens automatically before her.*

All that is perfectly correct. People's notions about these things are quite topsy-turvy. It is possible to give all that is needed in a few seconds.



*So many are still burdened with difficulties, depression and frustrations. This happens, I suppose, because they try to seek oneness with the Mother through her most material part — the outer body. They seem to be searching more and more for her physical nearness, touch, presence etc. But the fact is that the union of our consciousness with her physical self will be actually the last in our sadhana.*

Quite right. To live inside is the first principle of spiritual life and from inside to reshape the physical existence. But so many insist on remaining in the external and their relation with the Mother is governed by the ordinary reactions of the external unspiritualised nature.

*Could I have an interview with the Mother? Two or three difficulties have been troubling me right from the beginning of the sadhana. I want to discuss them and get at least a verbal solution.*

This method of asking questions and getting solutions in an interview is one of which the Mother does not approve. She finds it useless and it forces her to come down to meet a superficial mental consciousness which she has long left.

*Is it not quite wrong of a sadhak to judge the Mother from her outward expression of smile or seriousness; and then make his sadhana depend on such reactions?*

The personality of the Mother is not limited by her body or face nor can the movements of her personality be interpreted by ordinary human mind and vital feelings from her physical and outward appearances as they see it. To rely for the sadhana on that means to rely on one's own mind and vital reactions and not on the Mother.

*I feel my head burdened with unknown riches. The age-long separation culminates now in unity with the Divine Mother. Only they who have tasted this experience can know what a profound joy, happiness and bliss this oneness brings. The Silence there is a silence beyond the silence!*

*Is this a correct description of my unity and silence?*

That is how it is felt.

*In this Ashram one does not need to search for the divine Grace. It is there in abundance. Only a sincere opening is needed from us.*

Yes.

## PEACE AND SILENCE

*Could the lower forces be easily managed by living in the silence?*

If the silence has strength in it — is not too neutral.

*Does the presence of silence always include peace?*

When the silence is there, there ought to be peace — if not anything deeper at least a mental peace in the inner being.

*Could one stabilise the silence from the beginning?*

It can be done sometimes — though entire stability is not usual in the beginning.

*Does the silence need any supporting in order to sustain it for long?*

What do you mean by supporting? Usually the silence when it is there is sufficient to itself — it needs no support.

*Is it impossible to make my passive peace dynamic?*

It is not impossible if you insist on the Force and Strength coming down into the peace.

*The peace and silence is there all the time during meditation. But what is its value unless it becomes dynamic?*

It has a great value — because if there is not that peace and silence the true strength cannot come down in such a way as to settle.

*You have spoken of a strong peace. What is meant by it?*

By a strong peace I mean one with strength, power, force in it.

*When the emptiness deepens in the vital I feel a great appetite for food though in fact I may not be at all hungry!*

Association of ideas perhaps — emptiness = hunger.

*This type of vital emptiness is all right. But it confuses my mind regarding the sense of appetite — whether or not I am really hungry or how much hungry. It is noticed that in spite of eating a large amount the feeling of voidness did not disappear.*

That would seem to indicate that it is a subjective voidness and the hunger feeling comes only from association of ideas.

*In spite of having the peace for so long how is it that the tamas still lingers?*

I suppose the peace must become dynamic for the tamas to go altogether.

*The tamas is still occupying some space in my being. Something ought to be done. I could have easily fought it out as before. But I don't understand why the vital emptiness does not allow me to make any attempt.*

These alternations always come till the thing is perfect. But probably the vital emptiness being less old is less ripe than that of the higher part of the consciousness and therefore less able to press the Force or call it.

*I need a certain enlightenment from you. What is really the cause of the vital resistance? Which higher descents does it want to prevent? In the absence of any clear knowledge my mind needs something like a short review of the present state of the sadhana.*

I cannot say more than what I have said already. In its descent the peace and silence met with a resistance in the lower vital (probably mostly the vital-physical) and the physical combined which instead of receiving the peace and silence and the release and joy it brings replied with inertia. This inertia gave an opportunity for the old vital suggestions *from outside* to act in you — because that is the ordinary release from inertia to begin a vital activity good or bad. This would not have mattered, for the vital itself would have rejected it — but somewhere there was a sort of response, an acceptance of the inertia and through that a response to the vital suggestions, listening to them, giving them importance, not seeing the entire inanity of them. At the same time the inertia communicated itself to the mind, preventing the will from acting. Hence the difficulty.

*I feel something going on strongly between the navel and the sex centre? What is it?*

I suppose the Power is working there to clear a way for a stronger descent of the higher things into the lower vital and physical.

*You wrote: "I suppose the most material consciousness has come up or you have gone into it." Has this stage (of dealing with the most material consciousness) come for all of us here or only for me?*

It has come to many.

*At times, for days together I lived in a complete peace and silence. Do you think that has made any fundamental change in my lower nature? At present at least I see my ego, vital and physical practically in the same condition as ever before.*

Peace is a necessary basis but peace is not sufficient. Peace if it is strong and permanent can liberate the inner being which can become a calm and unmoved witness of the external movements. That is the liberation of the Sannyasin. In some cases it can liberate the external also throwing the old nature out into the environmental consciousness but even this is liberation, not transformation.

*Of course I do find some essential changes in the inner and higher parts of my being, but nothing concrete in the outer nature.*

If the peace had gone sufficiently into the physical, then the inner being could no more be veiled. You would have found the liberation described above. But the physical consciousness was too tamasic and replied to the descent of peace by inertia.

*I wonder how absolute silence could come down yesterday when there was an utter darkness and restlessness all over my lower being.*

That is quite possible and frequently happens.

*During the morning hours the Self is spontaneously revealed now and then. Do you think the consciousness of the Self alone can solve the difficulties of the vital nature?*

If the peace of the higher Self and the force from these higher levels or the knowledge that is there descends sufficiently.

*While reading about 'A Philosopher's Moods', I came across a phrase like a 'silence terrific'. Is the silence really terrific?*

No, except to those who are afraid of it.

*I had experiences of silence, sometimes of even a very high silence but never felt terrified. But what about the cosmic silence, is it terrific?*

No.

*When my consciousness is in silence I try to keep my mind as empty as possible. Then I leave my sadhana and even the thought of it to the Mother. Is it O.K., or is it necessary to think of the transformation and aspire for the bringing down of the higher things?*

If you can very quietly and silently aspire for the bringing down of the higher things, it might be good — but not, if it disturbs the silence.

*The whole system feels rest when the sadhana is going on well. The deeper the sadhana the better is the rest felt.*

That is as it should be.

*During voidness I feel my seat in the mind centre between the eyebrows and during blankness it is shifted to the top of the head. What should be my attitude during voidness?*

Call down the higher Truth and the Divine Force into the void.

*The emptiness in itself is a state of peace, silence and rest. It is as yet too passive and therefore not able to keep off the outer or lower forces.*

Yes, but it ought at least to make them ineffective — not the emptiness perhaps, but the peace in it. As if it were saying "Who are you, you beggars? I don't know or accept you."

*It would seem as if this time the peace and silence have projected a force which can stand any resistance from below. From 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. an unusually powerful pressure from above seized my head. Is all this a sign of any conquest over my lower nature?*

If it becomes a dynamic descent, then yes.

*If the sadhana continues like that, it would just be a fit board to jump into the higher planes of consciousness. As the Mother's sweet love and grace are with me such jumps would be safe and easy.*

*I would like to know if today's state has come as a natural development of my sadhana. Or is it only due to some higher pressure<sup>13</sup> which when it withdraws carries away also the dynamic peace and silence?*

It is certainly due to the higher pressure, but it has to become normal.

*There is no fluttering in the being at present. The quietness reigns all over the nature. Is this not a positive sign of the entire consciousness down to the physical turning towards a higher nature and making itself a calm vessel for its working?*

Yes, but it must fix itself in the physical.

*There was a feeling of complete muteness within me as well as above me.*

Good.

*Yesterday during the Darshan time (24.11.35) I came to you for Pranam. You must have observed my nature fully, where I am now and where next I must move in the sadhana. Could you kindly enlighten me about my future programme?*

It is simply that what was not done before during the first descent of peace and knowledge has to be done now.

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<sup>13</sup> During the course of sadhana and especially in the preliminary stages, some higher pressure brings in many experiences. Sometimes their influence is so great and powerful that their glow is felt even in the outer being. At times the same experience prolongs itself for days together. All this combined creates a strong and vivid impression that it is a state that has come to stay and not merely a passing experience.

## PART IV

## INNER AND OUTER BEING

*You always speak about turning to the inner being, so I would like to know if there is nothing good in the outer being?*

Obviously the outer being cannot be all bad, but it is mixed and ignorant and full of ignorant movements.

*What has the inner being to do with Yoga or spiritual life?*

It is the outer being that has nothing to do with Yoga or spiritual life unless the inner awakens it.

*When my outer being is busy with physical things or mechanical movements, what does my inner being do during that period?*

It may be silent or it may be occupied with its own activities which are not felt by the surface mind.

*This evening my consciousness was plunged into the inner depths. It aspired and received freely there. Is not even this insufficient? I mean without the inner being's coming in front how can the two mutually complementary movements — the inner coming out and the outer going in — take place?*

It will come in front if you persist. These things cannot be done in a day or without overcoming the resistance of the ordinary nature.

*During the morning meditation, my being goes deep and receives well according to its openness. But as soon as it comes out of the meditation, even for a short time, all is covered up. Why so?*

It depends on the state of the waking consciousness.

*What should be done to maintain the inner gains throughout the day?*

The waking consciousness has to be concentrated or receptive.

*How to decide the movements of the sadhana (whether they are right or wrong) without mental ideas?*



It is not a question of ideas but of the perception from within.

*This morning there was a powerful activity in the inner being. Its outer effect was experienced as an intensity in the vital and in the spine. Can there be such an action in the spine also?*

Yes.

*During a free reception, I feel the descent passing through my head, forehead and inner mind centre.*

It is the inner mind centres that have become open and conscious.

*While standing and looking at the Mother my eyes felt a burning pressure.*

It may be to connect the outer with the inner vision.

*The inertia is a thing of the subconscious nature and at most of the material body. My present sadhana is so much affected by the inertia. Are the sub-nature and physical parts of my being the only support of the sadhana? Is it on them that my inner being depends so much?*

The inner being does not depend on the subconscious, but the outer has depended on it for thousands of lives — that is why the outer being and physical consciousness's habit of response to the subconscious can be a formidable obstacle to the progress of the sadhana and is so with most. It keeps up the repetition of the old movements, is always pulling down the consciousness and opposing the continuity of the ascent and bringing the old nature or else the *tamas* (non-illumination and non-activity) across the descent. It is only if you live wholly and dynamically in the inner being and feel the outer as a quite superficial thing that you can get rid of the obstruction or minimise it until the transformation of the outer being can be made complete.

*How did the tendency to inertia get into me and why did my nature accept it?*

It was because of the nature, because the tendency to *tamas* is there, the outer being is not yet sufficiently transformed. When the inertia rises you have to keep your inner being separate from it and perfectly calm and not to acquiesce in any nervousness or accept any suggestions or allow yourself to lean towards any "active resistance" or dissatisfaction with what is written to you or done for you. If in addition you find it

possible to use any of the active means suggested in past answers, it is well — but if not this at least what I have written above must be done. And always the aspiration firm and steady — not eager and excited — for the descent and the transformation of the whole nature must be preserved constant.

Sri Aurobindo<sup>14</sup>

*It is always the identification with the outer being that causes difficulties on the path. So long as the inner separation was there I travelled like a prince luxuriating in the Mother's Peace, Knowledge and Force. But when it was lost the same traveller turned into a vagabond. Is this not a fact?*

Yes, that is correct. The outer being is a means of expression only, not one's self. One must not identify with it, for what it expresses is a personality formed by the old ignorant Nature. If not identified, one can change it so as to express the true inner personality of the Light.

*If one constantly supports the Mothers workings, won't the inertia get transformed into peace without needing to rise up and veil the inner parts?*

Yes, that is how it should happen — but it is difficult so long as the inner being is not conscious and receptive at all times and in all conditions — and it is difficult and takes time to establish such a condition.

*During yesterday's meditation, on one side I saw the inertia active in its usual way and on the other the inner consciousness receiving the Mothers working as usual! This is something new to me. For up to now, whenever there was tamas a free reception (from the Mother) was always disturbed. Also I noticed that the inner was rejecting the tamas at the same time that it was receiving the Mother's action! — this it did as a distinct and deliberate process.*

It is a great step forward which has to be confirmed. If the inner being can remain conscious and untouched whenever tamas or anything else rises, then half the victory over the other is won.

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<sup>14</sup> Sri Aurobindo wrote me numerous letters during 1933 to 1937, but he was not in the habit of signing them. He did so in approximately a dozen letters only, perhaps when he wanted to put a particular emphasis of power on the substance he expressed in a letter.

*The day before yesterday the tamas was strong enough. Yet by merely coming near the Mother I could push it out and keep myself free for a long time. But this luck is lost since yesterday! Yet I should say that there is some part in me that detaches itself at once from all strife and struggle the moment I come into the Mother's physical influence and then I become peaceful and quiet.*

These are the things you had and which the inertia has been covering over. They have to return and I suppose they are trying to do so.

*Because of the prolonged disturbed condition of my consciousness I feel depressed. Is it only the outer being or the inner also that is affected?*

There is no reason why the inner being should become depressed, but the outer seems to become restless when the inertia is increasing or else it gives some kind of response. If the outer being becomes quiet, then the inner can act — otherwise more force is given to the adverse action of the inertia.

*How is one to get rid of the tamas of the outer being and realise the inner permanently?*

Not to identify oneself is the first necessity. Not to be depressed or disturbed is the second. Then a little sooner or a little later the change comes.

There are always two alternatives, either to remain calm and detached and aspire or pray or else to use the Will or other active means as you used to do sometimes before.

*Does not physical fatigue disturb the march of the sadhana?*

Even if there is physical fatigue sometimes it is not inevitable that it should interfere with the sadhana. The inner movement can always go on.

*Recently I experienced an elevated condition of silence in spite of the inertia, and then after a while the silence disappeared and I was again plunged into obscurity.*

It is the oscillation between the two consciousnesses which always happens, until one can so stabilise the inner that it remains calm and fixed behind even when there are surface movements of the vital or surface rising of the inertia.

*This attitude is suggested to me from within: "It is not I who have fallen down. I am always above with the Mother. It is the lower nature which gives me the false impression of mixing me up with the Prakriti."*

Yes, that much at least everybody who has felt the inner consciousness should be able to do.

Your attitude is all right. It is only in some part of the external physical being that the difficulties seem to weigh too much.

*The resistance is still there. It is directed against the Divine. The suggestions are its weapons. Does all that mean I am doing some mistake or wrong action?*

No. It is simply a matter of the most external consciousness being sufficiently fortified so that there shall be no disturbance even there.

*Regarding the "struggles" and the feelings of "helplessness" it was true that my physical and vital physical felt them. But while reporting about them to you I ought to have clarified that they were not the feelings of my true self.*

Yes, that is best so as to keep the sense of separateness from these things strongly before you.

