

Chapter Seven

Surrender

The Meaning of Surrender

The Divine gives itself to those who give themselves without reserve and in all their parts to the Divine. For them the calm, the light, the power, the bliss, the freedom, the wideness, the heights of knowledge, the seas of Ananda.

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Surrender is giving oneself to the Divine — to give everything one is or has to the Divine and regard nothing as one's own, to obey only the Divine will and no other, to live for the Divine and not for the ego.

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Self-surrender is to give up yourself and all that is yours, mind and everything else to the Divine, so that the Divine Force may take everything and change it.

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Surrender means to consecrate everything in oneself to the Divine, to offer all one is and has, not to insist on one's ideas, desires, habits etc., but to allow the divine Truth to replace them by its knowledge, will and action everywhere.

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Surrender means to be entirely in the Mother's hands and not to resist in any way by egoism or otherwise her Light, Knowledge, Will, the working of her Force etc.

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The essence of surrender is not to ask the Mother before doing anything — but to accept whole-heartedly the influence and the

guidance, when the joy and peace come down to accept them without question or cavil and let them grow, when the Force is felt at work to let it work without opposition, when the Knowledge is given to receive and follow it, when the Will is revealed to make oneself its instrument.

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To believe that one is being constantly guided by the Divine in the heart is not necessarily surrender. It is necessary to be detached, to see what are the divine forces and undivine and to reject the undivine forces. It is only by this discrimination that one can make a true surrender to the Divine in the heart.

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It [*true surrender*] begins when there is the true self-offering.

A Free Surrender

The Divine can lead, he does not drive. There is an internal freedom permitted to every mental being called man to assent or not to assent to the Divine leading — how else can any real spiritual evolution be done?

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All the play in this world is based on a certain relative free will in the individual being. Even in the sadhana it remains and his consent is necessary at each step — even though it is by surrender to the Divine that he escapes from ignorance and separateness and ego, it must be at every step a free surrender.

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Each person has his own freedom of choice up to a certain point — unless he makes the full surrender — and as he uses the freedom, has to take the spiritual or other consequences. The help can only be offered, not imposed. Silence, absence of frank confession, means a desire in the vital to go its own way. When there is no longer concealment, when there is the physical

self-opening to the Divine, then the Divine can intervene.

The Will to Surrender

All can be done by the Divine, the heart and nature purified, the inner consciousness awakened, the veils removed, if one gives oneself to the Divine with trust and confidence — and even if one cannot do so fully at once, yet the more one does so, the more the inner help and guidance comes and the contact and the experience of the Divine grows within. If the questioning mind becomes less active and humility and the will to surrender grow in you, this ought to be perfectly possible. No other strength and tapasya are then needed, but this alone.

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Surrender cannot be made at once — it is not so easy; for there is much in the being that resists. But one must have the will to surrender. It is the same with becoming an instrument. If one has the will and calls on the Mother and opens oneself as much as possible to her, then gradually these things develop in the nature.

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If the difficulties that arise are in the nature itself, it is inevitable that they should rise and manifest themselves. Surrender is not easy, it is resisted by a large part of the nature. If the mind forms the will to surrender, all these inner obstacles are bound to show themselves; the sadhak has then to observe them and detach himself from them, reject them from his nature and overcome. This may take a very long time but it has to be done.

Outer obstacles cannot prevent the inner surrender unless they are supported by a resistance in the nature itself.

The Inner Surrender

It was never my intention to suggest that there was only a faint hope of your sadhana depending on the *if* of surrender. I have always said the contrary, that since your soul wants the Divine

truly, you are sure to reach him; only if you give up — and that is why I strongly object to these despondencies apart from the suffering they inflict, because they try to drive you to that — can it be frustrated or rather postponed to a far future.

What I wrote was in answer to your statement about your former idea of the Yoga that if one wanted the Divine, the Divine himself would take up the purifying of the heart and develop the sadhana and give the necessary experiences. I meant to say that it can and does happen in that way if one has trust and confidence in the Divine and the will to surrender. For such a taking up involves one's putting oneself in the hands of the Divine rather than trusting to one's own efforts alone and it implies one's putting one's trust and confidence in the Divine and a progressive self-giving. It is in fact the principle of sadhana that I myself followed and it is the central part of the Yoga as I envisage it. It is, I suppose, what Ramakrishna meant by the method of the baby cat in his image. But all cannot follow that at once; it takes time for them to arrive at it — it grows most when the mind and vital fall quiet.

