

# The Mother and the Sadhana in the Ashram

## The Mother Does the Sadhana

In what way does the Mother do the sadhana for the sadhaks?

The sadhana is done by the Mother according to the truth and necessity of each nature and of each plane of Nature. It is not one fixed process. 13 September 1933

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I heard from someone: “The Mother has chosen only those who have got capacity to do this Yoga, but they will reach the goal only if the vital gets transformed. If not, they will realise in the next birth.” Is it so?

The Mother has never spoken of anything to be done in the next birth.

Naturally the vital has to be transformed if one is to succeed. 15 January 1934

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Why do we feel that the Mother is experiencing 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. 3 January 1935

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Yesterday you wrote in regard to the Mother, “Experiencing what?” I meant experiencing what we feel. For sometimes we feel that our experiences are felt not only by us but by the Mother in us.

Naturally, the Mother does sadhana in each sadhak — only it is conditioned by their need and their receptivity.

Also I failed to understand your comment: “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* are a record of Mother’s experiences.

4 January 1935

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What you write is in itself unexceptionable — it is indeed what was offered to the sadhaks at the beginning — but the difficulty is precisely there, in the complete sincerity of the nature. Few have been able to rise to it and only a distant approximation (if the phrase can be accepted) has been attained by some. Apart from incomplete sincerity, there is the difficulty that the brain is clouded by egoism and desire and imagines it is doing the very thing when it is doing something else. That is why I spoke of the danger of the theory of all from the Mother. There are people who have taken it that all that comes from the ego or the vital, comes from the Mother, is her inspiration or what she has given them. There are others who have taken it as an excuse for going on in the old rut indefinitely, saying that when the Mother wants she will change things! There were even some who on this basis created a subjective Mother in themselves whose dictates, flattering to their ego and desire, they pitted against the contrary dictates of the Mother here and came to think that this external Mother was after all not so much the real thing as the inner one or that she was putting them through an ordeal by contradicting the inner dictates and seeing what they would do!! The truth remains the truth, but this power of twisting by the mind and other parts of the nature has to be kept in sight also.

17 October 1936

### **The Mother's Victory**

I am confident that in the long run everything will be clear and there will be Mother's victory.

The Mother's victory is, essentially, the victory of each sadhak over himself. It can only be then that any external form of work can come to harmonious perfection. 12 November 1936

### **Being Taken Up by the Mother**

When does the Divine take up the sadhaks fully?

When they give up the ego.

What is the meaning of "the Divine takes up" a sadhak?

When it is the Divine Force that works out all the Yoga and the actions by a direct action of which the sadhak is conscious.

When a person begins to do Yoga and comes to live under the shade of the Mother, is he not taken up fully by her?

Not until he is ready. He has first to accept her and then to give up more and more his ego. There are sadhaks who at every step revolt, oppose the Mother, contradict her will, criticise her decisions. How can she take them up fully in such conditions?

What is the sign that one is taken up by the Divine?

One can feel it.

21 June 1933

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My dear Mother, I have heard a good deal about your divine power and supernatural knowledge from X. As I myself am a humble servant of the Goddess, I would request you to instruct me in the development of supernatural force in order to attain the ultimate end — Darshan of the Goddess.

Reply<sup>1</sup> that the Mother is not able to write letters herself, and you are writing on her behalf. What is given by the Mother is not a development of supernatural force, but if someone is accepted to take up this path of Yoga he is led towards a deeper and higher consciousness in which he can attain union with the Divine Mother. This however is a path long and full of difficulties — Sri Aurobindo and the Mother do not admit anyone to it unless they are sure of his call and his capacity to follow it and the person himself is sure of his will to follow it until the goal is reached.