There are vibrations in your most external being, at least an uneasiness, which can be felt sometimes in your writing. If there were nothing there could be no real disturbance anywhere.

*I now find that even during the bad periods, my inner being does not get identified with the inertia.*

If the inner being is free, if the sadhana is not stopped, if the Force is at work preparing something then surely there is nothing to be anxious about.

The inertia will be worked out of the external being.

*Are there not people here who are always in touch with their inner being and merged in the Divine?*

To be always merged in the Divine is not so easy. It can be done only by an absorption in one's own inner self or by a consciousness that sees all in the Divine and the Divine in all and is always in that condition. There is none who has attained to that yet.

*If one remains merged in one's inner self for long, will not the realisation of seeing all in the Divine and the Divine in all come by itself?*

At least it will come easily, without the laborious meditation by which people usually try to arrive at it.

*Is it not true that in the early stages one can have only intermittent experiences of one's true self?*

That is so, so long as the whole consciousness is not open or so long as one cannot live always in the inner consciousness, looking at the outer when necessary but not involved in it.

## OPENING OF THE INNER SENSES

*At pranam while putting my head in the Mothers lap I heard a voice. It was felt to be the Mothers. Did she really say something to me inwardly or was it a mere illusion?*

It may have been that the Mother conveyed something to you. At this moment she does not remember.

*Can one rely solely on the voice from within and be thus guided by the Mother?*

If it is the Mother's voice; but you have to be sure of that.

*During yesterday's meditation, I perceived first only the pistils of the flower whose significance is given by the Mother as 'Psychic Prayer' (Habranthus robustus Zephyranthes). They were all moving and playing into each other harmoniously and joyfully. Afterwards the petals also appeared. What does this vision mean?*

I suppose it meant simply a happy activity of the force represented by the flower.

*Here is another vision: the flower meaning 'Consciousness turned towards the light' (Sunflower) is supporting an enormous weight which is trying to press it down but which it yet bears.*

It signifies, I suppose, the pressure of the work for the transformation which the consciousness is able to bear because it is turned to the Light.

*In the evening just before the Mother came down for a collective Meditation I saw the flower signifying 'Fire in the Mind' (Poinciana pulcherrima). At first it appeared as a bud and then slowly it opened out. Has the vision any connection with my sadhana?*

It means, I suppose, what is intended to happen — what was preparing before this inertia came — the opening of the dynamic light and force in the Mind.

*Standing before your photo in the Reception room, the flower named by the Mother as 'Peace in the Cells' (Ixora thwaitesii), came to me as if floating before my inner sight. Why are so many flowers being seen these days?*

It is usually when the psychic is active that this seeing of flowers becomes abundant.

## SUBTLE SOUNDS

*My sadhana is at a standstill. And yet I hear some subtle sounds with the same force and frequency as when it was in full movement. Have they then no connection with the sadhana?*

It depends on the nature of the sounds. Some have a connection, others are merely sounds of the other planes.

*Naik told me, "This subtle faculty is perhaps something like an occult thing opening in the consciousness, similar to seeing visions." Is it true?*

Yes.

*Visions help sadhana; does this faculty also help me?*

If it is accompanied with knowledge.

*I don't know if knowledge of subtle sounds also can come by itself.*

All knowledge can come by itself.

*Why should those subtle sounds which have no connection with my sadhana be heard at all? And what are the 'other planes'?*

Supraphysical planes. When the inner senses open, or any of them, one sees or hears things belonging to the other planes automatically. What one sees or hears depends on the development of the inner sense. It depends on what you hear whether these are the symbol sounds only which have a connection with the sadhana or simply other plane sounds of an ordinary character.

*A subtle sound like a peal of bells is heard constantly and loudly. What does it denote?*

That is considered to be a sound closely connected with the sadhana.

*In what way are such sounds connected with the sadhana?*

They are the signs of a working going on to prepare something — but as that is a general thing, it cannot be said from the sounds themselves what the preparation is.

*Along with the bells, there are at times sounds of a hammer striking on the Brahmīc centre on the top of the head. Have they also a significance?*

Yes. The same, but here a working to remove some obstacle which prevents the higher consciousness from coming down into the physical.

*If the sadhana were to be judged by the inner states and experiences, it is obviously suspended. But the subtle sounds of bells and hammers are rather increasing in force and frequency.*

I suppose they are trying to keep up the connection or something is being prepared.



## SUBTLE TASTES

*My consciousness feels a sweet juice in the mouth and the feeling goes so far that I am not aware any more of teeth or tongue or any flesh in the mouth.*

It happens sometimes when the force is flowing down from the Brahmarandhra.

*The above experience of the sweet juice was repeated. I would like to know what that sweet flow is and from where it comes into my mouth.*

It is a form of the flow of Ananda from above — when it takes a quite physical form the Yogins call it Amrita.

*The subtle tastes in my mouth are changing in quality. In place of the Amrita (the divine nectar) there is a bitter taste sometimes. Why so?*

It is not certain. It may be either something in the physical conflicting with the Amrita that comes up — or the opening of the subtle taste. When that comes there comes often a salt or a bitter as well as a sweet taste in the mouth. In the end the sweet taste swallows up the others.

*How many tastes are there in the subtle worlds in addition to those above mentioned? Are there other ones than those known on this earth?*

There are sour, pungent and astringent tastes — but also others that do not come under any classification.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> The faculty of subtle taste and other such faculties ceased a short time after their purpose had been served — that is, to open the being to occult knowledge and powers. All sorts of tastes, some combined in form, and at times even opposite, like bitter and sweet, were actually swallowed up in the end by the Amrita.

## THE PSYCHIC BEING

*Can there be a conscious contact with the Mother through the psychic before the latter comes fully forward?*

Yes, the psychic is always there.

*How is the psychic to be brought forward?*

It comes forward of itself either through constant love and aspiration or when the mind and vital have been made ready by the descent from above and the working of the Force.

To bring the psychic forward, selfishness and demand (which is the base of the vital feelings) must be got rid of — or at least never accepted.

Get rid of the dissatisfactions, they prevent the permanent psychic opening.

*When the psychic being is coming out can it not brush aside vital non-cooperation, depression etc.?*

If it has come out entirely, it can.

*When the psychic works on the external parts of the being they begin to aspire for the Divine. In my case, its influence seems to be spreading to the lower vital with the result that the latter is making demands on the Divine. Is that the usual movement?*

Yes, so long as the psychic has not transformed the lower vital.

*You wrote, "The heart is the seat not only of the psychic, but also of the emotional vital which covers it." Does it not mean that the emotional being itself works as a veil to the psychic?*

Yes, when it is full of vital movements or accustomed more to a vital than a psychic way of emotion.

*When there is a strong working or pressure on the heart-centre, is it some action on the psychic being?*

Action does not take place on the psychic being, but on the emotional vital. That may result in the release of the psychic being.

*Why is not my psychic being coming out in its fulness after such a long and strenuous sadhana? The absence of love is felt very keenly in my life. The ego and desires are still persisting.*

How do you expect the psychic to be in full activity with these things there and not thoroughly rejected? Moreover if the love comes forward in full what is to prevent the selfish vital taking hold of it and making demand on the Mother which she will certainly refuse to satisfy — as so many have done and afterwards revolted because “the Mother does not love them”, otherwise she would do whatever they want?

*I promise you that henceforth no part of my nature will be allowed to respond to any desire, demand, right etc. I hope this fulfils your condition for the psychic opening.*

The thing has to be done, not merely promised. If you do it, the psychic is bound to come out of itself.

*This is my appeal to the Mother: Either give me the psychic love or death. Let no third thing come to me — a final resolution.*

That is altogether the wrong attitude. It is once more the vital coming in — it is not a psychic attitude. If in asking for the psychic love, you take an attitude that is vital not psychic, how do you expect the psychic to come?

*Only I do not allow this matter of love to interfere with my peace, silence or self-realisation.*

That is better.

*Leaving aside the higher station, since yesterday I am trying to concentrate more and more on the Mother in the heart centre, with the attitude: Let me live in her, with her and it is enough.*

The attitude is good for awakening the psychic and the inner being generally. But if the higher experience comes, it should not be stopped.

*Along with the ascending movement in the spine, there has been a great intensity in the area of the heart. Something from there rises up ardently. Is that the soul?*

Something from the psychic at any rate.

*Does your answer mean that the psychic has unveiled itself now?*

It is trying to open.

*What is the matter again with my psychic being? It has not appeared in front for a long time.*

It will come out when the rest is prepared — till then it acts from behind the veil.

*During the experience of this morning I was living or rather made to live only inwards. Excepting for the Mother's work, if I spoke even on good subjects some part protested strongly and pressed me to be quiet. Was it the inner being that did it?*

The psychic probably.

*While looking at the Mother in the evening, something opened to her from within my heart, just like the disclosing and blooming of a flower. Would you kindly enlighten me as to what it was?*

The psychic, I suppose.

*What is meant by "having a psychic basis"?*

The psychic in front and supporting the whole experience.

*It seems that the psychic being has begun to work directly on the outer consciousness with love and devotion as its main means.*

Yes, certainly that is the working of the psychic.

*The pressure from the cardiac centre down to the navel centre is felt deeply and powerfully. It descends and ascends unceasingly.*

It means a strong working to connect the psychic and vital closely together.

*This morning my consciousness felt an intensely burning fire in the heart. Till the evening it continued along with the experiences felt above the head.*

It is obviously the psychic.

*When I had asked you, "Cannot the psychic-realisation and self-realisation go on simultaneously?", your reply was that such an action would be rare. Is it really such a difficult process?*

I meant that usually one comes first and the other after the first, whichever it be, is sufficiently established. Afterwards they progress together<sup>16</sup>.

*I can see why the mind or the inner being gets veiled by the tamas, but find no reason for the soul or self to be so, especially after a long sadhana.*

You forget that the self and the soul were covered for a long time, thousands of lives. So now although they are unveiled, it needs still some tapasya to keep them always so.

*Some part of my being appears to be acting as a mediator between my higher nature and the lower, but it is always fluttering. A mediator is supposed to remain detached from both the parties. Has the psychic taken up this role?*

I don't know what is this mediator. The only parts that can mediate are the psychic being or else the mental Purusha or mental will. But the psychic does not flutter. If it is either of the other two, you ought to be able to know.

*I wrote a prayer in French to the Mother. Her answer was: "Ouvre ton cœur et tu me trouveras déjà là" ("Open your heart and you will find me already there") What exactly does this signify?*

What Mother meant was this, that when there is a certain opening of the heart, you find that there was always the eternal union there (the same that you experience always in the self above).

*We believe that the Mother is doing the sadhana in all of us, particularly through the heart; but how is it we scarcely feel this? There must be some veil in us.*

It is a veil which disappears when the Mother's working as well as her presence is consciously felt at all times.

*I experience a strong movement to unify my entire being — inner, outer and lower — around the psychic being. At present I hear only two words, 'Mother' and 'psychic',*

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<sup>16</sup> The development of these two realisations is discussed further in Part VI, *Two Fires*.

*like the word OM, surging out from the depths of my consciousness. In the external consciousness the tamas is still there. I suppose when the outer being is psychicised the tamas will be changed into peace.*

Yes, these experiences open the way towards that psychicisation of the being.

*Some deeper being is becoming more and more prominent. It has started exerting its pressure on the mechanical and subconscious mind. So the inertia has to remain below. If sometimes it still forces itself up it is fought out. Is it right to say it is the psychic being?*

Your description at the end shows that it must be the psychic.

*Instead of staying at the heart-centre why does my psychic being stay mostly on the Sachchidananda plane above the head? It is from there that it manifests love and joy and governs the human nature.*

Probably it joins the central being there.

*What is meant by the psychic being joining the central being?*

Any part of the being can go upward and meet its source there. The central being is always above; the psychic is its outer part below. If the psychic goes up it may be also to join its source, the central being.

*On some other occasions I found the psychic below, but surely it does not become the lower Prakriti (Nature)?*

It is not the lower Prakriti in the usual sense. It is the inmost being supporting the lower Prakriti and urging it towards the Higher.

*I feel Mothers presence on the head and in the heart simultaneously. At times the consciousness on the head or in the heart descends or ascends into the other and then spreads all over the being.*

It is good.

## SHAPE AND FORM OF THE PSYCHIC

*Has the soul a form? A sadhak told me he saw his own psychic being as a woman.*

The soul is not limited by any form, but the psychic being puts out a form for its expression, just as the mental, vital and subtle physical Purushas do — that is to say, one can see or another person can see one's psychic being in such and such a form. But this seeing is of two kinds — there is the standing characteristic form taken by this being in this life and there are symbolic forms such as when one sees the psychic as a newborn child in the lap of the Mother. If the sadhak in question really saw his psychic in the form of a woman it can only have been a constructed appearance expressing some quality or attitude of the psychic.

*You said, "The soul is not limited by any form, but the psychic being puts out a form..." With regard to form what is the difference between the soul and the psychic being?*

As there is in us a mind which one does not see in form but is aware of and as there is at the same time a mental being which one can see in form, so there is a soul and a psychic being. The soul is the same always, the psychic being is what it develops in the evolution.

*When you say that the psychic being puts out a form, do you imply that it has a subtle-physical form so that one can see it as an embodied personality — just like a human body?*

Yes, but it is not limited by the form as the physical consciousness.

*After death when the soul returns for a new birth, who moulds the mind, vital and physical?*

It is done by Nature under the influence of the soul. In a certain sense it may be said that the soul does it, because what it sees as needed is drawn in as material and shaped.

*What is meant by "shaped"? Is a construction made?*

Unless material is given form (i.e. shaped) it cannot be used. Construction itself means shaping. You can't construct something shapeless.

*Is the exterior being also moulded by the soul? Tulsi told me that the inner being is constructed by the soul according to its need for a new manifestation on earth; but the outer is moulded by Nature as it belongs to Nature.*

All belongs to Nature — the soul itself acts under the conditions and by the agency of Nature.

*What is exactly the difference between an aspect of the Divine known as the self and a portion of the Divine called the soul?*

The self feels always its unity with the Divine and is always the same. The soul is a portion of the Divine that comes down into the evolution and evolves a psychic being more and more developed through experiences of successive lives until it is ready for the divine realisation here.

*If 'the self feels always its unity with the Divine', does not the soul too feel the same? Of course the psychic being does not till it attains to a certain consciousness by Yoga.*

The soul in evolution is only a power for the evolution, it contains everything in potentiality; but that can only be worked out by the psychic being. It is quite different from the condition of the self.

*At present, I find that among the parts of my being — the soul, mind, vital and physical — only the first is in relation with the Divine and has love, faith, equality etc. But what is new in this? Every soul on earth contains these qualities even without practising Yoga.*

Every soul is not awake and active; nor is every soul turned directly to the Divine before practising Yoga. For a long time it seeks the Divine through men and things much more than directly.

*Whatever purity, knowledge and force the soul has, are they of its own nature or does it derive them from the higher consciousness?*

The soul is always pure, but the knowledge and force in it are involved and come out only as the psychic being evolves and grows stronger.