What I meant by surrender was this inner surrender of the mind and vital. There is of course the outer surrender also, the giving up of all that is found to conflict with the spirit or need of the sadhana, the offering, the obedience to the guidance of the Divine, whether directly, if one has reached that stage, or through the psychic or to the guidance of the Guru. I may say that *prāyopaveśana* does not seem to me to have anything to do with surrender; it is a form of tapasya of a very austere and in my opinion very excessive kind, often dangerous. But what I was speaking of in my letter was the inner surrender.

The core of this inner surrender is trust and confidence in the Divine. One takes the attitude, "I want the Divine and nothing else." I do not know why you should think that you can be asked to give up that — if there is not that, then the Yoga cannot be done. "I want to give myself entirely to him and since my soul wants that, it cannot be but that I shall meet him and realise him. I ask nothing but that and his action in me to bring me to him, his action secret or open, veiled or manifest. I do not insist

on my own time and way; let him do all in his own time and way, I shall believe in him, accept his will, aspire steadily for his light and presence and joy, go through all difficulties and delays relying on him and never giving up. Let my mind be quiet and turn to him and let him open it to his light; let my vital be quiet and turn to him alone and let him open it to his calm and joy. All for him and myself for him. Whatever happens, I will keep to this aspiration and self-giving and go on in perfect reliance that it will be done.” That is the attitude into which one must grow; for, certainly, it cannot be made perfect at once; mental and vital movements come across; but if one keeps the will to it, it will grow in the being. The rest is a matter of obedience to the guidance when it makes itself manifest — not allowing one’s mental or vital movements to interfere.

It was not my intention to say that this way is the only way and sadhana cannot be done otherwise — there are so many others by which one can approach the Divine. But this is the only one I know by which the taking up of the sadhana by the Divine becomes a sensible fact before the preparation of the nature is done. In other methods the Divine action and help may be felt from time to time, but it remains mostly behind the veil till all is ready. In some sadhanas the Divine action is not recognised; all must be done by tapasya. In most there is a mixing of the two, the tapasya finally calling the direct help and intervention. The idea and experience of the Divine doing all belongs to the Yogas based on surrender.

But whatever way is followed, the one thing to be done is to be faithful and go to the end. You have so often taken that decision — stand by it, do not let the storms of the vital quench the aspiration of your soul.

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It depends on the sadhak [*whether the surrender should begin from within*]. Some may find it necessary to surrender the external activities first so as to bring the inner surrender.

The Central Surrender

I have said that if one has the principle of surrender and union in the mind and heart there is no difficulty in extending it to the obscurer parts of the physical and the subconscient. As you have this central surrender and union, you can easily complete it everywhere. A quiet aspiration for complete consciousness is all that is needed. Then the material and subconscient will become penetrated by the light like the rest and there will come in a quietude, wideness, harmony free from all reactions that will be the basis of the final change.

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When the psychic being and the heart and the thinking mind have surrendered, the rest is a matter of time and process — and there is no reason for disturbance. The central and effective surrender has been made.

Complete or Absolute Surrender

If you are surrendered only in the higher consciousness, with no peace or purity in the lower, certainly that is not enough and you have to aspire for the peace and purity everywhere.

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It [*surrender*] cannot be absolutely complete in the beginning, but it can be true — if the central will is sincere and there is the faith and the Bhakti. There may be contrary movements, but these will be unable to stand for long and the imperfection of the surrender in the lower part will not seriously interfere with the power and pervasiveness of the inner attitude.

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A complete surrender is not possible in so short a time, — for a complete surrender means to cut the knot of the ego in each part of the being and offer it, free and whole, to the Divine. The mind, the vital, the physical consciousness (and even each

part of these in all its movements) have one after the other to surrender separately, to give up their own way and to accept the way of the Divine. But what one can do is to make from the beginning a central resolve and self-dedication and to implement it in whatever way one finds open, at each step, taking advantage of each occasion that offers itself to make the self-giving complete. A surrender in one direction makes others easier, more inevitable; but it does not of itself cut or loosen the other knots, and especially those which are very intimately bound up with the present personality and its most cherished formations may often present great difficulties, even after the central will has been fixed and the first seals put on its resolve in practice.

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You can get the full surrender only by degrees. Meanwhile you have to go on the straight path not regarding the suggestions that are put into you through the vital or physical parts.