6 March 1937

### Broad Lines of the Sadhana

The basis of life here is wholly spiritual. An inner discipline is given, but it is on broad lines allowing each individual the necessary freedom for his nature and temperament to grow and change spontaneously. Broadly, the sadhana consists of a progressive surrender of oneself — inward and based upon it the outward also — to the Guru, to the Divine; meditation, concentration, work, service — all these are means for a self-gathering in all one's movements with the sole aim of delivering oneself into the hands of a Higher Power for being worked on and led towards the Goal. The Mother guides, helps each according to his nature and need, and, where necessary, herself intervenes with her Power enabling the sadhak to withstand the rigours and demands of the Path. She has placed herself — with all the Love, Peace, Knowledge and Consciousness that she is — at the disposal of every aspiring soul that looks for help.

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All in me is proceeding towards the Mother's love, devotion and purity. Why then am I not going up in my consciousness and getting higher experience?

The power of experience is not gone — but what is most important now is to develop the psychic condition of surrender,

<sup>1</sup> *Written by Sri Aurobindo to his secretary, who replied to the enquirer. — Ed.*

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. 17 January 1934

### **The Mother and Other Paths of Yoga**

The idea of your friend that it is necessary to receive a mantra from here and for that he must come is altogether wrong. There is no mantra given in this Yoga. It is the opening of the consciousness to the Mother from within that is the true initiation and that can only come by aspiration and rejection of restlessness in the mind and vital. To come here is not the way to get it. Many come and get nothing or get their difficulties raised or even fall away from the Yoga. It is no use coming before one is ready, and he does not seem to be ready. Strong desire is not a proof of readiness. When he is inwardly ready, then there will be no difficulty about his coming.

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Before coming here I was attracted to the path of Nirvikalpa Samadhi, and sometimes it attracts me still. Occasionally I wonder if I will be able to follow this yoga through all its vicissitudes. I would like the Mother to tell me what I should do.

The Mother cannot decide for you, she can only offer to you the Truth she has come here to bring to the world and, if you accept it, guide you towards it. 9 September 1933

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Someone told me that Ramana Maharshi lives on the overmental plane or that his realisation is on the same level as Shankara's. How is it then that he is not aware of the arrival of the Divine, while others, for instance X's Guru, had this awareness?

I can't say on what plane the Maharshi is, but his method is that of Advaita Knowledge and Moksha — so there is no necessity for him to recognise the arrival of the Divine. X's Guru was a bhakta of the Divine Mother and believed in the dynamic side of existence, so it was quite natural for him to have the revelation of the coming of the Mother.

23 January 1936

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After reading a chapter in *The Synthesis of Yoga* I wrote to you the other day about the strong mental realisation of cosmic oneness; now I find that that state has disappeared. Was there anything wrong in writing about it? Is it that the Mother does not like this sort of Yoga of Knowledge? Or is it that one should always write about the darker side and never mention the other side?

Why should Mother dislike Yoga of Knowledge? The realisation of self and of the cosmic being (without which the realisation of self is incomplete) are essential steps in our Yoga; it is the end of other Yogas, but it is, as it were, the beginning of ours, that is to say, the point where its own characteristic realisation can commence. The disappearance of a realisation when it is spoken of is an experience some people have, but it is not likely to be the case with you. To write only of the dark side would be to overemphasise it and not to give a chance to the other. It is probable that the realisation comes only as a first touch; it comes often like that and afterwards repeats itself until the consciousness is able to hold it as its normal state.

26 March 1936

### **Turning Entirely to the Mother**

All things are the Divine because the Divine is there, but hidden not manifest; when the mind goes out to things, it is not with the sense of the Divine in them, but for the appearances only which conceal the Divine. It is necessary therefore for you as a sadhak to turn entirely to the Mother in whom the Divine is manifest and not run after the appearances, the desire of which or the

interest in which prevents you from meeting the Divine. Once the being is consecrated, then it can see the Divine everywhere — and then it can include all things in the one consciousness without a separate interest or desire.

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Is it easily possible for my nature to terminate the remaining journey only with love, joy and happiness? I mean to say, can the transformation of my lower nature go on at the same time that the sadhana proceeds with full love?

It is possible if you (1) can get free of 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.

17 October 1935

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No, Mother was not serious or displeased with you at all. But why attach so much importance to what X or Y do or say. They are still so full of darkness and ego.