## PSYCHIC TEARS AND PSYCHIC SORROW

*When the Mother was throwing a last glance at us while returning from the Pranam, some tears and a profound feeling came out from my heart.*

It is the natural psychic movement of love and bhakti deep down in the being.

*Often tears come out as if directly from the heart as a result of joy or love for the Mother. I wonder if today's tears were also of the above category.*

Probably they were.

*The psychic tears often come up, usually they are few, one can count them. But today they were many, almost like weeping.*

There is a psychic sorrow which is not like the vital one — but it may be that the feeling came from the psychic but the vital took it up.

*My experience was somewhat disturbing. Could a psychic sorrow be like that?*

The vital took it up perhaps and gave it a more vehement and turbid expression — otherwise there is nothing disturbing in a psychic sorrow.

*I doubt if these were merely the tears of joy, for I could not then have left my head on the Mother's lap for such a long time. I had almost become unconscious of myself when the tears were springing out.*

I did not mean that they were tears of joy. There is a psychic sorrow which usually comes when the soul feels how strong is the resistance in the vital and how much the Forces in it rage against the Mother, or when some similar feeling is in or behind the consciousness.

## LOVE

### HUMAN LOVE

*Even the higher or deeper experiences do not seem to be of much value if one cannot love the Mother with the true heart.*

It is a mistake to think like that. The experiences prepare the different parts of the being for loving in the right way, so that it is not the soul alone that loves. So long as they are open to ignorance and ego they cannot receive and hold the love rightly.

*The action from the higher consciousness increases its intensity. However, what is the use of all that if it has no connection below with my heart that longs for love?*

You might just as well say what is the use of any sadhana. For the separation of the higher consciousness from the lower, the refusal to mix their movements, e.g. love of the Divine and sex, is essential to the sadhana.

*Please excuse me if I linger a little more on the topic of love, because much depends on that for the progress of my sadhana. Some parts of my being refuse to come out of their neutrality because they firmly believe that we have no love for you and you for us. The tough question is not of your love for me but of my love for you. If I have love for you why do I not feel it as before? What is responsible for this state?*

It is the parts that had the vital mixture. They regard that mixed movement alone as love and when it is not active they think there is no love. The love is quiescent; that is all.

*How stupid is our vital even in its 'prudence'? It loves sensitiveness though that depresses it!*

The vital loves any number of things that do it harm. It prefers the Pleasant always to the Good.

*We depend very much on finding in the Mother's ways a manifestation of her love for us. We feel we can progress only when we get it.*

This demand for a physical manifestation of love must go. It is a dangerous stumbling-block in the way of sadhana. A progress made by indulgence of this demand is an

insecure progress which may any moment be thrown down by the same force that produced it.

*The struggle in the outer being has gone out of control. The mind is under the vital's influence. During such circumstances, as a strategy, is it not good to satisfy the desire for the time being?*

How is it you do not see that all that is ego only, the old ego. The solution is not to satisfy it but to get rid of it. If anything in your mind supports the claim, it is no wonder that the suggestions come and stop the progress. You yourself had written the clear knowledge that the divine love must be free from all these lower demands, absolute and unconditioned.

*Can the suggestion of revolt come to one who loves the Divine?*

If the love is absolute and complete and there have never been any vital demands connected with it the suggestion of revolt cannot come.

*I have heard that many sadhikas love the Mother so much that they are ready to die for her. But if there is no physical expression of the Mother's love for them, they can't love her and some go so far as to revolt, weep or fast.*

It is self-love that makes them do it. It is just the same kind of vital love that people have outside (loving someone for one's own sake, not for the sake of the beloved). What is the use of that in sadhana here? It can only be an obstacle.

*Often the human vital falls on an ignorant idea: if the Mother does not do this or that for me it means that she has no love for me. It has another obsession also which comes from jealousy: why so much more for others and so little or nothing for me? These seem to be stumbling-blocks for many sadhaks.*

All that of course is not love, but self-love. Jealousy is only an ugly form of self-love. That is what people do not understand — they even think that demands and jealousy and wounded vanity are signs of love or at least natural attendants of it.

*In the Ashram the Mother works with us first through the ordinary human love and then through the psychic love, satisfying some of our desires and demands in the beginning. For it is only so that our weak human bullock cart can proceed. But farther on when the bullocks perceive, on the way, that too great a thing called Divine Love*

*they are frightened and fall down by the sudden shock. Then the Divine Mother showers on them the psychic love which lifts them up. And the journey is resumed. By and by, the bullocks become strong and powerful, get accustomed to the Divine Love after many a fall. Then nothing is felt as too great a thing for the rest of the journey. For the Divine Love contains everything and can stand on anything.*

All that is quite correct. Even the ordinary human or the psychic love many are unable to feel or understand because it is not quite in the ordinary human way.

## PSYCHIC AND DIVINE LOVE

The psychic never feels that it cannot love the Divine.

*Our psychic loves the Divine but the vital is in revolt. Then there will be gloomy periods. To avoid them we must make our outer being love the Divine. But how to do it with a strong ego in front?*

The outer being has to learn to love in the psychic way without ego. If it loves in the egoistic vital way, then it only creates difficulties for itself and for the sadhana and for the Mother.

*The outer being too must love the Divine Mother. If the love is confined within the soul alone there is hardly anything remarkable in it.*

Why do you need something remarkable? The love of the soul is the true thing, simple and absolute — the rest is good only if it is a means of manifestation of the soul's love.

*But what then about the love in the vital itself?*

The love in the vital or other parts is the true thing, good for the spiritual life, only when in the vital love is changed into a form of the psychic love and becomes an instrument for the manifestation of the soul's love, no longer for the desires of the ego which men call love.

*The present growth of the sadhana is to make my vital offer its full love for the Divine without any condition. Is it not so?*

Yes, love with surrender and dissolution of the ego.

*Usually I don't wear a coat. But yesterday it was chilly and I had a coat on me. I began to pluck various flowers for offering to the Mother. Unexpectedly, the flower called 'Divine Love' (Punica granatum) fell by itself and was caught just at my chest (heart centre) where the collar of the coat closes in. Any meaning?*

An indication of its coming in the heart.

*I think this can't be a mere accident as it appears to the outer mind. There must be the Mothers hand in it.*

Yes.

*Again I saw some very big and beautiful flowers, signifying 'Divine Love' in a dream.*

It is a suggestion of what must and will be.

*The latest form of the suggestions is directed towards myself and the Mother. They say, "You have no love for her." What is worse, they make some part of my being feel that as true.*

But that is surely very evident nonsense. If you feel love for the Mother how can they say you have none or, if they say it, what value has such an obvious lie and why does any part of you assent to it?

*What surprises me is, on one side I feel a profound love for the Mother but in the outward expression I can't feel any love.*

What do you mean by outward expression? Love is a thing of the heart and does not depend on outward expression.

*It is said that, if one loves the Divine, faith ceases to be important.*

It is not true except that when the psychic love for the Divine is there, faith is there also. But so long as knowledge and realisation are not complete, faith is indispensable.

*The difficulties in sadhana come because we lack a real self-giving and spontaneous love for the Divine Mother. For the integral Yoga especially, they are our only permanent safeguards. Moreover, it is harder to understand the Divine in a physical form than on the ethereal planes. Even our outer questioning and your answering does not bring us sufficiently close. Is it not really so?*

Obviously. To understand divine movements one must enter into the divine consciousness, till then faith and surrender are the only right attitude. How can the mind judge what is beyond all its measures?

## LOVE AND ANANDA

*Would you kindly define the nature of Ananda?*

Ananda is a thing to be felt — it cannot be defined except negatively that it is not mere joy, but something much more deep and essential.

*My physical consciousness does not seem to be ready to receive love and Ananda properly.*

The quiet and calm have to be increased so as to be a firm basis for the love and Ananda.

*How is it that I have suddenly lost the state of Ananda and love that I was experiencing before?*

In order to keep it the whole system must become calm, quiet and free from demands.

# PART V



## MIND

### MENTAL DEVELOPMENT

*How is thought itself to become quiescent?*

By the descent of silence in the whole mind down to the physical.

*When an impulse comes, the mind feels perplexed and the heart is anguished. They cannot exercise control over it.*

The mind and the heart would do better to remain quiet and wait on a higher Force than theirs to do what is necessary.

*Should I not persist in making my mind surrender all its workings to the Mother?*

A persistent but quiet aspiration for the surrender of the physical mind and vital is the best way.

*The mind does not remain now in my control or think properly. It feels pressed down under the Force from above.*

The best way to meet that is for the mind to be silent and only aspire for the true open and plastic condition.

*I have not much knowledge of experience or descent; so I am unable to get the full value out of them. Could you kindly say something in general about the psychic and spiritual experience and the descent from above?*

You have to learn by experience. Mental information (badly understood, as it always is without experience) might rather hamper than help. In fact there is no fixed mental knowledge for these things, which vary infinitely. You must learn to go beyond the hankering for mental information and open to the true way of knowledge.

*Is it not better to keep giving mental knowledge until the experiences come in plenty? As you were giving it in the past, even when there were small experiences, the habit persists, though I don't want to stick to it.*

There is something in you that does want to stick to the habit of mentalising about everything. So long as you were not having real experiences it did not matter. But once real experiences begin you have to learn to approach them in the right way.

*For the last few days, the mind seems to be losing its power of direction and my being is driven by all sorts of undesirable impulses and doing things suggested by the ordinary forces.*

It is probably due to the mental control being removed — what is acting in the things you mention is not the mind but the vital and physical consciousness.

*What should take the place of the removed mental control?*

The psychic or spiritual control.

*What is meant by the spiritual control?*

The control from the higher Consciousness above the ordinary mental.

*When the mental consciousness finds that what it had accepted was not true, should it not reject it and accept what was true?*

It should do so, but it is not always so easy as that. There is much unwillingness and resistance.

*Since the higher consciousness is active now, I don't feel like doing the mental thinking and perceiving or reading — unless you want me to do it.*

What mental thinking and perceiving? Reading? It is not necessary — especially if it disturbs the higher working.

*Why do some people here consider you as greater than the Mother? Are not both of you from the same plane? Is it not a veil over the human vision that makes such a distinction?*

It is the minds that see surface things only and cannot see what is behind them.

*Our correspondence is a great help and enlightenment on the path. But we should not push such a need too far. For, if we depend on your mental help (through*

*questions-answers) too much, the inner guidance or higher knowledge will find it difficult to manifest in us, or at least it will be delayed.*

The outer guidance is meant only as an aid to the inner working, especially for the correction of any erroneous movement and sometimes in order to point out the right road. It is not meant except at a very early stage to satisfy mental questionings or to stimulate a mental activity.

*A seeker of this Yoga must guard himself against a rigid, dry and self-assertive mind. A wrongly developed intellect realises its own truth in its crooked ways. It builds a world out of itself and believes that to be a unique creation of all-truth! Then of course it becomes as difficult for him as well as for the Divine to pull him out of that grip of falsehood.*

The intellect can be as great an obstacle as the vital when it chooses to prefer its own constructions to the Truth.

*What is the subtle meaning of our asking you questions about the Yoga and does it help to surrender?*

Questions are meant for getting light on the things that are going on in one. It is the statement of what is going on that helps to surrender.

*My mind does not remain as concentrated with open eyes as with closed. Why still the difference?*

It is a usual difference for most, until the whole consciousness is unified.

*What about reading newspapers? Is it not a vice?*

It is only the attachment and diffusion of mind that are objectionable. It is not a vice. One can read if there is no attachment and no diffusion.

*Is it possible to remain conscious of the Mother in the midst of intellectual pursuits?*

It can be done when you become the witness detached from the mental action and not involved in them, not absorbed in them as the mental doer or thinker.

*When there is much tamas it fatigues the mind and this affects my concentration. I ought to disregard all such reactions and go forward.*

If the mind gets tired, naturally it is difficult to concentrate — unless you have become separated from the mind.

*How to “become separated from the mind”?*

You have to feel yourself even in the mental, vital, physical levels (not only above) a consciousness that is neither mind, life nor body.

*Up to the last year the Mother’s Force had to continue its pressure on my lower nature to change. But now a mutual understanding seems strangely to emerge between the higher and the lower. Through my mental Purusha the higher consciousness points out to my lower being its obscurity and also shows the right movements in place of the habitual wrong ones. For example, while passing by a woman, the usual reaction was an automatic sex imagination and sensation in my subtle physical. But under the present cooperation the higher asks the lower, “What is the use of all such stupid sensations, you get nothing out of them. Instead, if you open yourself to the Mother you get her love and joy which is wholesome and lasting.”*

That kind of direct mental enlightenment of the lower parts is very necessary at a certain stage.

*I feel nowadays that it is through the silence that I write all my letters to you. That is, I do not need to use my mind for it except when I ask you some mental questions. I would, however, like to ascertain the truth of this fact from you.*

It is probably correct — when there is the silence, then it is natural that the writing etc. should come out of the silence — or through it. That may very well have begun.

*My inner absorption is deepened to such an extent that it has become difficult to come out to the mind, even for reporting to you my inner experiences.*

Yet to write is necessary.

## THE INTELLECT AND ITS TRAINING

*What is the place of intellect with regard to the inner being and the outer being?*

Intellectual activities are not part of the inner being, the intellect is the outer mind.

*When does the intellect become an obstacle to the higher realisation?*

When it wants to judge things for itself instead of submitting to a higher light.

*Can any of the various thoughts that pass through the mind be useful to sadhana?*

Not the ordinary random thoughts. If it is an idea or perception with light in it, then it can be of use.

To have a developed intellect is always helpful if one can enlighten it from above and turn it to a divine use.

It is only one man out of thousands who has a trained intellect. In others it is either ill-developed or undeveloped.

*I don't find my thinking as before. Either something has gone into it or its activity does not seem as pleasant as before.*

I do not see any evidence that your thinking is not just as before. If it is a fact, it may be due to the physical mind coming up — for that is always stupid — or it may be the mind is tired of the old kind of thinking and wants something better.

*My physical work goes on smoothly by the Mother's Force. But even an inner silence cannot be maintained during mental work.*

It is only because it is more difficult to separate from the active mind than from the body consciousness.

*During study I have to set aside my response to the spiritual pressure and externalise myself in order to comprehend what I read.*

You have to do that until you can develop the power of doing mental work without externalising yourself.

*After I wrote to you about study. I find I cannot keep reading properly because I am unable to put aside the pressure. The pressure goes on during the mental activity.*

So much the better. The reading must learn to accommodate itself to the pressure — that is, be done by the outer mind while the inner being remains in concentration.

*Do people learn philosophy to teach others?*

Not always. Some learn in order that the mind may look in a complete and accurate way at things. But that is of course a mental, not a spiritual knowledge.

*What subjects do you propose for my reading and what should be done by me as a student?*

There is a great mass of necessary information about the world, one's body, the evolution of the earth, the history of the human race that one ought to learn and get then<sup>17</sup> also the training of the intellect to deal rightly with facts. All that can be done afterwards, but not so easily or so well, unless one is exceptionally industrious and intelligent. To neglect one's studies as R and S have done is therefore a mistake.