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It is on that consciousness of complete surrender that the psychic foundation of sadhana can be made. If once it fixes itself, then, whatever difficulties remain to be overcome, the course of the sadhana becomes perfectly easy, sunlit, natural like the opening of a flower. The feeling you have is an indication of what can and must develop in you.

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It depends on what is meant by absolute surrender — the experience of it in some part of the being or the fact of it in all parts of the being. The former may easily come at any time; it is the latter that takes time to complete.

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The absolute surrender must be not only an experience in meditation, but a fact governing all the life, all the thoughts, feelings, actions. Till then the use of one's own will and effort is necessary, but an effort in which also there is the spirit of surrender, calling

in the Force to support the will and effort and undisturbed by success or failure. When the Force takes up the sadhana, then indeed effort may cease, but still there will be the necessity of the constant assent of the being and a vigilance so that one may not admit a false Force at any point.

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It is never too early to make the complete surrender. Some things may need to wait, but not that.

The Surrender of the Vital

The surrender of the vital is always difficult, because of the unwillingness of the forces of the universal vital Ignorance. But that does not mean a fundamental incapacity.

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The ordinary vital is never willing to surrender. The true inmost vital is different — surrender to the Divine is as necessary to it as to the psychic.

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If there is any identification with the vital demands or outcries, that necessarily diminishes the surrender for the time.

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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 keeps up its demand, these things will come.

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It was from your description of the reaction that I said there was a vital demand. In the pure psychic or spiritual self-giving there are no reactions of this kind, no despondency or despair, no saying, "What have I gained by seeking the Divine?", no anger, revolt, abhiman, wish to go away — such as you describe

here — but an absolute confidence and a persistence in clinging to the Divine under all conditions. That is what I wanted you to have; it is the only basis in which one is free from troubles and reactions and goes steadily forward.

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Not to impose one's mind and vital will on the Divine but to receive the Divine's will and follow it, is the true attitude of sadhana. Not to say, "This is my right, want, claim, need, requirement, why do I not get it?" but to give oneself, to surrender and to receive with joy whatever the Divine gives, not grieving or revolting, is the better way. Then what you receive will be the right thing for you.

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The Divine is not bound to do that [*supply all one's real needs*], He can give or not give; whether He gives or does not give makes no difference to the one who is surrendered to Him. Otherwise, there is an *arrière-pensée* in the surrender which is not then complete.

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Most of the sadhaks have similar thoughts [*of hostility and ingratitude*] — or had them at one time or another. They rise from the vital ego which either does not want the Divine or wants It for its own purpose and not for the Divine's purpose. It gets furious when it is pressed to change or when its desires are not satisfied — that is at the root of all these things. That is why we insist on surrender in this Yoga — because it is only by the surrender (especially of the vital ego) that these things can go — to accept the Divine for the Divine's sake and for no other motive and in the Divine's way and not in one's own way or on one's own conditions.

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Difficult? It is the first principle of our sadhana that surrender is the means of fulfilment and so long as ego or vital demand

and desire are cherished, complete surrender is impossible — the self-giving is incomplete. We have never concealed that. It may be difficult and it is; but it is the very principle of the sadhana. Because it is difficult it has to be done steadily and patiently till the work is complete.

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Your mind and psychic being are concentrated on the spiritual aim and open to the Divine — that is why the Influence comes down into the head and as far as the heart. But the vital being and nature and the physical consciousness are under the influence of the lower nature. As long as the vital and physical being are not surrendered or do not on their own account call for the higher life, this struggle is likely to continue.

Surrender everything, reject all other desires or interests, call on the divine Shakti to open the vital nature and bring down calm, peace, light, Ananda into all the centres. Aspire, await with faith and patience the result. All depends on a complete sincerity and an integral consecration and aspiration.

The world will trouble you so long as any part of you belongs to the world. It is only if you belong entirely to the Divine that you can become free.

Surrender and the Psychic

For surrender it is necessary not to insist on the mind's opinions, ideas and preferences, the vital's desires and impulses, the physical's habitual actions, the life of the ego — all such insistence is contrary to surrender. All egoism and self-will has to be abandoned and one must seek to be governed only by the Divine Shakti. No complete surrender is possible without the psychic opening.

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It is impossible to become like a child giving oneself entirely until the psychic is in control and stronger than the vital.

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It is the psychic coming forward that brings the force of surrender.