The path you have now taken — to cleave to the Mother through all circumstances and let nothing shake you from that — will bring the true solution of difficulties for you. For it means that the psychic being has started its work in you.

24 December 1935

### **Acceptance of the Mother**

There seems to be a lack of harmony or unity of will between you and the Mother. What you write the Mother seems to contradict almost intuitively by exerting her weight on the opposite side.

On what grounds do you come to this conclusion? I do not write anything that is not approved by the Mother.

My physical is convinced that the right will has not descended

in the Mother. That is why she finds so many reasons not to support me. I think it is better for the present that I remain in retreat till the Will and love have descended in her, which would make her turn fully towards me.

Is it the opinion of your physical that the test of the right will in the Mother is that she must always support *you*? Does your physical think then that the infallible right will is necessarily in you — that it has descended in you first before it descends in the Mother? Otherwise, what is the basis of such a strange idea, that to disagree with you or suggest something else shows that her will is in the wrong and in error? 8 November 1932

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I feel I have an inner relation with you, but I do not feel the same relation with the Mother. In all probability she has no place in my inner heart. Perhaps it is this consciousness in her that makes her act against the spirit of what she agrees to when you write things.

I again repeat that what I write is what the Mother approves or decides; we have not two separate wills. This idea of division or opposition between us is a suggestion of the Ignorance.

10 November 1932

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Even a good devotee and a brilliant student like X finds it difficult to accept Mother. I cannot understand why he cannot see the simple truth about her.

If he finds it difficult to accept Mother, how is he a good devotee? A devotee to whom? A brilliant student is another matter; one can be a brilliant student and yet quite incompetent in spiritual matters. If one is a devotee of Vishnu or some other godhead, then it is different — one may see only one's object of worship and so not be able to accept anything else. 14 November 1934

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Today is really a great day for me. What greater day can there

be than the one when the Mother is accepted even by the obscure, ignorant, revolting parts of my lower vital nature?

Yes, when that has been done, it is one of the biggest steps in the sadhana. 28 March 1935

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The Mother puts energy into all who can receive it; it depends on them whether they use it rightly or not — or waste it. Men are not machines, they have a will — and they can choose whether they accept the Divine or not — whether they do the Divine's will or not.

### **Confidence in the Mother**

Have confidence in the Mother and be sure that the liberation from these things will surely come. What the soul feels is the sign of the spiritual destiny as of the spiritual need. What opposes is a remnant of the nature of the human ignorance. Our help will be there with you fully to overcome it. 27 February 1935

### **Recognising the Mother's Divinity**

Up till now, I have not recognised the divinity of anyone except Sri Krishna. I have looked on the Mother as a Guru who can take me to him. But now something in me wants to hold the Mother fast as divinity. I can't keep her out of my mind, nor can I reject Sri Krishna. The more I think, the more I am perplexed. I pray for your help.

This struggle in you (between bhakti for Sri Krishna and the sense of the divinity of the Mother) is quite unnecessary; for the two things are one and go perfectly together. It is he who has brought you to the Mother and it is by adoration of her that you will realise him. He is here in the Asram and it is his work that is being done here. 2 March 1932

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This evening when I looked at the Mother, I found in her the utmost beauty. She was glimmering. I felt as if a great Goddess had come down from the heavens. Can I know what this was?

It was only that you felt the Divinity with her which is always there. 20 July 1933

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There are people who start at once, others take time.

X recognised the Mother as divine at first sight and has been happy ever afterwards; others who rank among Mother's devotees took years to discover or admit it, but they arrived all the same. There are people who had nothing but difficulties and revolts for the first five, six, seven or more years of the sadhana, yet the psychic ended by awaking. The time taken is a secondary matter: the one thing needful is — soon or late, easily or with difficulty — to get there. circa 22 July 1935

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It seems X has climbed to the top rung of your spiritual ladder in a very short period. In your heavenly Parliament he must have been in charge of a very important portfolio! Otherwise I don't see how he could, at first sight, have had a vision of the Divine in the Mother, besides other things.