*I wish to read some philosophical books. Will you please give me some names?*

I am not sure what books would interest you and I am myself so far away from books that it is difficult to remember names. If you have not read Vivekananda's things, you can read them or any books that would give you an idea of Vedanta schools and Sankhya. There is Mahendra Sircar's "Eastern Lights". It is Indian philosophy you want, I suppose!

*What Vivekananda has said in his lectures — is it all truth, something directly inspired?*

I cannot say that it is all truth — he had his own opinions about certain things (like everybody else) which can be questioned. But most of what he said was of great value.

*I have been reading the philosophical writer Adhar Das. He writes of "unintelligent faith". Is it not a queer specimen of faith?*

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<sup>17</sup> Uncertain reading.

Intelligent faith is, I suppose, "reasoned" faith; unintelligent faith is faith that believes without reasoning.

(1) If you say "X is equal to Y. Y is equal to Z. therefore X is equal to Z, — so I believe X is equal to Z," that is intelligent faith. If you simply see at once that X is equal to Z and believe, that is unintelligent faith.

(2) If you refuse to believe and doubt and challenge and argue till all your doubts and challenges and arguments are answered to your satisfaction, at least for the time being, then that is intelligent faith. Otherwise it is unintelligent faith.

E.g. You see Nirod and believe he is Nirod, — that is unintelligent faith. If you doubt and say he might be Narbheram or Khirod or Hitler and discuss all the possible arguments for or against his being Nirod, Narbheram, Khirod and Hitler till the whole subject is exhausted until you come to the conclusion either that he is Nirod or that he is Hitler and believe in your conclusion, then that is intelligent faith.

(3) If you believe what Adhar Das believes, that is intelligent faith. If you believe what he does not believe, that is unintelligent faith.

I hope you understand now Adhar Das's statement.

There can be no clearing out of doubts. The mind doubts for the sake of doubting.

It is the stupidity of the mind to want a mental solution for everything.

Doubt and questioning are part of the physical obstruction.

*My mind does not remain vigilant all the time. Perhaps it is because it has not the vital's assistance.*

It is the mind's business to be on guard, not the vital's. If you mean that the vital is interested in other things and the mind follows, that may be so. But the business of the mind is to recall the vital, not to follow it.

*The mind observes and directs the vital, doesn't it?*

It ought to, but in most men the mind is the instrument of the vital.

*Nowadays the vital often makes me read and talk about things as an aspiring seeker should not do.*

One need not be so strict about it at this stage. All depends on the effect they have on the consciousness. Adverse things of course had better not be talked about.

*Have I not to put a cut to all the vital joys?*

All that come in the way of the sadhana, for the rest one has to remain unattached, i.e. not minding their absence, not insisting and claiming them till the right consciousness can be brought into them.

*Do you not agree that at present what I feel as joy is all a vital joy?*

What joy? There are vital joys that are innocent and need not be seriously put down — such as joy in art, poetry, literature. They have not to be put down but put aside only when they interfere with sadhana.

*At times the mind is not in a clear condition and is unaware of the reason and effect of the working of the higher Force.*

It has only to watch and observe and wait for the knowledge.

*You once used the phrase, "the essential power of the higher consciousness". What is the meaning of "essential" here?*

Do you not know what "essential" means? There is a difference between the essence of a thing which is always the same and its formations and developments which vary. There is, for instance, the essence of gold and there are the many forms which gold can take.

*I can understand the silence, peace etc. which the higher consciousness commands. But what makes a power "essential"?*

Essence can never be defined — it simply is.

*Could it be said that my intellect or inner mind has now detached itself from the lower Prakriti?*

The thinking mind generally — except the physical part.



## LOSS OF MEMORY IN SADHANA

*In which part of the mind is the memory of everything stored?*

It is not in the mind alone; it is stored in the subconscious (mind, vital and physical) as impressions — also in the inner being all is present but held back as a store of past experience.

*If one shuts out emotions, doesn't one become absent-minded?*

Absentmindedness has nothing to do with emotions, it has to do with mind, memory and thoughts.

*Why do we sometimes fail to remember certain things even though we try our best to recollect them?*

It is the nature of the physical consciousness to forget.

*My memory is very weak and dull. How to set it right?*

By training it to remember, practice (abhyasa).

*My mind has almost lost its power of memory. Can't remember anything. One minute after reading even your answers to my letters I forget all about them!*

There is very often a complaint of this kind made during the course of the sadhana. I suppose that the usual action of memory is for a time suspended by the mental silence or else by the physical tamas.

*How then is life to be carried on? The Mother's Force reminds me of what is to be done at the right time.*

That happens. The memory comes back in another way of action.

*I do not know what to do when I fail to understand your answer properly, as for instance about memory.*

It depends on the character of the answer. Sometimes the answer is not intended to be full or explicit — as about the memory, it was simply meant to hint that there would be a change or transformation of the memory as of everything else.

*Cannot a power of memory be brought down like peace or strength? How else is this difficulty to be solved?*

No, but by the change of the consciousness there can be a more conscious and perfect functioning of the memory replacing the old mechanism.

*Just as I seek the Mother's help for opening in me new capacities for her work, can I not do the same regarding memory?*

Yes, if the consciousness opens itself sufficiently to the action of the higher Force.

## PHYSICAL MIND

*All sorts of thought-formations take place in my mind, acting this way and that. What is it that brings them about?*

It is something in the physical mind which is accustomed to such thoughts and so readily receives them from any force that chooses to put them in.

*Sometimes a part of me gets drawn into noting how the Mother puts her hand on a sadhak's head at pranam and also how long she keeps it there. This seems a stupid movement of the physical mind. Why does it go on?*

The physical mind is in the habit of observing things with or without use.

*Does the inquiry consciousness belong to the intelligence proper?*

There is no "inquiry consciousness", there is curiosity in the physical mind or a tendency to inquire in the thinking mind.

*What is the difference between a thought of the physical mind and a thought of the mind proper?*

The field is different and the capacity.

*In the Mother Conversations I have read; "If the central being makes its surrender, these difficulties can be destroyed." So I thought: How easy it is to get the difficulties out of the system! What part of the mind is it that thinks like this?*

It is the physical mind that would like everything made easy.

*The emptiness, pure-existence, silence etc. are spiritual states. But it needs a special knowledge for the mind to take them rightly, otherwise there is the danger of an ignorant resistance. Unfortunately I miss that knowledge.*

These are suggestions of the physical mind and lower vital. Nobody has a special knowledge from the beginning.

*Is the physical mind right in thinking that I should not write to you about the usual wrong reactions of the outer being?*

It may be better, provided that does not mean allowing the reactions to grow and get worse.

*Is it really the physical mind that says so? Is it then not true that the normal physical mind would rather enjoy such reactions than feel a wound in reporting about them?*

No, it might accept them, but it would not enjoy them. It is something in the vital that enjoys these things in a certain sense of enjoyment.

*When I separate myself from the inertia and try to rise higher I feel some positive obstruction. Probably it is between the inner mind centre and the seventh centre (sahasradal padma).*

It must be the physical mind interfering and preventing the free ascension.

*Why is my physical mind not happy with your answers to what I write?*

Something in your physical mind stiffens and begins to defend its views. It is better to wait till it is more supple and plastic. Mental discussions are not good for sadhana but only for clarifying the intellect which is not so important at this stage as other things.

*There is a constant turmoil in the mind, which can't rest without some activity.*

Usual restlessness of the physical mind. It does not like to be unoccupied.

*From where has this restlessness come?*

The restlessness came from activity of the physical mind, dissatisfied with the answers given to it and insisting on its own ideas. This is an old habit of your physical mind.

*What should be a sadhak's attitude during the period of loneliness?*

He must have confidence in the Divine and remain unmoved even in that loneliness.

*And what is its cure?*

One should get down the peace and presence in that part to cure the loneliness.

All difficulties cannot disappear at once, but the active resistance can cease.

## MECHANICAL MIND

*For a long time I have been trying to reduce the thoughts of the mechanical mind, but to little purpose. Can nothing be done about it? When they are active how am I to remember the Mother and offer my being to her?*

You are probably paying too much attention to them.

It is quite possible to concentrate and let the mechanical activity pass unnoticed.

*When my mind begins to slacken due to some form of inertia (unwillingness to concentrate), should I try to force it to concentrate or allow it to remain only quiet?*

No general rule can be given. The best at this stage is perhaps to let it be quiet for a while and then concentrate.

*Will such slackness, inertia, unwillingness to contemplate disappear by themselves?*

No. As the higher consciousness comes in, it will push them out.

*I am much troubled by the frequency of mechanical thoughts.*

Reject always without getting disturbed by the recurrences.

*When the tamas prevails over the consciousness, is it advisable to keep the mind occupied with some book in which it generally takes interest?*

Yes, if the mind refuses the activity of sadhana, you can do that.

*How shall I be able to master this mechanical condition (in which the mind goes on endlessly with its recurring rounds) in such a way that it is transformed and never appears again?*

That is rather difficult. It is only when the subconscious has become enlightened and conscious that one can safely say, "the mechanical condition will never appear again".

As for the submind etc. these things have a habit of sticking so long as the higher dynamic activities are not established. The main thing is that they should not be allowed to invade the inner consciousness.

*Is it the mechanical mind in me that keeps the influence of a wrong movement going?*

That is probably the thing. Any disturbance is taken up by the mechanical mind and even when the direct cause is no longer there it goes on grinding out like a machine the thoughts and vibrations created.

*This long period of assimilation has made some essential change in many parts of my being, including the mechanical mind. Don't you think so?*

Certainly.

*The mechanical mind is a great obstacle to reconciling my outer work with the inner concentration. It thinks too much and endlessly.*

There is always a difficulty in getting rid of a formed habit of the nature.

There are periods when an obstacle that has not been got rid of comes up with a great force. One has to take the opportunity to fight it out.

It has to be done whether quickly or slowly. You have to work towards it without getting impatient.

*My mechanical mind has become extremely sensitive. Whenever I project outwards for action — even a necessary one — the mechanical mind takes it up for its food and goes on chewing it for quite a time.*

That is the nature of the mechanical mind — it is not due to any sensitiveness in it. Only as the outer parts of the mind are more silent and under control, this activity looks more prominent and takes more space. It usually wears itself out, if one goes on rejecting it.

*At present, it is specially the mechanical and subconscious minds that are trying now and then to interfere with the inner tranquillity. But now they themselves seem to be tired out by their fruitless knocking about.*

That is what must happen. They must become weak and ineffective so that they have no result of disturbance and then they will give up.

## STUDY AND SADHANA

*At present my sadhana has practically come down to the level of the physical and hence is much retarded. Is this not a good opportunity to train my intellect?*

The best opportunity was when the sadhana was in the mind.

*If I don't study like S. how will my mind be trained or enlightened?*

From above. However, there is no harm in training from below also.

*Shall I start by taking lessons?*

I don't see much use in your taking lessons. What you can do is to read not for pastime but with the clear intention of furnishing your mind with knowledge.

*But I would not like to waste my time reading unless it is given me as part of the sadhana.*

Yes, reading can be done for the improvement of the mental instrument as part of the sadhana.

*Once you wrote to me, "Before you read offer it to the Mother, call down her Force." Is not her Force already within us and working?*

If it is there you will have no difficulty.

*Is it not possible to do the mental work and sadhana simultaneously as I do with the physical work?*

It is not so easy to do mental work and do sadhana at the same time, for it is with the mind that the sadhana is done. If one gets back from the mind as well as the body and lives in the inner Purusha consciousness, then it is possible.

*Here the question is of separating myself even from the mind; — a difficult problem no doubt. But is it not to be done one day?*

Yes, but it is not done yet.

*If I start studying, it must be taken up as seriously as I did with the sadhana. As I have to learn English and French several hours have to be sacrificed for it.*

Study cannot take the same or greater importance than sadhana.

I have already said that you can spend time in study as the sadhana is not active. If the sadhana were active then study can be done in the spare time i.e., in times not given to work or meditation.

If there is a pressure and a descent then at that time it is better not to read.

*There was a strong higher pressure while I was studying. Normally I would have left the reading and attended to the pressure. But today I put a will that study and sadhana both must continue together. Was it correct?*

It is all right. A time must come when the reading as well as any other outward occupation does not interfere with the pressure or activity of the higher consciousness.

*There was an understanding between us that I should stay above and not pay too much attention to the ordinary movements of my outer being and that I need not report to you about the negative side of my sadhana. But now that the lower nature has become active shall I resume writing about it?*

Yes, you can write. The other arrangement was for going on with the positive side of the sadhana and not paying an undue attention to the outer being. But if the outer being imposes attention like that it is better to write about it.

*I am told that in sadhana the outer mind can be developed directly from above. At present I see many changes in my inner being, particularly in the inner mind. But the outer mind seems to have remained as ignorant and unchanged as before!*

The change there can only come when the higher consciousness takes possession of the physical mind also.

*I wonder why any part of my mind identifies itself with the outer vital. Certainly it did not do so before.*

You were too much preoccupied with higher experience at that time for the mind to do that. Coming down into the physical the physical mind became strong and it is the physical mind (or part of it) that so identifies itself.



## TWO ESSAYS

*One day I wrote two essays for my English class. My teacher criticised them in such a way that I sought Sri Aurobindo's opinion on the matter. He made some comments on the essays. These comments and the two essays are both given here.*

### **1. On Peace**

*Spiritual peace has not the same meaning as peace in our worldly parlance. In the ordinary life, when one is less depressed, disturbed or despondent than people generally are, one thinks oneself at peace.*

*Our normal consciousness (viz. our mental, vital and physical) — inner and outer — whirls constantly in restless actions. It is always pushed to activity; to pass five minutes without some kind of movement would be intolerable to it. That is perhaps the reason why even those who have a philosophical bent are often afraid of silence in the preliminary stage of their practice of Yoga. They take it, or feel it, to be something terrible, blank, fearful. We shall soon see that true silence is never like that. They feel it as such only because they are too mentally oriented.*

*In the absence of sadhana one can have quietness at the most. Even that can be attained only when one is above pain and suffering, strife and quarrel, gloom and despair, at least for the time being. But then, too, there is no true peace or quietude. These are the fruition of spiritual experience and a yogic practice is necessary for their attainment.*

*Worldly quietude or peace is very fragile, momentary, variable. Solid, lasting, self-existent, firm are the attributes of a higher peace. One who has that peace can stand against any turbulence or disturbance, shock or attack from the world, and yet hold his inner peace unmoved.*

*The ordinary peace is confined to the mind, whereas the yogic peace can descend into the vital and the body also. With many it takes up the mind first and then comes down into the other parts. But even if it has settled only in the mind, it casts its influence on the vital, and therefore we feel a kind of rest down to the very physical, as the physical is usually directed and pushed by the vital.*

## 2. On Peace and the Vital

*The spiritual peace, when it descends, brings with it such a force and strength that we feel ourselves safe, secure and poised. The vital cravings, dissatisfactions, disturbances touch us no more; and the vital likes and dislikes no longer interfere with the freedom of our will and aspiration; also, vital depression and despair are made quiet. These are the usual signs of a deep peace.*

*A peace in the mind is not enough. It can only quiet the mental disturbance and give scope for free thinking. But even this free thinking is hindered by the upsurging of the vital. For though we are mental beings, we live largely in the vital. Very few live purely and constantly in the mental consciousness. As we are more in the vital, the descent of peace straight into it is indispensable in order to calm completely our whole mental stuff.*

*But this peace must descend into the inner vital. The inner vital can open to spiritual things more easily than the outer. To bring down and establish peace in the outer vital needs long years of practice and an arduous sadhana. It is sufficient in the beginning to stabilise it in the inner vital. This will bring as a result a calm aloofness from all the lower vital movements, actions and thoughts.*

\* \* \*

*Is all this correct?*

Perfectly correct.