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The power of experience is not gone — but what is most important now is to develop the psychic condition of surrender, devotion, love and cheerful confidence in the Mother, an unshaken faith and a constant inner closeness, and also to bring down from above the peace, wideness, purity etc. of the higher Self which is that of the Mother's consciousness. It is these things that are the basis of the siddhi in this Yoga — other experiences are only a help, not the basis.

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It is the psychic surrender in the physical that you have begun to experience.

All the parts are essentially offered, but the surrender has to be made complete by the growth of the psychic self-offering in all of them and in all their movements separately and together.

To be enjoyed by the Divine is to be entirely surrendered so that one feels the Divine Presence, Power, Light, Ananda possessing the whole being rather than oneself possessing these things for one's own satisfaction. It is a much greater ecstasy to be thus surrendered and possessed by the Divine than oneself to be the possessor. At the same time by this surrender there comes also a calm and happy mastery of self and nature.

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No surrender to the psychic being is demanded, the surrender is to the Divine. One approaches the Divine through faith; concrete experience comes as a result of sadhana. One cannot demand a direct experience without doing anything to prepare the consciousness for it. If one feels the call, one follows it — if there is no call, then there is no need to seek the Divine. Faith is sufficient to start with — the idea that one must first understand and realise before one can seek is a mental error and if it were true would make all sadhana impossible — realisation can come

only as a result of sadhana, not as its preliminary.

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There is no need of all this complication. If the psychic manifests, it will not ask you to surrender to it, but to surrender to the Mother.

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The surrender must be to the Mother — not even to the Force, but to the Mother herself.

Surrender and Bhakti

Surrender and love-bhakti are not contrary things — they go together. It is true that at first surrender can be made through knowledge by the mind, but it implies a mental bhakti and, as soon as the surrender reaches the heart, the bhakti manifests as a feeling and with the feeling of bhakti love comes.

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Self-surrender at first comes through love and bhakti, more than through Atmajnana. But it is true that with Atmajnana the complete surrender becomes more possible.

Surrender and the Brahmic Condition

There can be [*devotion and surrender on the higher spiritual planes*], but it is not inevitable as in the psychic. In the higher mind one may be too conscious of identity with the “Brahman” to have devotion or surrender.

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The Brahmic condition brings a negative peace of shanti and mukti in the soul. Self-giving brings a positive freedom which can become also a dynamic force of action in the nature.

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One can have the Brahmic condition without self-giving, because it is the impersonal Brahman to which one turns. Renunciation of desires and of all identification with Nature is its condition. One can have self-giving of the nature to the Divine as well as of the soul and reach by it the Brahmic condition which is not only negative but positive, a release of the nature itself and not only a release from the nature.

Surrender and Transformation

If there is no surrender, there can be no transformation of the whole being.

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A surrender by any means is good, but obviously the impersonal is not enough — for surrender to that may be limited in result to the inner experience without any transformation of the outer nature.

Passive or Tamasic Surrender

Active surrender is when you associate your will with the Divine Will, reject what is not the Divine, assent to what is the Divine. Passive surrender is when everything is left entirely to the Divine — that few can really do, because in practice it turns out that you surrender to the lower nature under pretext of surrendering to the Divine.

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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 these 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 glowing 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, nor 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 in 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.

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You are always expecting the Mother to do it [*remove vital dissatisfaction and revolt*]—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.

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Talk of surrender or a mere idea or tepid wish for integral consecration will not do; there must be the push for a radical and total change.

It is not by taking a mere mental attitude that this can be done or even by any number of inner experiences which leave the outer man as he was. It is this outer man who has to open, to surrender and to change. His every least movement, habit, action has to be surrendered, seen, held up and exposed to the divine Light, offered to the divine Force for its old forms and

motives to be destroyed and the divine Truth and the action of the transforming consciousness of the Divine Mother to take their place.

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It [*the idea that the sadhana is done by the Divine rather than by oneself*] is a truth but a truth that does not become effective for the consciousness until or in proportion as it is realised. The people who stagnate because of it are those who accept the idea but do not realise — so they have neither the force of tapasya nor that of the Divine Grace. On the other hand those who can realise it feel even behind their tapasya and in it the action of the Divine Force.

Surrender and Tapasya

Yoga is an endeavour, a tapasya — it can cease to be so only when one surrenders sincerely to a higher Action and keeps the surrender and makes it complete. It is not a fantasia, devoid of all reason and coherence or a mere miracle. It has its laws and conditions and I do not see how you can demand of the Divine to do everything by a violent miracle.