What top rung and what Parliament? There is no such thing as a heavenly parliament. X progressed smoothly and rapidly from the beginning in Yoga, first, because he was in dead earnest; secondly, because he had a clear and solid mind and a strong and tenacious will in complete control of the nerves; thirdly, because his vital being was calm, strong and solid; finally, and chiefly, because he had a complete faith and devotion to the Mother. As for seeing the Divine in the Mother at first sight, he is not the only one to do that. Plenty of people have done that who had no chance of any portfolios, e.g. Y's cousin, a Musulman girl, who as soon as she met her declared "This is not a woman, she is a goddess" and has been having significant dreams of her ever since and whenever she is in trouble, thinks of her and gets helped out of the trouble. It is not so damnably

difficult to see the Divine in the Mother as you make it out to be. 23 July 1935

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As for the Divine in the Mother, I know what the Musulman lady exactly saw. From what you say it seems to be a flash of intuition.

Not at all, it was a direct sense of the Godhead in her — for I suppose you mean by intuition a sort of idea that comes suddenly? That is what people usually understand by intuition. It was not that in her case nor in X's.

By seeing the Divine in the Mother, I don't mean imagination or calm, calculated reasoning. But to see actually the fully flaming, resplendent, effulgent Divine Mother in any one of her Powers — why, that is damnably difficult at least for me who have not even seen the halo around her.

I don't believe X or anybody would have that at first view. That can only come if one has already developed the faculty of vision in the occult planes. What is of more importance is the clear perception or intimate inner feeling or direct sense "This is She." I think you are inclined to be too romantic and poetic and too little spiritually realistic in these things. 29 July 1935

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I suppose you do not expect me to answer in detail this list of old grievances or try to justify the Mother or explain what you consider to be her indefensible conduct. I do not intend to do these things. It is for each sadhak to discover for himself whether he can take the Mother as divine or accept her government and guidance, or regards her as one like himself or inferior to himself, whose conduct he can see rightly, weigh, condemn and judge. It is not for the Mother to explain or justify herself, nor indeed was it ever the rule for the Guru to stand at the bar for the judgment of the disciple. Each has to see for himself whether he can give that obedience and self-opening to one who has or lives in the Divine Consciousness or has realised the Divine Truth, by which

alone he can receive what is to be given.

19 December 1936

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I do not have an active faith on every occasion that the Mother is divine or that her dealings with us are divine. How to have a firm conviction of this?

It is only if you see the divinity of the Mother that there can be a settled conviction — that is a question of the inner consciousness and vision.

5 June 1937

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It seems to me that the part of my external nature which was not accepting the Mother as divine is now being convinced of her divinity. But why do I forget her divinity when I actually come before her?

It is the physical mind in its most external action that sees physical things as only physical.

15 August 1937

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How to convince the mind that the Mother is the Divine and that her workings are not human?

It is by opening up the psychic and letting it rule the mind and vital that it can be done — because the psychic knows and can see what the mind cannot.

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Is there some doubting part in me, always doubting that the Mother is divine, or does something in me simply form for the enjoyment of doubt?

If something forms for the enjoyment of doubt and if that something is in you, then that part must surely be a doubting part. Or if these formations (which are always busily going about in the atmosphere) present themselves to you and something in you responds, it means that there is a part in you which is still open to the suggestions of doubt.

There is, I suppose, something in your vital and exterior mind which is still prone to the idea that the Mother cannot be divine because she does not satisfy their desires or act according to their ideas.

### **Discontent with the Mother**

In your letter to the Mother I note that you profess to be writing a confession, but the tone of it is rather a justification of your faultless self accompanied by an accusation against the Mother of favouritism, bad temper, and injustice. I observe also that your statement of facts is incorrect and as far as it concerns the Mother, grotesque. You lay stress too on a point in which you can justify yourself, and you ignore all the rest in which you were in fault. I will assume, however, that all this was unintentional and that, in writing such a letter, you were unconscious of the movements of your vital being which inspired its spirit and tone.