*My teacher rejected the second and third paragraphs. He condemned some of the sentences as rubbish. Are the essays so discouraging?*

Certainly not. Why do you suppose X to be an authority on these things? You go to him for English, not for Yoga knowledge.

*He censures my use of expressions like "mental stuff", "vital mind", etc. At least here, are they used wrongly?*

No, they are quite in place.

*The difference I made here about the inner vital and the outer vital does not coincide with his knowledge. Is there then anything to be corrected in my reference to the inner and outer vital and the peace?*

Nothing at all. Every word is correct. It does not in the least matter whether what you write coincides or not with somebody else's knowledge, so long as it coincides with mine and with your own inner perception and experience.

*I have heard that X has studied philosophy widely and is himself the author of a number of books.*

All that has nothing to do with ordinary philosophy. Philosophy knows nothing about peace and silence or the inner and outer vital. These things are discovered only by Yoga.

*I suppose they have such notions because they are given too much to thoughts.*

Yes.

*I am a little doubtful about the truth of what I wrote about philosophy; that is why I have asked you a separate question regarding it. I hope you will kindly point out my errors in ideas.*

There is no error in these.

*The first essay I sent you was written as an initial training for philosophical thought, for X's class. His judgment was that there were many incorrect ideas, particularly about philosophy and silence. But you said that there was no error there. In that case should I take all I have written as correct?*

There was no error. Ordinary human minds, Europeans especially, are accustomed to regard thought as indispensable and as the highest thing, so they are alarmed of silence. Y when he was here asked for Yoga. I told him how to make his mind silent and it became silent. He immediately got frightened and said, "I am becoming a fool, I can't think", so I took what I had given away from him. That is how the average mind regards silence.

# KNOWLEDGE

## PREFACE TO KNOWLEDGE

*Sri Aurobindo always discouraged in me the ordinary way of developing the mind. Whenever I asked him intellectual or philosophical questions he would reply that I should not go after intellectual knowledge but allow direct intuitive knowledge to grow in me. He used to tell me this when I had just begun the sadhana and was very far from even the beginning of knowledge. When it first started descending into me, I was utterly unaware of what was taking place; it took such a personal aspect that I did not even guess that I was receiving the higher knowledge. It did not come as a voice, or as something objectively apprehended, but touched the stuff of my mind in a way that made it flow as a natural and spontaneous movement, making me think that it was a product of my own mind.*

*How things really were I only came to know later. One day I realised that Sri Aurobindo was giving me very brief answers; so I wrote to him that I found such answers unsatisfying. It was then that he informed me that as it was the higher knowledge I was receiving from the Mother, he found no need to comment on my letters at length. A little later he told me in connection with some other question that this knowledge was from the Higher Mind level. Just for the sake of interest I counted the number of mistakes I had made in transcribing this knowledge, that is, in giving it mental expression; there were very few in three or four years. These occurred when I attempted something which was obviously beyond my capacity at the time — I tried to formulate certain spiritual truths metaphysically.*

*It is necessary to explain here the value of this higher knowledge for my inner sadhana as well as for my outer life, which is nothing but a continuation of this sadhana, an external expression of the internal development.*

*In the course of the practice of Sri Aurobindo's Yoga one comes in contact with the higher knowledge; it can be effectively utilised for one's sadhana either by entering into it or by drawing it down. This movement of contacting the knowledge remains with many, at least in the early stages, more or less impersonal. But this was not the case with me; I did not know mentally what was meant by spiritual knowledge when it first began to descend — the actual relation between the knowledge and myself was, and still is, even after so many years, beyond my grasp. What the Mother seems to have done, not as a result of my tapasya but as an act of*

*her Grace, is this: she has opened me to her higher spiritual knowledge, and has linked it through this opening with the stuff of my mental consciousness, so that whenever the knowledge flows in I feel it as a natural product of my own consciousness, but when the opening is closed the same knowledge seems foreign to me. The action of this knowledge is at times felt, to use Sri Aurobindo's own words, "as a sort of concrete spiritual sense".*

*Through this knowledge I feel not only the Mother's and Sri Aurobindo's guidance in an impersonal way, but also their personal intervention and direct help in any problem I may have; the action of their light and power can always be dynamically felt. In the course of this correspondence we shall have many occasions to note this. In a few cases the possession of the Mother's knowledge of my mind was so entire that she spoke to me as directly as if she had been physically present before me and speaking. These have been recorded in the book.*

*Had it not been for this rare act of the Mother's Grace, I would never have been able to go ahead so boldly and confidently on the path; for I have always felt assured that if I were to make any serious mistake she would not only inform me inwardly about it but would also show me why it had occurred and how it could be prevented in the future. Whenever she has done this, she has not merely enlightened me about my defects as other Gurus do, but projected her Power to change and sometimes transform them.*

*One wanting to tread the path of Sri Aurobindo's Yoga to the very end must needs have, along with other requisites, the Mother's knowledge too.*

\* \* \*

*What is the use of knowledge when we can't act according to its light and truth?*

Knowledge is always better than ignorance. It makes things possible hereafter, if not at the moment, while ignorance actively obstructs and misleads.

*Yesterday's experience was more intense, solid and powerful than ever before. Calm and silence were its background. Will you kindly tell me what it was? It seemed too profound for me to understand.*

You must get the knowledge by developing the experience.

*Generally the experiences come by themselves, I only try to live within and go on aspiring and receiving them. What is actually meant by "developing the experience"?*

Let it develop of itself — then it must become sufficiently precise for you to know what it is.

*It is said that the Silence is the best state for the knowledge to descend. At present when I become silent I receive no such thing as knowledge. "Non-existence" is the only state that I experience.*

That is the first stage of the silence not the last.

*But why does the knowledge not come since there is silence to receive it?*

The knowledge will come in its time.

*Daily I report to you the experiences and other movements of my sadhana. Sometimes you give your illuminating comments, sometimes you are silent. Does your latter reaction indicate any exaggeration on my part?*

It means that I accept what you write — or when what you write is not explicit enough, I wait for the experience to develop. Silence does not mean that there is any exaggeration.

*I think, it is better to go on writing whatever knowledge comes down from above without giving it any importance. But then what about corrections?*

It is not that it is of no importance but you have to go on seeing things as they present themselves to your experience. If there is anything to be corrected, it will be corrected.

*Your answer to what I had noted down from the higher knowledge was, "There was no objection to make, so I said nothing." In that case, when you make no comments to my statements, may I take the latter as correct and as accepted by you?*

Substantially in all important matters. But sometimes I wait for confirmation.

*The Mother is so great that none of us can gauge her truly. Not only our highest range of intellect but even our spiritual experiences are not enough to make us understand and feel fully what she really is. They can offer us only a partial revelation.*

The experiences are not a complete knowledge, but they lead towards it.

*The Mother's light flows in my forehead. I am surprised to see that it works with a tranquil intensity, while the whole head is completely filled with it.*

Good.

*As the Brahmic passage remains widely open all the time I have begun to feel now the Mother's working precisely. So when she grants me something I shall experience it as clearly as if she were pouring water into a glass.*

That is good also.

*Often during a good receptivity, my consciousness feels clearly a free flow of what the Mother gives me. And yet I am so ignorant of the exact nature of the thing received. I am only aware that something from above has descended.*

The knowledge from above has to descend before there can be precise knowledge of that kind.

To be conscious is the first step — the exact knowledge will come afterwards.

*O Lord, in what immensity of stillness did the Mother place my soul and all! Then to what great heights did she carry me! While being lifted I felt a pure consciousness in place of my mind, life and body.*

That is what is known as the realisation of the Self which is other than mind, life or body.

*What I once understood as the "mind" the Mother has pulled back during the Pranam; thus emptying me of the mental stuff she wants to fill me with her own Self! Now my life will be carried on without the usual action of the mind. There will not be any difficulty, I think, for the inner sadhana, as it is entirely done by her alone, and in my letters to you I shall only put what she sends me from her knowledge, myself remaining only a pure and clean channel. I am sure that one day the very words and phrases too will come directly from her. As regards the physical work, it must be completely left to her Force; as a child leaves everything to its mother, so too will I leave her to judge everything and decide for me.*

That is how all should be in the perfect realisation throughout the being.

*Even when the deeper or higher pitch of the sadhana falls down the Mother's knowledge-gift does not leave me. It is really her wonderful Blessings which go on helping at any time and in any state — highest or lowest!*

That is very good.

*The higher knowledge is one of the aspects of the Divine Mother. It contains in itself fire, force and light for effectuation.*

Yes.

*I describe certain knowledge in my letters to you. When the letters come back to me, I just cannot believe that it was really I who wrote them. Why is this so?*

The knowledge comes from above, — it is not yours in any personal sense.

*During the sadhak's journey Godwards there are always difficulties and problems. But he should not halt and wait to solve them. He should rather increase the speed and reach the destination earlier. For the things left behind unsolved will automatically be cleared up once he reaches the summit.*

Yes.

*One more reason to travel fast is that once he reaches the goal he can offer himself as the Mother's aide in her great mission on earth.*

Quite right.

*How do you find what I said above?*

All that is written in this letter is the true knowledge. If only everybody could realise it!

*To change tamas into peace, dynamic means are necessary. When will my passivity and emptiness adopt that dynamism?*

There must come a greater descent of Force into the system. At present Peace and Knowledge are descending more than Force.

*I find that the lower nature is not as yet much influenced by the knowledge. I can only detach myself from it by the help of knowledge, but not master it.*



If one has the knowledge, then it is much easier to draw back into that free part and feel separate from the clouded parts.

*It is now time that my vital-physical should reject its old weakness of not accepting whatever the Mother does not do for me.*

Yes. It must be got rid of. It has no true reason for remaining after the real knowledge has come.

*About the veiling of the higher knowledge you wrote, "There is no other reason than the force of the inertia itself and its acceptance by the physical consciousness." Should I then take it that formerly there was no "force of the inertia" and therefore the knowledge was always open to me?*

When the knowledge began coming down, there was not the force of inertia as strong as at present. It was at that time something quite behind, since then you have come down much deeper into the physical and the inertia rises accordingly.

*During the days of inertia, instead of resorting to some dynamic means I am rather passive. Everything seems to get veiled.*

If the knowledge also gets veiled, then the use of dynamic means may be necessary.

*Should I report about the dark period of sadhana?*

It all depends. If the inertia persisting really veils up everything, then you have to write. But if you are conscious of yourself and the knowledge unveiled, then you need not.

*The subconscious inertia has now veiled everything in me.*

Keep the knowledge secure — do not allow that to be clouded.

*Could you kindly enlighten me as to how the knowledge gets obstructed at times?*

These things do not work according to any fixed rule. Sometimes they have one effect which at other times they have not.

*Do you not think that the stopping of knowledge is more due to the vital and its ego than to the inertia alone? The inertia by itself is only a passive obstruction which turns into a dynamic one when the vital-mind endorses it.*

Yes, that is correct.

*Is not the knowledge again trying to penetrate in spite of the dark impediments?*

It is trying to do so.

*How is it that the higher knowledge descends only when I begin to write it down?*

That is because that movement (of the knowledge descending through writing) is now something fixed and normal to the consciousness.

## KNOWLEDGE AND MIND

*The knowledge seems to be obstructed by the mental activity. Whenever a little of it descends the mechanical mind catches it and goes on chewing it endlessly. That is why sometimes I have to stop the flow of even the higher thought to guard my silence.*

That is always the difficulty with the mind. It must learn to be silent and let the knowledge come without trying to catch hold of it for its own play.

*During the descent of the higher knowledge what happens to our human mind? I suppose it must be present, if not active at least passive; otherwise how could the knowledge take form and shape?*

It uses the substance of mind (for, of course the mind is there) but the mind remains passive and does not try to form or imagine thoughts for itself.

*Is it really necessary for us sadhaks to inquire what plane we have reached, how far we are from the goal, what our next step should be?*

All that has its use but it should come as experience and knowledge from within and above, not as mental questioning and answer.

*I get many perceptions. I don't know which are the right ones and which the wrong ones, since I am not directly and consciously open to the intuitive plane. You may perhaps ask me to use my discrimination, but at this stage my intellect has entirely fallen away!*

There is a discrimination that is not intellectual — a direct perception.

*Nowadays I feel that my consciousness has an effortless and clear understanding of what is the Mother's and what is not hers.*

That is the right thing — a certain effortless intuitive discrimination.

## KNOWLEDGE AND FAITH

*I could not quite understand the following thought from the Arya: "The faith will be more and more justified as the higher knowledge opens, we shall begin to see the great and small significances that escaped our limited mentality and faith will pass into knowledge." How does faith turn into knowledge?*

Until we know the Truth (not mentally but by experience, by change of consciousness) we need the soul's faith to sustain us and hold on to the Truth — but when we live in the knowledge, this faith is changed into knowledge.

Of course I am speaking of direct spiritual knowledge. Mental knowledge cannot replace faith, so long as there is only mental knowledge, faith is still needed.

*If a sadhak waits a little and watches without giving room to anxiety and impatience most of his troubles will be over soon. Even if it takes a little long what does it matter since he has left his boat entirely in the hands of the Mother?*

*Those who ask the Mother why the boat is turning downstream, why it does not sail as freely and swiftly as before, what makes the clouds grow blacker, cannot claim a real faith. For there is hardly any spiritual element here. Even an ordinary man takes great risks in life if he is foretold and promised that after passing through the storms he will be highly rewarded.*

*A true faith is that which never questions or grumbles no matter if the obscurity, ignorance or falsehood is suffocating him or hell is let loose on him. He does not even murmur before the omniscient Mother, since he knows that She is aware of all that is happening in him. So it is not necessary to cry before Her outwardly. Not that he does not suffer. But he bears his burden in silence. He has realised that it is for the sake of the Divine that he is undergoing all such hardships and difficulties. This realisation will rather offer him joy instead of sorrow in enduring whatever is to be endured on the path. He does not allow himself to be deluded by the attacks, failures and griefs. He sees them with a detached eye. He depends on his psychic being and consults it at every turn of the road to make sure that the Mother is not left aside by him. If She is still there, he is worried about nothing else.*

*A still higher attitude is a very simple one and may be very shortly expressed. The sadhak should not take any attack or difficulty as belonging to his individual self but consider it as moving in the general atmosphere. He should say to himself, "I am*

*progressing as before, The Mother is carrying me on just as ever, whether I am aware or unaware of the fact."*

That is the true faith and its natural attitude.

*It is said that, if one loves the Divine, faith ceases to be important.*

It is not true except that when the psychic love for the Divine is there, the faith is there also. But so long as knowledge and realisation are not complete, faith is indispensable.

