

## *General Messages and Letters*

Become Master of your body — this will lead you to Freedom.

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Physical culture is the best way of developing the consciousness of the body, and the more the body is conscious, the more it is capable of receiving the divine forces that are at work to transform it and give birth to the new race.

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*(Concerning a room to be used for gymnastics)*

Does this room have air and light? Without air and light exercises do more harm than good.

5 October 1945

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It is an urgent and indispensable lesson to be learned. Nothing useful can be won without a team-spirit and a sporting discipline.

15 January 1947

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*In what spirit should we take and do the sports competitions and games that we are doing now?*

Read the enclosed booklet<sup>1</sup> — it will give you an answer and read also Sri Aurobindo's message in the first *Bulletin*.<sup>2</sup>

2 June 1949

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<sup>1</sup> *Code of Sportsmanship*.

<sup>2</sup> Message to the Jeunesse Sportive de l'Ashram de Sri Aurobindo; see *The Supramental Manifestation*, Cent. Vol. 16, pp. 1-4.

## On Education

If I understand well what you have written, you mean that by concentrating one's attention on the physical activity one is doing, it automatically stops all mental activity and this increases the efficiency of the body. This is true provided the concentration is total which is rather rare.

Blessings.

2 June 1949

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*(A captain, who had begun teaching athletics to a group of children ten to eleven years of age, asked Mother if he should make a plan of activities. She replied:)*

A plan is good, but more for yourself than for the children. I mean to say that you must know exactly what you want to do and you must organise your work. But do not enforce too rigidly your method because the children like to be free and spontaneous in their movements, and this freedom is good for their growth.

My love and blessings.

6 June 1950

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### To the Soviet Gymnasts<sup>3</sup>

We salute you, brothers already so far on the way to the physical perfection for which we all aspire here.

Be welcome in the Ashram, amongst us. We feel sure that today one step more is taken towards unity of the great human family.

3 April 1956

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<sup>3</sup> Message to the Soviet Gymnasts who gave demonstrations at the Ashram sports-ground on 2 and 3 April 1956.

Build in yourself the total harmony, so that when the time comes  
Perfect Beauty can express itself through your body.

1959

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#### ABOUT HATHA YOGA

From our experience we have found that a particular system of exercises cannot be stamped as the only yogic type of exercises and we cannot definitely say that participation in those exercises only will help to gain health because they are yogic exercises.

Any rational system of exercises suited to one's need and capacity will help the participant to improve in health. Moreover it is the attitude that is more important. Any well-planned and scientifically arranged programme of exercises practised with a yogic attitude will become yogic exercises and the person practising them will draw full benefit from the point of view of physical health and moral and spiritual uplift.

*Bulletin, April 1959*

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*I simply want to be beautiful.*

Do sincerely some physical culture and you will succeed.

1965

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It does not seem to me quite wise to take children below six years to sea bathing; the sea water is too strong for them.

*8 February 1966*

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## On Education

*(A captain wrote that she had told some children that Mother would be happy if they followed the discipline of their group. Mother commented:)*

Your reply is correct.

When one is incapable of conforming to a discipline, one is also incapable of doing anything of lasting value in life.

16 February 1967

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*(A captain informed Mother that he felt mentally and physically “pulled down”. She wrote:)*

Do not worry — with some good and regular exercises and my blessings it will be all right.

Love and blessings.

14 March 1967

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*Thrice I have been injured in my right knee and thrice I have recovered from it.*

*Ma, grant that I may not be injured once again and miss my group activities.*

Be *more conscious* and you will no more be injured.

8 July 1968

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*Mother, I have seen that I am not able to force my physical body to do a little better than my actual capacity. I would like to know how I can force it. But, Mother, is it good to force one's body?*

No.

The body is capable of progressing and gradually it can learn to do what it could not do. But its capacity for progress is much

slower than the vital desire for progress and the mental will for progress. And if the vital and the mental were left as masters of action, they would simply harass the body, destroy its poise and upset its health.

Therefore, one must be patient and follow the rhythm of one's body; it is more reasonable and knows what it can do and what it cannot.

Naturally, there are tamasic bodies and they need some encouragement for progressing.

But in everything and in all cases, one must keep one's balance.

Blessings.

13 October 1969

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*Mother, why should one take part in competitions and demonstrations in sports?*

Because it is an occasion to put in a greater effort and therefore to make a rapid progress.

Blessings.

16 November 1969

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*(Concerning accidents in sports)*

I do not think there are more accidents here than outside. Certainly there should be less. But for that, children who are here must take care to grow in consciousness (a thing which they can do here more easily than anywhere else). Unfortunately, however, very few among them take the trouble to do it. So they lose the good chance given to them.

22 December 1969

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## On Education

*Mother, what is the difference between sports and physical education?*

Sports are all the games, competitions, tournaments, etc., all the things based on contests and ending in placings and prizes.

Physical education means chiefly the combination of all exercises for the sake of the growth and upkeep of the body.

Naturally, here we have the two together. But it is particularly so because human beings, especially in their young age, still require some excitement in order to make an effort.

Blessings.

14 January 1970

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Sports help the body to prepare for the Transformation.

30 September 1972

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*(Concerning the sketch on the Games Tournament Award Card for the winner)*

The drawing on the winner's card is an adaptation from a Greek bronze and is meant to express our will to use the physical strength for mastery over the black bull of passion.

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*(Concerning the sketch on the Games Tournament Award Card for the runner-up)*

This *Penseur* of Rodin on the Runner-up Cards signifies the necessity of reflection to perfect means for a better result.

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Department of Physical Education

*(Concerning the painting "Oedipus and the Sphinx"  
by Gustave Moreau, reproduced on the Gymnastics  
Competition Award Card)*

The Riddle of the World

If you can solve it, you will be immortal, but if you fail you will  
perish.