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When the will and energy are concentrated and used to control the mind, vital and physical and change them or to bring down the higher consciousness or for any other Yogic purpose or high purpose, that is called Tapasya.

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Tapasya has predominated in your sadhana, for you have a fervour and active energy which predisposes you to that. No way is entirely easy, and in that of surrender the difficulty is to make a true and complete surrender. Once it is made, it certainly makes things easier — not that things are all done in no time or that there are no difficulties, but there is an assurance, a support, an absence of tension which gives the consciousness rest as well

as strength and freedom from the worst forms of resistance.

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Yes, of course you are right. The process of surrender is itself a Tapasya. Not only so, but in fact a double process of Tapasya and increasing surrender persists for a long time even when the surrender has fairly well begun. But a time comes when one feels the Presence and the Force constantly and more and more feels that that is doing everything — so that the worst difficulties cannot disturb this sense and personal effort is no longer necessary, hardly even possible. That is the sign of the full surrender of the nature into the hands of the Divine. There are some who take this position in faith even before there is this experience and if the Bhakti and the faith are strong it carries them through till the experience is there. But all cannot take this position from the beginning — and for some it would be dangerous since they might put themselves into the hand of a wrong Force thinking it to be the Divine. For most it is necessary to grow through Tapasya into surrender.

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Yes, if there is the sense of the Divine Will behind all the Tapasya and receiving it and bestowing the fruit — it is at least a first form of surrender.

Surrender and Personal Effort

There are always two ways of doing the Yoga — one by the action of a vigilant mind and vital seeing, observing, thinking and deciding what is or is not to be done. Of course it acts with the Divine Force behind it, drawing or calling in that Force — for otherwise nothing much can be done. But still it is the personal effort that is prominent and assumes most of the burden.

The other way is that of the psychic being, the consciousness opening to the Divine, not only opening the psychic and bringing it forward, but opening the mind, the vital and the physical, receiving the Light, perceiving what is to be done, feeling and

seeing it done by the Divine Force itself and helping constantly by its own vigilant and conscious assent to and call for the Divine working.

Usually there cannot but be a mixture of these two ways until the consciousness is ready to be entirely open, entirely submitted to the Divine's origination of all its action. It is then that all responsibility disappears and there is no personal burden on the shoulders of the sadhak.

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There are two possibilities, one of purification by personal effort, which takes a long time, another by a direct intervention of the Divine Grace which is usually rapid in its action. For the latter there must be a complete surrender and self-giving and for that again usually it is necessary to have a mind that can remain quite quiet and allow the Divine Force to act supporting it with its complete adhesion at every step, but otherwise remaining still and quiet. This last condition which resembles the baby cat attitude spoken of by Ramakrishna, is difficult to have. Those who are accustomed to a very active movement of their thought and will in all they do, find it difficult to still the activity and adopt the quietude of mental self-giving. This does not mean that they cannot do the Yoga or cannot arrive at self-giving — only the purification and the self-giving take a long time to accomplish and one must have the patience and steady perseverance and resolution to go through.

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If there is not a complete surrender, then it is not possible to adopt the baby cat attitude, — it becomes mere tamasic passivity calling itself surrender. If a complete surrender is not possible in the beginning, it follows that personal effort is necessary.

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In the early part of the sadhana — and by early I do not mean a short part — effort is indispensable. Surrender of course, but surrender is not a thing that is done in a day. The mind has its

ideas and it clings to them; the human vital resists surrender, for what it calls surrender in the early stages is a doubtful kind of self-giving with a demand in it; the physical consciousness is like a stone and what it calls surrender is often no more than inertia. It is only the psychic that knows how to surrender and the psychic is usually very much veiled in the beginning. When the psychic awakes, it can bring a sudden and true surrender of the whole being, for the difficulty of the rest is rapidly dealt with and disappears. But till then effort is indispensable. Or else it is necessary till the Force comes flooding down into the being from above and takes up the sadhana, does it for one more and more and leaves less and less to individual effort — but even then, if not effort, at least aspiration and vigilance are needed till the possession of mind, will, life and body by the Divine Power is complete. I have dealt with this subject, I think, in one of the chapters of *The Mother*.