## KNOWLEDGE AND THE RISING OF EGO

*It is true that when one crosses the border of mind and lives above the head, the word "difficulty" exists no more for him. For the hostile or the lower forces cannot touch the higher planes which are the Mother's.*

From the higher mind upwards all is free from the action of the hostile forces. For they all belong to the spiritual consciousness though with varying degrees of light and power and completeness.

*I think the sadhaks should be satisfied with describing what happens in their sadhana, and have no demands regarding the answers they receive from you. To ask questions urged by the vital ego will only disturb the sadhana.*

It is so indeed because it is their mind and vital that put the question and the ego is always wanting to make use of the answer or the mental ignorance to distort it.

*A suggestion tells me that, at least for some time, I should write to you as little, as possible and devote more time to the deeper meditations.*

To write is necessary but it is not necessary to write much. A little is sufficient at present.

*I am glad to know that you don't think it necessary for me to write much, but then what about the higher knowledge? You know that it is only while writing that I open myself to its descent.*

I suggest "a little" only in case you find it difficult, as you said, to write owing to the pressure of the silence. But if things come, there is no reason to stop them.

*Will you please let me know why you often write, "You are right", since it is the Mother's knowledge?*

When I say, you are right, it is understood that the "you" gets its knowledge from the Mother.

*I notice that sometimes in order not to send my letters back without something of yourself, you make some remark on them through love and kindness for me even when such a remark is not really required. But I feel that you need not do this. After reading the letters if you draw a small line at the end it will be sufficient to give me*

*the indication that they have not come back without your reading them, as sometimes happens.*<sup>18</sup>

Very well.

*When I suggested about drawing a line, I thought that it would be possible for me to impose a complete surrender on my outer being. For three days I have been trying to do it.*

*The outer nature is losing all interest and joy in responding to the higher knowledge. It says: "What is the use of spending time in bringing down the higher knowledge, it has now no value as Sri Aurobindo doesn't put his comments on what I write? How am I to know that all I write is from the higher source without his written approval, for it could be a mixture of my own mind or of some non-spiritual planes?"*

All these suggestions are absolutely absurd. It is the ego rising up again and wanting to be patted on the back and told how clever it is and how much knowledge it is getting.

You yourself wrote that the knowledge was not yours, but the Mother's and objected to my writing "You are right". If it is the Mother's knowledge coming down in you why should I have to say "Yes, no" or "Right, wrong" to it? It is the knowledge which you need that the Mother is giving you — if there is any mixture of your own, I shall point it out to you. If there is none, why should I put in unnecessary approving comments on it? It was your own psychic that made you suggest putting the line so as to get rid of the remnant of the old ego that was secretly feeding on my comments and it was to help in that that I kept silence.

You wrote, I suppose, to help your communion with the Mother and lay what comes in you physically before her, not to get her mental approval or praise. If there is anything to say, you can trust in me to say it — if there is no remark called for, you should leave me free to keep silence. That is the rule I keep always with those who have advanced sufficiently — not to need mental encouragement or explanations at every step. It seems to me that you have advanced far enough for that also.

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<sup>18</sup> This process continued during the rest of the correspondence. Even when Sri Aurobindo did give his written answer he continued drawing a line at the end.

## PART VI



## HIGHER PLANES OF CONSCIOUSNESS

*Is not the higher mind the first plane above our mind?*

That is right. It is the first of the planes above the ordinary human mind.

*Is the forehead (inner mind centre) a part of the higher mind?*

No, it indicates the mind generally. The higher mind is above.

*What is characteristic of the higher mind?*

It is a mind of thought and knowledge and spiritual perception but spontaneously seeing the truth.

*Could one cross the higher planes without establishing peace and silence? If so, would one feel the vibrations?*

I do not see how it can be done without peace and silence, if it is the higher planes which are spoken of. Of course large mental and vital planes can be reached without it and in that passage there may be vibrations.

*A few days back you wrote: "It happens sometimes when the force is flowing down from the Brahmarandhra." What does this Sanskrit word indicate?*

The place at the top of the head (called crown of the head) which is supposed to be the part at which things ordinarily come in from above and go out. E.g. it is through this that the being in the sukshma deha (subtle physical) goes out at the time of death and also it is the passage of connection (previous to opening) between the higher and the lower consciousness.

*There are stories in the old scriptures, Puranas, that some great yogis were tempted by the Apsaras (fairies of other worlds). Then some of them left their yogic tapasya and even married them. Are these really facts or mere religious fables?*

These things are possible but they do not usually happen — because it is difficult for beings of the subtle worlds to materialise to such an extent or for a long time. They prefer to act by influencing human beings, using them as instruments or taking possession of a human mind and body.

## ASCENT AND DESCENT OF THE HIGHER CONSCIOUSNESS-FORCE

*Sometimes in my forehead I feel as if a burning spark has entered, though it remains within only for a while. What is this spark?*

A spark of the higher dynamic force, I suppose.

*Since early morning I have been receiving something from above through the forehead. It descends swiftly and powerfully.*

It is the higher consciousness sending its force down into the inner mind centre.

*In the morning my inner consciousness was lifted up above the head. There it found a plane which was filled with force — a force of great intensity and power. Even the air there was full of fiery vibrations. What was this experience?*

It is the higher Force above which is always there waiting for its time of descent. As one feels the silence and wideness of the Self there, so one feels there a presence of a great Force — higher or Divine Force.

*During the free reception I feel the descent passing through my head, forehead and inner vision centre.*

It is the inner mind centres that have become open and conscious.

*During a deep meditation, sometimes I feel a sweet and star-cool intense Force just above my head. At the same time I see my vital consciousness rising from its navel centre to that Force and drawing it down. It may be noted, however, that this whole movement needs a little effort (though not striving), otherwise the Force by itself does not descend.*

Such an ascent and drawing down from above is often the preliminary to the spontaneous descent of that which is above.

*Should I allow such an effort?*

There is no harm at all in allowing it.

*The effort to ascend and draw down the Mother's Force does not succeed every time. Still do you want me to go on developing this process till it becomes easy and natural for the Force to come down by itself even without my conscious call?*

It does not matter if it fails at times. You have to persist until it becomes automatic.

*The Mother's present Force is experienced as a piece of sweetmeat! How to believe in such a phenomena?*

Why not?

*When it is too difficult to bring down the Force while remaining below and to remove the darkness that is there, I simply leave my external being and rise above.*

That is good. The power of rising above at will is of great value.

*The Mother has worked out something positive during yesterday's general meditation. The mechanical recurrence that used to take place even when part of myself entered into the self-realisation has now stopped altogether.*

It is evident that something fundamental has been realised.

*You wrote: "The higher vital can be like that (calm, strong, ready for the higher Force) but only when the true vital manifests itself." There seems to be no revolt or resistance from the vital. What then prevents my true vital from manifesting?*

The things that you are realising more and more fundamentally are liberation, purification, peace and silence, self, etc., the static side of the higher consciousness. The dynamic things are only beginning or preparing — the manifestation of the true vital is part of this dynamic realisation. There is no hurry — all will come in its time.

*There is started today an easy soaring from plane to still higher plane of consciousness. It was a sweet and joyous flight.*

That is good. It means the way open to higher and higher planes of consciousness.

*This particular movement I could not follow with full clarity: whether it was an ascent or a descent or both. First something huge came down through the head, filling my body with its light. Passing through the throat centre with a little difficulty it reached the chest. Simultaneously another movement also took place from the chest. It rose*

*up to the seventh centre (sahasradala padma chakra on the head). The second movement was also full of intensity and supported by the vital, otherwise it would not have been experienced so clearly and at the same time. It would have been rather engulfed in the powerful descent.*

It is the descent and responding ascent in the higher part of the being.

*During the past seven days the Mother opened me to the first of the higher planes. Now a suggestion says that a preparation for the second plane is on. And I am passing through the intermediate zone, which lies between the two higher planes. Is that why the downward pull of the adverse forces is so strong and obstinate at present?*

What do you mean exactly by the intermediate zone?

It is not likely that the attack is for preventing your rising above the higher Mind. It is rather probable that they want to prevent two things — first, your being permanently above in the Self and secondly the descent of the Force which should fill the Peace and Silence.

*Some people say that between two planes there is an intermediate zone. As one passes through it the forces or beings of that region try their best to lure away and prevent the sadhak from entering the next upper plane.*

Who are the people that say that? I have used the phrase in a quite different sense. Has anybody had experience of these intermediate zones?

*How is it that at times the Force descends, but only a part of it, not its fullness?*

That is always so at first. It prepares the completer descent.

*If you kindly permit, I would prefer to station myself in the higher consciousness, from where I have been absent for quite a time, to be up there and associate myself with the Mother in her working out the change of my lower nature.*

No objection — it is a very good thing to keep working in the higher consciousness. It is more effective than struggling all the time down below with the lower forces.

*There are periods when there is no active or apparent movement of the sadhana for the entire being is at rest. During such a transitional period, I pulled up my human*

*consciousness from below and united it with the self-existence above. By this method, it will carry back at least some peace and purity of the higher planes when it returns to earth.*

It is an excellent method.

*Now I have started using dynamic aspirations on the battlefield and find them very effective.*

All along good so that there is nothing to say.

*When I rise above and before I plunge myself into some higher development the mechanical mind pulls me down. It does it so secretly and cunningly that I become aware of it only when I am already pulled down. It is due to this defect or weakness that I am not as yet able to take full advantage of my stay on the spiritual planes.*

That is a thing that happens in the earlier stages. It can be got rid of by perseverance, the length of the higher condition increasing to the requisite degrees.

*I draw your attention to some of the essential things I need at present: bhakti (devotion), love and joy.*

All comes in its time. One has to go on quietly and steadily increasing the higher consciousness till it takes possession of the vital and physical parts.

*There was just one moment, a single moment, when I experienced myself completely and throughout, as the divine Force itself. Is it not by such openings that tamas shall be conquered most easily and effectively?*

Yes.

*I am sorry, today I have not kept the distinction between what is truly of my self and what is of the lower vital.*

The distinction must be kept not only clear but entire — for the least blurring of it gives the opportunity for the vital of the nature to pull out the consciousness from its higher state.

*Now that the Mother's Power acts in me it will make me do what should be done. And it will also help me to avoid unnecessary things on the path. Is it not really so?*

Yes.

*While rising a little beyond the human mind I see and feel a direct and straight path. Its one end is at the seventh centre and the other high above, in fact so high up that I cannot see it but can have only an impression of it. This flight has many gradations.*

It is the line of connection between the spiritual mind, through higher mind, illumined mind, intuition, overmind to the supramental.

*For the last two days, my consciousness seems to soar much higher than the Higher Mind. Not only the inner but even the outer being feels elevated. Today especially I experienced as if the consciousness had crossed the Intuition plane. I cannot be quite certain about these flights unless I have your confirmation.*

It may be, but it is comparatively easy to go high when the way is opened. The difficulty is to bring down the power of those states and that can be done only stage by stage.

*Rising above, one rarely thinks of bringing anything down oneself. For one always thinks it is enough if one can dwell there up above and whatever is to be brought down or worked out below in the lower planes will be accomplished by the Mother's Force alone.*

If you can rise always, it can be done like that. But the inertia prevents that, then there must be a descent to remove the obstacle. The will for that must be there.

*For many days I have been feeling a great Force above my head, but it is not coming down. That means there is some obstruction to its passage below. Do you want me to draw it down by my will?*

The Force must come down, though probably it will do so by stages. The will has to invite it if not draw it. Also the Force has to be used, that is, something of it directed by the will against the obstacles. This training of the will to act in the yogic way is very important as a stage in the sadhana.

*Your phrase, "the will has to invite it if not draw it" — does it mean I should rather invite the Force than draw it?*

No, I did not ask you not to draw it. I meant, if one does not want to draw it, one must at least invite it by one's own will, not merely wait for it to come down.

*The inertia, physical weakness, endless subconscious recurrences have covered up my sadhana again and made such a confusion that I don't know how to pull myself out of it.*

By calling down the Descent, since the Ascent is impossible. At least that is how I dealt with the situation in my own case.

*If it was the 'oscillation' which made a complete silence disappear, I can't understand it. Formerly such a silence could stay on for days together. Moreover, at that time my progress was less and not as stable as now.*

The rush of the experience at the beginning is often very powerful, so powerful that the resisting elements remain quiescent — afterwards they rise up. The experience has then to be brought down and settled in these parts also.

*In one place you say, "The experiences prepare the different parts of the being for loving in the right way." Somewhere else you write that the higher experiences leave the exterior nature as it is and that mere rising above or getting experiences brings no change in the lower vital, ego etc. Well?*

I am not speaking of mere rising above. The rising above has to be followed by the descent of the higher consciousness into the different parts of the being. That aided by the psychic development and aiding it changes the external nature.

*In spite of the massive difficulties not only my inner being but even the outer mind are sure of a final victory.*

Yes, of course. The obstruction can be only a temporary phase.

*You might have noticed that during the last two days the higher consciousness has again been pressing immensely. The head and forehead remain under strong and keen pressures which are often unbearable.*

That is simply the higher consciousness trying to come down.

*I would like to know if my former experiences and living in the higher consciousness have brought about any fundamental change in my lower nature. At least at present my ego and physical vital are found to be practically the same as ever.*

The action of the higher consciousness does not usually begin by changing the outer nature — it works on the inner being, prepares that and then goes outward. Before that whatever change is done in the outer nature has to be done by the psychic.

*Do you think that I remained too much in the higher consciousness and in the yogic experiences? That I really never thought enough of bringing all that down to change my human nature?*

Your tendency was to go up and to leave the higher consciousness to deal with the lower nature without any personal effort for that. That could have worked all right on two conditions: (1) that the peace and force would come down and occupy all down to the physical (2) that you succeeded in keeping the inner being unmoved by the outer nature. The physical failed to absorb the peace, inertia rose instead; force could not come down; the suggestions from the outer nature proved too strong for you and between these suggestions and the inertia they interrupted the sadhana.

*Regarding the change of the physical nature, I never thought of doing it myself. My impression was that such a herculean task could only be performed by the Mother's Force, while I maintained my station above. I always had a will for it but did not put myself to work at it.*

One can remain in the higher consciousness and yet associate oneself with the change of the lower nature. No doubt it is the Mother's Force that will do what is necessary but the consent of the "sadhak, the association of his will with her action or at least of his witness vision is necessary also.

You left it [the ordinary nature] to be dealt with by the Force while you remained above — and if you could have remained above it would no doubt have been dealt with.

*In the Yoga does the ascent take place first or the descent? I can see that I was not wholly fixed on the higher plane.*

There is no fixed rule in such things. With many the descent comes first and the ascension afterwards, with others it is the other way; with some the two processes go on together. If one can fix oneself above so much the better. I have explained to you why it did not happen.



*The Mother put her Force on a sadhak because he wanted to change something in his nature. Can she not do the same thing with me? I too wish to change my ego and vital.*

I don't know to what you refer. Force is always put; its result depends on the cooperation of the sadhaka's nature.