I would suggest that in your relations with others, — which seem always to have been full of disharmony, — when incidents occur, it would be much better for you not to take the standpoint that you are all in the right and they are all in the wrong. It would be wiser to be fair and just in reflection, seeing where you have gone astray, and even laying stress on your own fault and not on theirs. This would probably lead to more harmony in your relations with others; at any rate, it would be more conducive to your inner progress, which is more important than to be the top-dog in a quarrel. Neither is it well to cherish a spirit of self-justification and self-righteousness and a wish to conceal either from yourself or from the Mother your faults or your errors.

As for your doubts about the Mother, they are not likely to disappear so long as you think you can read the Mother's mind by the light of your own and pass your mental judgments on her and her action from those erroneous data. Nor can they easily disappear if your faith breaks down every time that she does something which your limited intelligence cannot understand or which is displeasing to the feelings and demands of your vital nature. If you do not believe that she has a consciousness

greater and wider than yours and not measurable by ordinary standards and judgments, at the very least a Yogic consciousness, I do not see on what ground you are practising Yoga here under her guidance. Those who constantly doubt and criticise and blame or attribute her actions to the most common and vulgar human feelings and motives and yet pretend to accept her or to accept myself and my Yoga, are guilty of a stupid and irrational inconsequence. As for understanding, that is another matter. I would suggest that you must grow out of the ordinary mind and become conscious with the true consciousness before you can hope to do it. And for that faith and surrender and fidelity and openness are conditions of some importance.

6 November 1929

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Are there sadhaks in the Asram who do not understand that “the Divinity acts according to the Consciousness of the Truth above and the Lila below and not according to men’s ideas about what it should or should not do”?

There are plenty who do not realise it — they expect the Mother to act according to their ideas and wishes, not according to a higher consciousness.

20 October 1934

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When the Mother pointed out my mistake, I became discontented. Misguided by the suggestions of the refractory parts of my being, I took it as an undeserved reproach. I feel very ashamed.

It was simply a statement of fact, not a reproach, and it was not you but your ego that got discontented because it felt scratched by the facts.

I had promised you that I would never be discontented with the Mother. I failed to keep that promise. I pray to you again to pull me out of this state and I promise again that I shall never be discontented with the Mother.

Very well, I take the promise. But the rising of discontent is surely a sufficient indication that the consciousness is going wrong. As soon as you feel it you should immediately draw back and say, "O ego, you are up again against the Mother! Stop that or I will take you by the scruff of the neck and throw you out of the window." I hope indeed to see that "thrown out" actually happen one day.

21 October 1935

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I have no intention of entering into an explanation, defence or apology for the Mother's action. I have long ago decided that I would not allow the Mother's rightful position here to be lowered by the sadhaks putting her as an accused before the tribunal of their ignorant mind or vital ego and demanding that she or I for her should plead her case. The Mother acts from her own knowledge and consciousness which is not that of the sadhaks; their ideas of what she ought to do or ought not to do have no place. Rather they are here to discard such ideas and accept her guidance by which they can themselves enter into a higher consciousness where these mental and vital errors have no right of existence.

I have already pointed out to you that your action was entirely mistaken. You had no right to ask for a letter placed there for the Mother's perusal. You had no right to demand that the Mother should give you the letter. You had no special claim to mend the envelope for X. It is not a question of bad or good desire. The pretension of doing good can contain as much ego and desire as any other personal claim, and that it was egoistic is proved by the violent reaction against the Mother that her not satisfying it raised in you. If it had been pure of ego, you would have had no reaction but quietly accepted the Mother's action as right because it was the Mother's.

If you want to get rid of the painful inner and physical reactions, you must get rid of their cause in you, the ego of self-esteem, demand and desire. It is only by a complete surrender of yourself, your mind, vital and everything else to the Divine that this ego can go. Your reaction and accusation of injustice against

the Mother shows that you are still clinging to it in some part of you and you should welcome rather than resent anything that gives you a chance of rejecting it still more from your nature.

