

## Chapter Two

# Qualities Needed for Sadhana

### Indispensable Qualities

It goes without saying that the qualities you speak of are helpful in the approach to the spiritual path, while the defects you enumerate are each a serious stumbling-block in the way. Sincerity especially is indispensable to the spiritual endeavour, and crookedness a constant obstacle. The sattvic nature has always been held to be the most apt and ready for the spiritual life, while the rajasic nature is encumbered by its desires and passions. At the same time, spirituality is something above the dualities, and what is most needed for it is a true upward aspiration. This may come to the rajasic man as well as to the sattvic. If it does, he can rise by it above his failings and desires and passions, just as the other can rise beyond his virtues, to the Divine Purity and Light and Love. Necessarily this can only happen if he conquers his lower nature and throws it from him; for if he relapses into it, he is likely to fall from the path or at least to be, so long as the relapse lasts, held back by it from inner progress. But for all that the conversion of great sinners into great saints, of men of little or no virtue into spiritual seekers and God-lovers has frequently happened in religious and spiritual history — as in Europe St. Augustine, in India Chaitanya's Jagai and Madhai, Bilwamangal and many others. The house of the Divine is not closed to any who knock sincerely at its gates, whatever their past stumbles and errors. Human virtues and human errors are bright and dark wrappings of a divine element within which once it pierces the veil, can burn through both towards the heights of the Spirit.

Humility before the Divine is also a *sine qua non* of the spiritual life, and spiritual pride, arrogance, or vanity and self-assurance press always downward. But confidence in the Divine and a faith in one's spiritual destiny (i.e. since my heart and

soul seek for the Divine, I cannot fail one day to reach Him) are much needed in view of the difficulties of the Path. A contempt for others is out of place, especially since the Divine is in all. Evidently, the activities and aspirations of men are not trivial and worthless, for all life is a growth of the soul out of the darkness towards the Light. But our attitude is that humanity cannot grow out of its limitations by the ordinary means adopted by the human mind, politics, social reform, philanthropy, etc., — these can only be temporary or local palliatives. The only true escape is a change of consciousness, a change into a greater, wider and purer way of being, and a life and action based upon that change. It is therefore to that that the energies must be turned, once the spiritual orientation is complete. This implies no contempt, but the preference of the only effective means over those which have been found ineffective.

\*

Such qualities as faith, sincerity, aspiration, devotion etc. make up the perfection indicated in our language of the flowers.<sup>1</sup> In ordinary language it would mean something else such as purity, love, benevolence, fidelity and a host of other virtues.

### Conditions of the Yoga

I have never said that this Yoga was a safe one — no Yoga is. Each has its dangers as has every great attempt in human life. But it can be carried through if one has a central sincerity and a fidelity to the Divine. These are the two necessary conditions.

\*

The first conditions of this Yoga are:

(1) A complete sincerity and surrender in the being. The divine life and the transformation of the lower human into the higher divine nature must be made the sole aim of all the life.

<sup>1</sup> *The Mother named the Plumeria flower "Psychological perfection" and said that its five elements were faith, sincerity, aspiration, devotion and surrender. — Ed.*

No attachments, desires or habits of the mind, heart, vital being or body should be clung to which come in the way of this one aspiration and one object of the life. One must be ready to renounce all these completely as soon as the demand comes from above and from the divine Shakti.

(2) A fundamental calm, peace and purity in the mind, vital being and all the nature.

The hours of meditation should be devoted to the formation of these two conditions in you, by aspiration and by self-observation and rejection of all that disturbs the nature or keeps it troubled, confused and impure. Aspiration if rightly done, quietly, earnestly and sincerely, brings the divine help from above to effect this object.

As to the hours devoted to work, needs, family, etc., they can be made an aid only on the following conditions.

(1) To regard all these things as not belonging to yourself, your inner being, but as things external, work to be done so long as it remains on your shoulders to the best of your ability without desire or attachment of any kind.

(2) To do all work as a sacrifice without any egoistic motive.

(3) To establish and deepen the inner calm and quiet. If that is done, all these things will be felt more and more as external and the falling off of desire and attachment will become possible.

For getting rid of passion the same condition. If you separate yourself from these movements and establish calm and peace inside, the passions may still rise on the surface, but they will be felt to be external movements and you can deal with them or call down the divine aid to get rid of them. So long as the mind does not fall quiet, it is not possible to deal finally with the vital being from which these forces rise.

\*

The way to realise is through a quiet mind and a vital free from desires. To reject the desires and demands of the vital and to quiet the excessive activity of the mind, so that a true consciousness and spiritual perception and knowledge may take the place of the mind's activity, are the requisite conditions of the Yoga.

The further method is, — (1) To concentrate in the heart and aspire and (2) to call to the divine Mother to enter there and purify the mind and vital and unveil the psychic being so that her constant guidance and presence in it may be felt always and (3) to concentrate in the quiet mind and (in the head) open oneself first to the divine force and light which is always above the mind and call to it to descend into the body and the whole being — either of these or both, according to the capacity of the sadhaka.

Yoga must be done not for oneself or what one can get but for the sake of the Divine and to be united with the Divine.

If he can do any of these things (not minding how long it takes) in this spirit, then let him do Yoga; if he cannot, then there is no use in doing it.