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Mother reads Sri Aurobindo's "The Divine Superman" (Cent. Vol. 17, p. 74).

"Thou must reach thy own summit," says Sri Aurobindo. Is the summit the same for everybody or does each one have his particular summit?

In the last analysis, it is always the same summit — the divine oneness which is behind all things — but everyone will reach his own summit, that is, through his own nature and own way of manifesting the divine unity. This is what we were saying the other day: each one represents a special way of having a relation with the Divine and manifesting the Divine. You don't need to follow another's path! You must follow your own path and it is by this path that you will reach the summit, which is one, but found by your own route. The goal is beyond the summits — the goal is one and beyond the summits — but one may attain this summit each by his own road, climbing his own mountain, not the mountain of another.

"Imagine not the way is easy; the way is long, arduous, dangerous, difficult. At every step is an ambush, at every turn a pitfall. A thousand seen or unseen enemies will start up against thee, terrible in subtlety against thy ignorance, formidable in power against thy weakness. And when with pain thou hast destroyed them, other thousands will surge up to take their place."

Sri Aurobindo, "The Way", Cent. Vol. 17, p. 39

This is to give you courage, courage to act. You must be vigilant and must keep your will, whatever happens. If you put the two things end to end, you have the complete thing.

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How can one remain conscious in the midst of unconsciousness?

One must be vigilant.

And when asleep?

One can remain conscious in sleep, we have already explained that! One must work.

Then one doesn't sleep!

Not at all, one sleeps much better, one has a quiet sleep instead of a restless one. Most people do so many things in their sleep that they wake up more tired than before. We have already spoken about this once. Naturally, if you keep yourself from sleeping, you won't sleep. I always tell those who complain of not being able to sleep, "Meditate then and you will end up by sleeping." It is better to fall asleep while concentrating than "like that", scattered and strewn without knowing even where one is.

To sleep well one must learn how to sleep.

If one is physically very tired, it is better not to go to sleep immediately, otherwise one falls into the unconscious. If one is very tired, one must stretch out on the bed, relax, loosen all the nerves one after another until one becomes like a rumpled cloth in one's bed, as though one had neither bones nor muscles. When one has done that, the same thing must be done in the mind. Relax, do not concentrate on any idea or try to solve a problem or ruminate on impressions, sensations or emotions you had during the day. All that must be allowed to drop off quietly: one gives oneself up, one is indeed like a rag. When you have succeeded in doing this, there is always a little flame, there — that flame never goes out and you become conscious of it when you have managed this relaxation. And all of a sudden this little flame rises slowly into an aspiration for the divine life,

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the truth, the consciousness of the Divine, the union with the inner being, it goes higher and higher, it rises, rises, like that, very gently. Then everything gathers there, and if at that moment you fall asleep, you have the best sleep you could possibly have. I guarantee that if you do this carefully, you are sure to sleep, and also sure that instead of falling into a dark hole you will sleep in light, and when you get up in the morning you will be fresh, fit, content, happy and full of energy for the day.

When one is conscious in sleep, does the brain sleep or not?

When does the brain ever sleep? When does it sleep? This is of all things the most difficult. If you succeed in making your brain sleep, it would be wonderful. How it runs on! It is rambling. It is this I meant when I spoke of relaxation in the brain. If you do it really well, your brain enters a silent restfulness and that is wonderful; when you attain that, five minutes of that and you are quite fresh afterwards, you can solve a heap of problems.

If the brain is always working, why don't we remember what has happened during the night?

Because you have not caught the consciousness at its work. And perhaps because if you remembered what was going on in your brain, you would be horrified! It is really like a madhouse, all these ideas which clash, all dancing a saraband in the head! It is as if one were throwing balls in all directions at once. So, if you saw that, you would be a bit troubled.

Sri Aurobindo writes here: "...Few and brief in their visits are the Bright Ones who are willing or permitted to succour."¹ Why?

¹ "The Way", Cent. Vol. 17, p. 40.

One must go and ask them! But there is a conclusion, the last sentences give a very clear explanation. It is said: “Nay, then, is immortality a plaything to be given lightly to a child, or the divine life a prize without effort or the crown for a weakling?”² This comes back to the question why the adverse forces have the right to interfere, to harass you. But this is precisely the test necessary for your sincerity. If the way were very easy, everybody would start on the way, and if one could reach the goal without any obstacle and without any effort, everybody would reach the goal, and when one has come to the end, the situation would be the same as when one started, there would be no change. That is, the new world would be exactly what the old has been. It is truly not worth the trouble! Evidently a process of elimination is necessary so that only what is capable of manifesting the new life remains. This is the reason and there is no other, this is the best of reasons. And, you see, it is a tempering, it is the ordeal of fire, only that which can stand it remains absolutely pure; when everything has burnt down, there remains only the little ingot of pure gold. And it is like that. What puts things out very much in all this is the religious idea of fault, sin, redemption. But there is no arbitrary decision! On the contrary, for each one it is the best and most favourable conditions which are given. We were saying the other day that it is only his friends whom God treats with severity; you thought it was a joke, but it is true. It is only to those who are full of hope, who will pass through this purifying flame, that the conditions for attaining the maximum result are given. And the human mind is made in such a way that you may test this; when something extremely unpleasant happens to you, you may tell yourself, “Well, this proves I am worth the trouble of being given this difficulty, this proves there is something in me which can resist the difficulty”, and you will notice that instead of tormenting yourself, you rejoice — you will be so happy and so strong that even the most unpleasant things will seem to

² *Ibid.*

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you quite charming! This is a very easy experiment to make. Whatever the circumstance, if your mind is accustomed to look at it as something favourable, it will no longer be unpleasant for you. This is quite well known; as long as the mind refuses to accept a thing, struggles against it, tries to obstruct it, there are torments, difficulties, storms, inner struggles and all suffering. But the minute the mind says, "Good, this is what has to come, it is thus that it must happen", whatever happens, you are content. There are people who have acquired such control of their mind over their body that they feel nothing; I told you this the other day about certain mystics: if they think the suffering inflicted upon them is going to help them cross the stages in a moment and give them a sort of stepping-stone to attain the Realisation, the goal they have put before them, union with the Divine, they no longer feel the suffering at all. Their body is as it were galvanised by the mental conception. This has happened very often, it is a very common experience among those who truly have enthusiasm. And after all, if one must for some reason or other leave one's body and take a new one, is it not better to make of one's death something magnificent, joyful, enthusiastic, than to make it a disgusting defeat? Those who cling on, who try by every possible means to delay the end even by a minute or two, who give you an example of frightful anguish, show that they are not conscious of their soul.... After all, it is perhaps a means, isn't it? One can change this accident into a means; if one is conscious one can make a beautiful thing of it, a very beautiful thing, as of everything. And note, those who do not fear it, who are not anxious, who can die without any sordidness are those who never think about it, who are not haunted all the time by this "horror" facing them which they must escape and which they try to push as far away from them as they can. These, when the occasion comes, can lift their head, smile and say, "Here I am."

It is they who have the will to make the best possible use of their life, it is they who say, "I shall remain here as long as it is

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necessary, to the last second, and I shall not lose one moment to realise my goal"; these, when the necessity comes, put up the best show. Why? — It is very simple, because they live in their ideal, the truth of their ideal; because that is the real thing for them, the very reason of their being, and in all things they can see this ideal, this reason of existence, and never do they come down into the sordidness of material life.

So, the conclusion:

One must never wish for death.

One must never will to die.

One must never be afraid to die.

And in all circumstances one must will to exceed oneself.