7 March 1937

# The Mother as Guru and Guide

## The Mother's Way of Dealing with Sadhaks

The difficulty about meeting your demand that the Mother should plan out and fix a routine for you in everything which you must follow is that this is quite contrary to the Mother's way of working in most matters. In the most physical things you have to fix a programme in order to deal with time, otherwise all becomes a sea of confusion and haphazard. Fixed rules have also to be made for the management of material things so long as people are not sufficiently developed to deal with them in the right way without rules. But these things of which you write are different; they are concerned with your inner development, your sadhana. In fact, even in outward things the Mother does not plan with her mind and make a mental map and rule of what is to be done; she sees what is to be done in each case and organises and develops it according to the nature of each case. In matters of the inner development and the sadhana, it is still more impossible to map out a plan fixed in every detail and say, "Every time you shall step here, there, in this way, on that line and no other." Things would become so tied up and rigid that nothing could be done; there could be no true and effective movement.

If the Mother asked you to tell her everything, it was not in order that she might give you directions in every detail which you must obey. It was in order, first, that there might grow up the complete intimacy in which you would be entirely open to her, so that she might pour more and more and continuously and at every point the Divine Force into you which would increase the Light in you, perfect your action, deliver and develop your nature. It is this that was important; all else is secondary, important only so far as it helps this or hinders. In addition it would help her to give wherever needed the necessary touch, the necessary

direction, the necessary help or warning, not always by words, more often by a silent intervention and pressure. This is her way of dealing with those who are open to her; it is not necessary to give express orders at every moment and in every detail. Especially if the psychic consciousness is open and one lives fully in that, it gets the intimation at once and sees things clearly and receives the help, the intervention, the necessary direction or warning. That was what was happening to a great extent when your psychic consciousness was very active, but there was a vital part in which you were not open and which was coming up repeatedly, and it is this that has created the confusion and the trouble.

Everything depends on the inner condition and the outward action is only useful as a means and a help for expressing or confirming the inner condition and making it dynamic and effective. If you do or say a thing with the psychic uppermost or with the right inner touch, it will be effective; if you do or say the same thing out of the mind or the vital or with a wrong or mixed atmosphere, it may be quite ineffective. To do the right thing, in the right way in each case and at each moment one must be in the right consciousness — it can't be done by following a fixed mental rule which under some circumstances might fit in and under others might not fit in at all. A general principle can be laid down if it is in consonance with the Truth, but its application must be determined by the inner consciousness seeing at each step what is to be done or not done. If the psychic is uppermost, if the being is entirely turned towards the Mother and follows the psychic, this can be increasingly done.

All depends therefore not on a mental rule to follow in practice, but on getting the psychic consciousness back and putting its light into this vital part, and making that part turn wholly to the Mother. It is not that the question of your going too much to your sisters is of no importance, — it is of considerable importance — but to limit the contact is effective only as a means of helping your vital part to withdraw from this servitude to old movements. It is the same everywhere.

The kind of outward obedience you lay stress on, asking

for a direction in every detail, is not the essence of surrender, although obedience is the natural fruit and outward body of surrender. Surrender is from within, opening and giving mind, vital, physical, all to the Mother for her to take them as her own and recreate them in their true being which is a portion of the Divine; all the rest follows as a consequence. It would not then be necessary to ask her word and order outwardly in every detail; the being would feel and act according to her will; her sanction would be sought but as the seal of that inner unity, receptiveness of her will and obedience. 11 June 1932

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Your letter of the morning came entirely from the disturbed and wounded vital; that was why I was in no hurry to answer. I do not know why you are so ready to believe that myself or the Mother act from ordinary movements of anger, vexation or displeasure; there was nothing of the kind in what I wrote. You had been repeatedly falling from your attained level of a higher consciousness and, in spite of our suggestions to you to see what was pulling you down, your only reply was that you could see nothing. We knew perfectly well that it was part of the vital which did not want to change and, not wanting to change, was hiding itself from the mind and the mind itself did not seem very willing to see, — so we thought it necessary when you gave us a chance by what you wrote to indicate plainly and strongly the nature of the obstacle — on one side your old sentiment persisting in the *viparita* form of anger, resentment and wounded feeling, on the other the vital's habit of self-esteem, censorious judgment of others, a sense of superiority in sadhana or in other respects, a wish to appear well before others and before yourself also. This especially has a blinding influence and prevents the clear examination of oneself and the perception of the obstacles that are interfering with the spiritual progress. Even if the mind aspires to know and change, a habit of that kind acting concealed in the vital is quite enough to stand in the way and prevent both the knowledge and the change. I was therefore careful to speak plainly of vanity and self-righteousness — so that this part of the