*I cannot understand whether or not my sadhana is really stopped. Could you kindly explain what is actually the matter?*

'Stopped' is a relative term. It is not able to go further or even to complete the descent that was taking place, because the vital has not yet consented to the necessary change.

*About the higher Force you wrote, "Let it come in." Does it mean that under the present circumstances of the sadhana I had better not draw the Force but leave it to its own choice?*

I mean that you need not pull it down, but you should aid its entry by your full aspiration and assent.

*Now if there is no harm can I resume drawing the Force?*

You can do it.

*Why are my peace and silence still so passive? Will they never become solid and dynamic?*

It can only be so if Force comes down into the silence.

*There is no fluttering in the being. The quietness reigns over the nature. Is this not the positive sign of the whole consciousness, down to the physical, turning towards the higher and making itself a calm vessel for the Mother's working?*

Yes. But it must fix itself in the physical.

*From 1.30 to 3.30 p.m. a powerful and unusual pressure seizes my head. Is it an indication of any victory over my lower nature?*

If it becomes a dynamic descent, then yes.

*In that case it is certain that there is a descent though I am not aware of it.*

Yes.

*Does the descent's becoming dynamic or passive depend on myself?*

To a certain extent, not altogether.

*What is the purpose of the dynamic descent?*

The dynamic descent is for change.

*The physical consciousness is too weak to hold the experience even for a short time. It gets tired. The mechanical mind takes advantage of this and rushes in. How to prevent such obstacles? It is really a pity that in spite of having the higher experiences before me I can't respond to them. What is the remedy?*

No remedy except the possession of the physical by the higher consciousness and a consequent throwing outside of these things.

## SELF, INDIVIDUAL AND UNIVERSAL

*What is called one's self (not the soul or the psychic being) above the head? Is it individual or universal? I mean, is one's self the same as another's self or is there individuality in it as is in the soul of each person?*

The self is felt as either universal, one in all, or as universalised individual the same in essence as others, extended everywhere from each being but centred here. Of course centre is a way of speaking, because no physical centre is usually felt — only all the action takes place around the individual.

*When the self is made active by sadhana, does it usually work directly or through the psychic being?*

Directly but with the psychic being as its support. Usually however one does not so much feel the self active as an action in and through the self. What acts on the self depends on the realisation; it is sometimes Nature, sometimes the cosmic Divine, sometimes the Mother.

*You said, "sometimes Nature". What is meant by Nature with a capital N?*

Nature = Prakriti.

*Yesterday you wrote to me, "Usually however one does not so much feel the self active as an action in and through the self." I am sorry I fail to grasp the phrase about the self and the action.*

The Self or Atman is inactive; Nature (Prakriti) or Shakti acts. When the Self is felt it is first an infinite existence, wideness, silence, freedom, peace that is felt — that is called Atman or Self. When action takes place, it is according to the realisation either felt as forces of Nature working in that wideness, as the Divine Shakti working or as the Cosmic Divine or various powers of his working. It is not felt that the Self is acting.

*Is not the self a portion of the Divine?*

It is the individual being that is a portion of the Divine. The universal self or Atman which is the same in all, is not a portion but an aspect of the Divine.

*Here what is exactly meant by the 'individual being' — is it the soul or the central being?*

The central being and the soul are both in different ways portions of the Divine. They are in fact two aspects of the same entity, but one is unevolving above Nature, the other evolves a psychic being in Nature.

*What is the difference between the cosmic Divine and the Mother?*

It is a matter of realisation. In the Yoga of the Gita the Cosmic Divine is realised as Vasudeva (Krishna). The Vaishnavas realise it as Vishnu, the Shaivas as Shiva, the Tantrics (Shaktas) realise the Devi (Goddess) as the Cosmic and even as the Transcendent Divine.

*Is not the Self and the Jivatman one and the same thing? The soul is considered as a spark of the Divine and the Jivatman as a portion of the Divine.*

The self, Atman is in its nature either transcendent or universal (Paramatma, Atma); when it individualises and becomes a central being, then it is the Jivatman. The Jivatman feels his oneness with the universal but at the same time his central separateness as a portion of the Divine.

*"What acts on the Self depends on the realisation; it is sometimes Nature, sometimes the cosmic Divine, sometimes the Mother." Is the Self, which is an aspect of the Divine, so much open to anything that even Nature (lower Prakriti) can act on it?*

It is in the Self not on it. Everything acts in the self — the whole play of Nature takes place in the Self, in the Divine. The Self contains the universe.

*In that case are not the Self and the Divine one and the same? How is it then I was told that the Self was not even a portion of the Divine but only an aspect?*

The Self is the Divine itself in an essential aspect; it is not a portion. There is no meaning in the phrase "not even a portion" or "only an aspect". An aspect is not something inferior to a portion.

*Could you kindly tell me in short the differences between the cosmic Truth and the Divine Truth?*

The cosmic Truth is the truth of things as they are at present expressed in the universe. The Divine Truth is independent of the universe, above it and originates it.

*I suppose in the eyes of the cosmic Divine everything here is perfect.*

Everything here is not perfect but all works out the cosmic Will in the course of the ages.

*How far does the cosmic Divine maintain his unity or relation with the Supramental Divine? We see here hundreds of things and movements about which the Real Divine would not at all say: "They are one with my Will."*

This is a world of evolution in Matter. If everything were supramental from the beginning, there would be no place for evolution.

*When I asked about the difference between the cosmic and the Divine Truth it was not "the truth of things" that was in my mind. Rather I wanted to know the difference between the Yogi's cosmic experiences and his spiritual experiences.*

The Yogi's cosmic experiences are spiritual experiences — experiences of the play of the Forces and its relation with the Self, the action of the Guide, what is behind the appearance of things, occurrences etc. etc., the actual relations of the workings of Purusha and Prakriti etc. The Divine Truth is the truth of the divine Essence, Consciousness, Self, Knowledge, Light, Power, Bliss. It is something from which the cosmos derives with all its movements, but it is more than the cosmos.

## REALISATION OF THE SELF

*My present consciousness does not like to concentrate on anything or on any definite object. It remains simply 'spread out'. What is meant by that?*

I presume you mean that you are living in the consciousness of the Self which is everywhere spread out throughout existence. That is how one usually experiences it.

*You have spoken of spreading out the Brahmic consciousness where one begins to lose the ego. What is this Brahmic or Brahman consciousness? Spread out where?*

In the wideness of the Self and of the universal Divine Consciousness — these two together are the Brahman consciousness.

*I feel what you want all of us to do is to detach at least one part of our being and unite it inwardly with the Mother. So that however low our immediate condition or fall, that part will keep us in contact with her light and truth. No amount of falls, frustrations and depressions (after all most of us can't avoid such things on the way) will have any lasting effect on us.*

Yes, that is the first necessity.

*That inner contact with the Mother automatically weakens the fundamental power of the forces of the Darkness and Ignorance. This perhaps is one of the highest gains in our sadhana.*

Yes.

*We are not fully conscious all the time and in all conditions. Therefore we shall miss that unity at times, especially when the darkness has veiled the heart and the inner being.*

Even then the self ought not to be veiled — it must recover consciousness.

*As one part of our being is always in the Mother it will become a channel to the other parts for the needed help.*

Yes.

*... the part of my being which is stationed in the higher self has to come down to work for the change of the human nature. It says, "Oh, now I am a part of the Divine and yet I have to descend and dwell with the lower physical nature." I suppose, you would agree that in my previous birth I must have been a sannyasin, seeking for Nirvana.*

Maybe — but it is a natural reluctance even if one is not after Nirvana.

*A time comes when one reaches a consciousness which is full of sheer silence, peace, bliss and freedom. They are so rich, deep and intoxicating at least to our human experience that one may not take the trouble to march forward. One may choose to remain plunged in them forever.*

It is the goal for most Yogas, but for us it is the beginning and basis. For it is the state of spiritual liberation which was all they wanted.

## OLD YOGAS AND OUR YOGA

*It seems someone wrote to you: "I thought there is quite a difference between divinisation and supramentalisation, one being only one of the steps to the other." I would like to understand exactly the difference between divinisation and supramentalisation. Is not the latter implied in the former? Is not the Divine greater than the Supermind?*

The Divine can be realised in any plane according to the capacity of that plane, as the Divine is everywhere. The Yogis and Saints realise the Divine on the spiritualised mind plane, that does not mean they become supramental.

*Did the ancient Yogis make no distinction between the realisation of the Divine and divinisation?*

They aimed at realisation and did not care about the divinisation, except the Tantrics and some others. The aim however even in these was rather to become saints and siddhas than anything else.

*When people speak of 'non-existence', do they mean the nothingness of the Buddhists?*

They mean an absence of all that we know of as existence.

*Do the philosophers always make their philosophies practical?*

In ancient times in Europe and at all times in the East many have done so or done their best to do so. Modern philosophy does not aim at practice, only at thought.

*I came across this: "A silent or vacant mind does not necessarily mean a fit state for the true Knowledge. For anything divine or undivine may rush in through such a vacancy." I suppose this may be a cosmic silence which is always open to any universal force (which does not care about the good or the bad). But there does exist a silence which is open only to the higher knowledge and not to the mixture below. We may call it the soul's reticence.*

Yes, except that reticence is not an apposite word, stillness is better. The cosmic silence also is not apposite because whatever forces pass through it, the cosmic silence is not



disturbed or distressed by them. What they mean is an inert vacancy of the nature, not of the soul. The soul's silence is always good; true silence always is.

*I am told that all difficulties like ego, sex etc. would vanish if one says: "I am Brahman, peace, light, knowledge, power. How can anything rise against me?"*

It is the Advaita attitude corresponding to the attitude of being with the Mother above in the self. I don't know whether it will bring about the transformation of the lower nature. It may help you to detach yourself from it.

*Each religion or sect says something different about the creation of the earth. The Buddhists declare it as from nothingness; some from the Shabda (original word), the Mahabharata as from the Egg. What is actually the truth of this subject?*

For the physical creation it is best to look to the knowledge Science gives. The egg is only an image — if we accept the present scientific theory of an expanding universe out of an original compact mass, the egg may represent that original mass.

*It is said that before this Iron Age (Kali Yuga) there was a Golden Age (Satya Yuga). It is also said that the world is always progressing. How then comes this downward turn (Iron after Gold)?*

There is no great utility in such theories. It was supposed that there was only movement in a constantly repeated cycle. The idea of progress was not there when the theory came into existence. Progress of course can be by cycles and not in a straight line, spirals with downward and upward curves.

*"After all the Divine is infinite and the unrolling of the Truth may be an infinite process or at least, if not quite so much, yet with some room for new discovery and new statement..." In that case, are not the Vedas or Upanishads wrong in declaring that all the Truth is hidden in them and that there can never be any newer Truth than what is in them?*

Where do the Vedas or Upanishads declare that? I never heard of it. It is people who say that about them, not the Vedas or Upanishads themselves.

*Is it true that some ancient sages and Rishis have taken birth here in order to help your work?*

If so, it is not a fact of much importance.

*I fail to understand how the ancient Yogis managed to spend their whole lives in only one pursuit — self-realisation? Is it really such a long process?*

It is not a long process? The whole life and several lives more are often not enough to achieve it. Ramakrishna's guru took 30 years to arrive and even then he did not claim that he had realised it.

*In his book "A Search in Secret India", Paul Brunton writes about "The Sage Who Never Speaks". He remains in Samadhi day and night and comes out only once or twice for food etc. What usually does he do during such long periods in trance, since his goal is not so high?*

Do? Why should he want to do anything if he was in the eternal peace or Ananda or union with the Divine? If a man is spiritual and has gone beyond the vital and mind, he does not need to be always "doing" something. The self or spirit has the joy of its own existence. It is free to do nothing and free to do everything — but not because it is bound to action and unable to exist without it.

*By my question, "What does he do?" I did not mean any physical or mental action. Rather I wanted to know if by merely remaining in a samadhi of eternal Peace and Ananda, it would be possible to liberate oneself completely from the ego. Would it bring about other necessary changes like the purification and transformation?*

Without purification it is not possible to live always in the Brahman consciousness. While living in that Brahman consciousness one is free from the sense of a separative ego. As for the transformation of the nature, that is not their object.

*In asking this I wanted to understand how he could bring down the higher things into the lower and conquer the lower resistance, and whether all that could be achieved by an impersonal and eternal Calm and Delight.*

All that is not necessary for those who seek only liberation as end.

*In the same book Brunton has discussed the central teachings of some great Yogis of modern India. I find nothing new in them. They seem like a repetition of the Yogas of ancient India. To leave the world and seek self-realisation is their goal. All that does not appear to me a very difficult stage.*

Wonderful! The realisation of the Self which includes the liberation from the ego, the consciousness of the One in all, the established and consummated transcendence out of the universal Ignorance, the fixity of the consciousness in the union with the Highest, the Infinite and Eternal is not anything worth doing or recommending to anybody — is “not a very difficult stage”!

Nothing new! Why should there be anything new? The object of spiritual seeking is to find out, what is eternally true, not what is new in Time.

From where did you get this singular attitude towards the old Yogas and Yogis? Is the wisdom of the Vedanta and Tantra a small and trifling thing? Have then the sadhaks of this Ashram attained to self-realisation and are they liberated Jivan-muktas, free from ego and ignorance? If not, why then do you say, “it is not a difficult stage” “their goal is not so high” “is it such a long process”?

I have said that this Yoga is “new” because it aims at a change in this world and not only beyond it and at a supramental realisation. But how does that justify a superior contempt for the spiritual realisation which is as much the aim of this Yoga as of any other?

*It becomes clear now that I had some fundamentally wrong ideas about the old Yogas and Yogins. They were actually not my own but borrowed from some sadhaks. Still I am not quite clear about the old Yogas.*

I have heard that people from outside often find the sadhaks here full of an insufferable pride and arrogance, looking on all others as outsiders far below them! If it is so, it is a most foolish and comically ridiculous attitude.

As for the depreciation of the old Yogas as something quite easy, unimportant and worthless, and the depreciation of Buddha and Yajnavalkya and other great spiritual figures of the past, is it not evidently absurd on the face of it?

*Is it not a fact that the mind, vital and physical are integrally woven into each other and that to separate them and put each one in its proper place is no easy task.*

*When the mind alone is realising the self, the vital and physical will constantly try to disturb it. (One cannot do this realisation in all these beings together.) Thus the necessity of separating them becomes inevitable. Do you think that they all can be fundamentally separated without the help of the supramental planes, the planes above the human mind?*

There are many planes above man's mind — the supramental is not the only one, and on all of them the self can be realised, — for they are all spiritual planes.

Mind, vital and physical are inextricably mixed together only on the surface consciousness — the inner mind, inner vital, inner physical are separate from each other. Those who seek the self by the old Yogas separate themselves from mind, life and body and realise the self of it from these things. It is perfectly easy to separate mind, vital and physical from each other without the aid of supermind. It is done by the ordinary Yogas.