On the other hand, there are some people who start with a genuine and dynamic will for a total surrender. It is those who are governed by the psychic or are governed by a clear and enlightened mental will which having once accepted surrender as the law of the sadhana will stand no nonsense about it and insists on the other parts of the being following its direction. Here there is still effort, but it is so ready and spontaneous and has so much the sense of a greater Force behind it that the sadhak hardly feels that he is making an effort at all. In the contrary case of a will in mind or vital to retain self-will, a reluctance to give up your independent movement, there must be struggle and endeavour until the wall between the instrument in front and the Divinity behind or above is broken. No rule can be laid down which applies without distinction to everybody — the variations in human nature are too great to be covered by a single trenchant rule.

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It is not possible to get rid of the stress on personal effort at once — and not always desirable; for personal effort is better than tamasic inertia.

The personal effort has to be transformed progressively into

a movement of the Divine Force. If you feel conscious of the Divine Force, then call it in more and more to govern your effort, to take it up, to transform it into something not yours, but the Mother's. There will be a sort of transfer, a taking up of the forces at work in the personal adhar — a transfer not suddenly complete but progressive.

But the psychic poise is necessary: the discrimination must develop which sees accurately what is the Divine Force, what is the element of personal effort, and what is brought in as a mixture from the lower cosmic forces. And until the transfer is complete, which always takes time, there must always be as a personal contribution, a constant consent to the true Force, a constant rejection of any lower mixture — that is very important.

At present to give up personal effort is not what is wanted, but to call in more and more the Divine Power and govern and guide by it the personal endeavour.

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It is not advisable in the early stages of the sadhana to leave everything to the Divine or expect everything from it without the need of one's own endeavour. That is only possible when the psychic being is in front and influencing the whole action (and even then vigilance and a constant assent are necessary) or else, later on in the ultimate stages of the Yoga when a direct or almost direct supramental force is taking up the consciousness; but this stage is very far away as yet. Under other conditions this attitude is likely to lead to stagnation and inertia. (See *The Mother*, Part I.)

It is only the more mechanical parts of the being that can truly say they are helpless: the physical (material) consciousness, especially, is inert in its nature and moved either by the mental and vital or by the higher forces. But one has always the power to put the mental will or vital push at the service of the Divine. One cannot be sure of the immediate result, for the obstruction of the lower Nature or the pressure of the adverse forces can often act successfully for a time, even for a long time, against

the necessary change. One has then to persist, to put always the will on the side of the Divine, rejecting what has to be rejected, opening oneself to the true Light and the true Force, calling it down quietly, steadfastly, without tiring, without depression or impatience, until one feels the Divine Force at work and the obstacles beginning to give way.

You say you are conscious of your ignorance and obscurity. If it is only a general consciousness, that is not enough. But if you are conscious of it in the details, in its actual working, then that is sufficient to start with; you have to reject steadfastly the wrong workings of which you are conscious and make your mind and vital a quiet and clear field for the action of the Divine Force.

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Certainly one ought not to fret [*about whether one will achieve one's end*]—and certainly one ought to dedicate [*one's desire to achieve it*] to the Divine. But our experience is that merely leaving the Divine to do everything (to fulfil) does not carry one very far. There must be a cooperation, a consent, an aspiration, a will to change.

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If there were no conditions at all [*in Yoga*], then there would be no need of sadhana; all would be done automatically by the Force or help without any need of effort by the sadhak. The help is always there and it has pulled you out of many difficulties and attacks. It is, I suppose, because of the feeling “I do not want to do anything” that you have not been able to receive the help, but that is a temporary inertia of the physical mind and will. I do not see the use of your going back for a few months to a life which could not now satisfy you. The only course is to shake off the inertia of the will and persevere.

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So long as there is not the full presence and conscious working of the higher Force, some amount of personal effort is

indispensable. To do the sadhana for the sake of the Divine and not for one's own sake is of course the true attitude.

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Faith, reliance upon God, surrender and self-giving to the Divine Power are necessary and indispensable. But reliance upon God must not be made an excuse for indolence, weakness and surrender to the impulses of the lower nature; it must go along with untiring aspiration and a persistent rejection of all that comes in the way of the Divine Truth. The surrender to the Divine must not be turned into an excuse, a cloak or an occasion for surrender to one's own desires and lower movements or to one's ego or to some Force of the ignorance and darkness that puts on a false appearance of the Divine.

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It is always better to make an effort in the right direction; even if one fails the effort bears some result and is never lost.

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For those who do not make any effort, — that absence of effort is itself a difficulty — they do not progress.