*You wrote the other day, "Certainly they can realise the self. It is not at all necessary to get the supramental planes for that." Then what is the fundamental difference between our Yoga and the old Yogas?*

The difference between this and the old Yogas is not that they are incompetent and cannot do these things — they can do them perfectly well; but that they proceed from realisation of self to Nirvana or some Heaven and abandon life, while this does not abandon life. The supramental is necessary for the transformation of terrestrial life and being, not for reaching the self. One must realise self first — only afterwards one can realise the supermind.

*You wrote, "Those who seek the self by the old Yogas separate themselves from mind, life and body and realise the self apart from these things." How do they manage to separate themselves from mind, life and body so easily? Will not these things interfere with their realisation? In allowing them to do this, will not the mind, vital and physical have to withdraw from their ordinary movements of *tamas*, *rajas* and *sattwa*?*

Of course they will — it can only be prevented by the lower movements if you assent to the lower movements; one who refuses to accept them as his real being can always withdraw from them to the self. The movements of Nature become for them an outer thing not belonging to their true being and having no power to pull them down from it.

These men who live in the self are always there at all times. Nothing in the outer nature can affect that.

*Is there any difference between our way of seeking the self and that of the old Yogis?*

Only that they often sought it by one line, the line varying in different Yogas, while in ours it may come in several ways.

*I suppose anyone who wants to realise the self cannot do it except by separating oneself from mind, life and body.*

Naturally.

*While referring to the supramental planes lately, I did not mean the supermind, but simply the spiritual planes above the human mind. To separate mind, vital and physical from each other, is there no need of the higher spiritual planes?*

Spiritual and supramental are not the same thing. The spiritual planes from higher mind to overmind are accessible to the old sadhanas so there is no difficulty about that. If they were not accessible there would have been no Yoga at all and no Yogis in the past in India.

*Your above answer regarding the spiritual planes and supramental planes urges me to inquire about the exact difference between spiritualisation and supramentalisation.*

Spiritualisation means the descent of the higher peace, force, light, knowledge, purity, Ananda etc. which belong to any of the higher planes from higher mind to Overmind, for in any of these the Self can be realised. It brings about a subjective transformation; the instrumental Nature is only so far transformed that it becomes an instrument for the Cosmic Divine to get some work done while the self within remains calm and free and united to the Divine. But this is an incomplete individual transformation — the full transformation of the instrumental Nature can only come when the Supramental change takes place. Till then the nature remains full of many imperfections, but the Self in the higher planes does not mind them, as it is itself free and unaffected. The inner being down to the inner physical can also become free and unaffected. The Overmind itself is subject to limitations in the working of the effective Knowledge, limitations in the working of the Power, subject to a partial and limited Truth etc. It is only in the Supermind that the full Truth-Consciousness comes into being.

*When you say that the self also can descend, is it the self as such that comes down or as peace, purity, knowledge etc.?*

As consciousness bringing all the rest after it.

*Is this self a consciousness or a being like the psychic?*

It is being, not a being. By self is meant the conscious essential existence one in all.

*Will you kindly elaborate the difference between "being" and "a being"?*

I suppose you would have to study philosophy in order to understand. Self is being, the essential conscious existence one in all, that is being. A being means one person out of many; an individualised conscious existence.

*When I asked you if the self was being or consciousness, I meant the self in its individualised aspect and not in its original universal status.*

The self is essentially universal; the individualised self is only the universal experienced from an individual centre. If what you have realised is not felt to be one in all, then it is not the "Atman", only it is the central being not yet revealing its universal aspect as Atman.

## THE TRUE YOGIC CONSCIOUSNESS

### DETACHMENT AND LIBERATION

*Now it is as if the Mother were carrying me into herself, leaving behind only a projection of her Force which works in my external nature.*

That was what was needed — on one side the dwelling in the Mother, on the other the consciousness of her Force working in the physical being.

*My actions are beginning to be felt (not merely thought to be) as being performed by her Force while I remain merged in her consciousness.*

It is very good. That was what was needed.

*I feel myself far from the ignorance and falsehood and close to the Mother. Not that the ordinary nature and its movements are gone for ever, but due to my separateness their reactions do not touch me.*

It is the true Yogic consciousness in which one feels that oneness and lives in it, not touched by the outer being and its inferior movements, but looking on them with a smile at their ignorance and smallness. It will become much more possible to deal with these outer things if that separateness is maintained always.

*Even the inertia now seems like something detached from me.*

That is good. Inertia or anything else must be felt as separate, not part of one's real self which is one with the Divine.

*In the midst of physical or even mental occupation I cannot forget the Mother.*

That is very good.

*It was a surprise to watch that my sadhana was going on even during the work although I made no conscious attempt to separate myself from the work.*

It is a stage of detachment and separation which is necessary in Yoga. It is only so that freedom in the work can come.

*In the midst of work I feel myself at full rest. Even the body consciousness does not feel that it is working.*

That is right. It is so that it must be felt.

*I am afraid I wrote yesterday rather too much about my feeling separate from the outer Prakriti during work.*

No, it was all right — a very clear and precise statement.

*Since the sadhana has taken a turn for the positive side, I do not like to look much at the negative or write on the happenings there, provided you agree to it.*

Yes, certainly — that is the best.

*The inner and spiritual experiences, realisations etc. come truly from the Mother. But that truth we accept only on faith, as their source is not detectable by us in the beginning. But now I can clearly see and feel them coming from her, even as one sees the Ganges flowing down from the Himalayas.*

It is very good indeed. It was what was lacking in the former realisation of self and of peace, now with this realisation you have the foundation of the dynamic as well as the static side of the Truth.

*I experience as if my mental and vital consciousness were merged in the Mother, while the (subtle) physical has begun to feel itself on the lap of the Mother.*

Yes.

*When X went to the Mother for Pranam and she put her hand on his head I too felt the touch of her hand on my own head. How did this happen?*

It shows that the subtle physical is growing conscious and felt the touch and blessing of the Mother which is always there.

*Returning from the Pranam ceremony when the Mother was throwing a last glance at us from the staircase, some tears and a profound feeling surged out from my heart.*

It is the natural psychic movement of love and bhakti deep down in the being.



## THE INMOST SILENCE

*Is not the innermost being now possessing me?*

Yes.

*My inner emptiness is growing into a solid and permanent condition so that nothing can penetrate into me from outside.*

Yes, that is what must happen.

*O Lord, again I am getting inertia. What am I to do?*

Keep yourself separate from the inertia as you do from the wrong vital suggestions, sex, ego, etc.

*I see different kinds of flowers as if floating before my eyes. Strange to say, before they are clearly visible to me they themselves announce their significances.*

*Thus I saw, one after the other, two flowers signifying,*

*(1) "The physical consciousness turned towards the Light",*

*(2) "The peace in the cells".*

It is evidently from what you have written the thing that is happening — the physical consciousness is opening to the spiritual experience.

*In action I feel detached and the Mother's Force working in my place; I find myself above with her at the same time.*

All is very good — to live on a higher plane and see the action in the physical from it as something separate is a definite stage in the movement towards transformation.

*The mind and vital are simply flooded with the experiences. In the consciousness of the physical also the experiences are beginning, while the background of peace and silence is always maintained.*

It is very good, that was what was needed — the settled background of peace and silence as the foundation of an activity of experience.

*The stuff of my being has become so quiet that it is difficult for me even to pray!*

It is probably that — in order to establish entirely the inmost Silence.

*To what heights the Mother is escorting me! She makes me bear with ease her powerful and rapid working.*

That is very good.

*I am sorry I am unable to describe to you at present all that is happening in me (experiences, realisations etc.).*

You will do so hereafter when these things have ripened and can be expressed.

*On what a mute ocean do we float! Each day I find the water calmer than before.*

It is true that peace and silence can always become deeper and wider and more intense.

*Every evening brings a strong voidness — shama. I suppose it is meant as a preparation for my reception of what the Mother brings down during the night Meditation.*

Yes.

*The Mother is trying to establish in me a dynamic stillness which could vibrate only to her Knowledge.*

Right.

*This realisation already shows its beginning in my active state.*

That is good.

*That deeper silence will spontaneously open me to the understanding of the inner experiences and the higher developments by the light of the Knowledge from above. Then there will be no need to write to you so much about my sadhana as now.*

Yes, for the most part. But when the experience is of importance for the progress it can be written.

*If one wants to cut down one's troubles to a minimum, one should try to follow the sunlit path, which means "give all and ask nothing".*

Yes, all that is quite true.

*The body has such a peace that there is not the slightest stir in it when I soar high above. If the little mental sense were not there it would be a trance!*

Trance could not be sufficient — the waking consciousness must be the same.

*What greater day can there be than the one when the Mother is accepted even by my lower vital?*

Yes, when that has been done, it is one of the biggest steps in the sadhana.

*I see a dawning possibility of my silence and work getting fused into each other.*

That will surely happen.

*Till recently, it was I who used to enter into the Mother's consciousness and live in it. Now, it seems as if she has begun to come into me and be with me more and more.*

It is the next thing that must be perfected.

*It seems to me, Lord, that my physical body is opening to the Mother's experiences. There is nothing to be said about the peace and silence — they appear to be there all the time, but something else happened yesterday. The subconscious inertia arose, and I put the whole of my concentration on it. I felt at the same time that the Mother's Force was working in the nerves of my left hand. It was a concrete experience.*

*Another thing. I cannot quite make out why I need to be inactive in order to observe the experiences of the physical. Could one of the reasons be that at present I am doing that part of the sadhana which is concerned with the static side?*

*Every morning from half past four to half past nine the subnature seems to remain active in a fixed rhythm. It would really be a shame if I allowed its working passively. I try and try to bring down something by long and single-minded concentration, but nothing happens that can change this condition.*

*One night after the evening Meditation the Mother showed me a dynamic and positive way by awakening the psychic and the self's fire, but again a more passive state got in and her method was suspended.*

*I know the time has now come when I must take up seriously the reins of the nature and control it. The old way of remaining as a passive observer should become a matter of the past. But I don't know how this step could possibly be taken with such an increasing passivity.*

The dynamic action when it comes acts without disturbing the silence and peace. There is the vast peace and silence and in that the Force or the Will works to do what is necessary — in that also is the action of Agni or the psychic.

*At present what I see as inertia may perhaps be coming from the subliminal consciousness; otherwise how can my physical be reposing in peace and silence in spite of the inertia?*

It is evidently in that case the subconscious inertia.

*The lower nature tried its best, but in vain, to throw its waves of jealousy on my vital, for the Mother has so reinforced my environmental consciousness with her Peace that nothing foreign to her can penetrate it.*

Yes, that is the peace that must be there.

## TWO FIRES

*I see that a sadhak who comes to the Mother for Pranam with the right attitude and not with the object of satisfying any vital demand of desire, does not concentrate on her physical movements like smiling or the putting of her hand on his head, for his attention is directed towards the inner reception; he may not even know if she puts her hand on his head or not or if she smiles at him, for his concentration is turned exclusively to her eyes — those seas of Truth, and it is from there that he hopes to receive something.*

Yes, that is quite true.

*Who can deny that her single gaze is quite sufficient for him to receive all that he needs?*

*Why then are some people not content with her one look or a little touch? Is it not because of their time-born ego which keeps them in ignorance and darkness? They do not know or rather refuse to conceive that there is no limitation of time and space with the Divine, that she can create wonders in the fraction of a moment. Thus their minds deny rigidly that she, the Divine Mother, can help them adequately by a mere look or a touch. As they are so limited and narrow they take her also to be such! No doubt such foolishness is not in the true being, but in the outer. But then it must be kept outside and not allowed to become a fact.*

All that is very well said. It is the real truth about the matter.

*It seems that the Mother has started today a new working in me. In the morning there was a keen and strong pressure on my right temple, and an inner intoxication which kept me merged in her Peace and Silence all through. I noticed that most of the inner and higher parts, which ordinarily remain prominent, withdrew in a deep passivity; the outer being was then left to itself without any dynamic control. When this happened the inertia tried to take advantage by rising up.*

If the physical being has felt and assimilated the silence and peace, then inertia ought not to rise up.

*Why do I feel today that I should keep myself plunged in this rich and deep intoxication and suspend my post<sup>19</sup> and prayer?*

It is better not to suspend the post.

*Thou knowest, Lord, that I have been keeping separate from the lower Prakriti for a long time. It is during this period of detachment that the Mother made me realise what I really am and what human nature is. But the Mother knows that a mere separation is not enough. Now I must control that nature and govern it according to her Light; then only can there be a conquest. Let me then apply myself to this new movement for the further change of my outer being. I have become conscious that her cleansing Fire is there, capable of purifying and transforming the darkest material.*

*The Mother, as the Divine Agni, has done something special to me during Meditation. It is that which has made me write all this, and has shown me what she wishes to do in me in the future.*

*Already a change within and around is noticed. She has awakened two fires for her great work. But why two? Was not one enough? It is because one fire may not be able to keep pace with her new working which is so tremendous, powerful, fast, and full of Agni.*

*Thus two fires are indispensable. One is in the heart; it will go on tirelessly putting its pressure upon the unconverted parts, and helping their purification and transformation. The other is in the higher consciousness, the Agni of the self; this will support the psychic fire and keep it alive all the time. For, the psychic fire, being already in the evolution, may get veiled by the lower nature, but the Agni of the self is always above the Creation and so is ever detached and dynamic. It can bring down whatever help and protection is necessary from the Mother.*

Yes, the two are necessary for any complete or rapid transformation.

*I am aware that for such a powerful action of the Mother I must remain in a fully conscious state of vigilance, intense aspiration, surrender and rejection, not flagging even for a moment. No feeling, thought or action should be allowed unless it is from the Mother or for her work.*

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<sup>19</sup> My writing letters to Sri Aurobindo.

It is good. If you remain in a fully conscious state, the cleaning of the nature ought not to be difficult — afterwards the positive work of its transformation into a perfect instrument can be undertaken.

*Lord, it will be good if the Mother does something — otherwise I may perhaps have to suspend the outer communications; for, her love in which she is pressing me is so deep and sublime that my poor pen refuses to manifest it through a material thing like paper!*

Material things are not to be despised — without them there can be no manifestation in the material world.

*The following flowers present themselves repeatedly before me: "Psychic purity" (Jasminum), "Purity in the blood" (Pimpinella major) and "Aspiration in the physical for the supramental light" (Ixora Singaporensis). Are they thus announcing the descent of these things?*

The first two perhaps, but the supramental light in the physical cannot come until much else is done to prepare the physical for it.

*It is for the great object of transformation that the Divine Mother sends down something from her own self in the form of experiences and realisations.*

*Remaining in the Mother the sadhak need not remain all passive, doing nothing, when the lower nature becomes active; but remaining in her he must repel everything undivine.*

Correct.

*If one is vigilant and constantly keeps a watch over all the movements, the feeling of dullness will not come, experiences will not stop, and progress in the sadhana will not be affected. Often a sadhak feels that the experiences have stopped; this is because what he has already received is being consolidated in him. But even then, if he is sufficiently conscious and watchful, he will find that it is only from the surface consciousness that they are withdrawn. The inner being still has them in the deeper regions of the consciousness. For, if he is fully aware of his true self with a ceaseless aspiration, he will not be denied the experiences for a long time. For this he has of course to learn to observe things deep behind the surface layers.*

That is all true and I am glad you have realised it.