vital might not try not to see. The Mother speaks or writes much more pointedly and sharply to those whom she wishes to push rapidly on the way because they are capable of it and they do not resent or suffer but are glad of the pressure and the plainness, because they know by experience that it helps them to see their obstacles and change. If you wish to progress rapidly, you must get rid of this vital reaction of *abhimāna*, suffering, wounded feeling, seeking for arguments of self-justification, outcry against the touch that is intended to liberate, — for so long as you have these, it is difficult for us to deal openly and firmly with the obstacles created by the vital nature.

In regard to the difference between you and X, the Mother's warning to you against the undesirability of too much talk, loose chat and gossip, social self-dispersion was entirely meant and stands; when you indulge in these things, you throw yourself out into a very small and ignorant consciousness in which your vital defects get free play and this is likely to bring you out of what you have developed in your inner consciousness. That was why we said that if you felt a reaction against these things when you went to X's, it was a sign of (psychic) sensitiveness coming into you — into your vital and nervous being — and we meant that it was all for the good. But in dealing with others, in withdrawing from these things you should not allow any sense of superiority to creep in or force on them by your manner or spirit a sense of disapproval or condemnation or pressure on them to change. It is for your personal inward need that you draw back from these things, that is all. As for them what they do in these matters, right or wrong, is their affair — and ours; we will deal with them according to what we see as necessary and possible for them at the moment and for that purpose we can not only deal quite differently with different people, allowing for one what we forbid for another, but we may deal differently with the same person at different times, allowing or even encouraging today what we shall forbid tomorrow. X's case is quite different from yours, for there is no resemblance in your natures. I told you that or something like it long ago and I emphasised in my letter to X that what might be the rule for myself or Y was not to

be applied or going to be applied to his case. To deal otherwise would be to create difficulties in his sadhana and not to make it easier for him or swifter. I have also told him quite clearly in my letter that the attempt at meeting and mixing with others — which in the ordinary human life is attempted by sociableness and other contacts — has to be realised in Yoga on another plane of consciousness and without the lower mixture — for a higher unity with all on a spiritual and psychic basis. But the way, the time, the order of movements by which this is done, need not be the same for everybody. If he attempted to force himself it would lead to gloom, despondency and an artificial movement which would not be the true way to success. A human soul and nature cannot be dealt with by a set of mental rules applicable to everybody in the same way; if it were so, there would be no need of a Guru, each could set his chart of Yogic rules before him like the rules of Sandow's exercise and follow them till he became the perfect siddha!

I have said so much in order to let you understand why we do not deal in the same way with X as with you or another. The tendency to take what I lay down for one and apply it without discrimination to another is responsible for much misunderstanding. A general statement too, true in itself, cannot be applied to everyone alike or applied now and immediately without consideration of condition or circumstance or person or time. I may say generally that to bring down the supermind is my aim in the yoga or that to do that one has first to rise out of mind into overmind, but if on the strength of that, anybody and everybody began trying to pull down the supermind or force his way immediately out of mind into overmind, the result would be disaster.

Therefore concern yourself with your own progress and follow there the lead the Mother gives you. Leave X or others to do the same; the Mother is there to guide and help them according to their need and their nature. It does not in the least matter if the way she follows with him seems different or the opposite of that which she takes with you. That is the right one for him as this is the right one for you.

You have now begun to see the difficulties that are still there in your vital; keep to that clear perception, let it grow clearer and more precise. Concentrate on what you have to do and do not let yourself be distracted this way and that by irrelevant preoccupations or any other influence. 25 October 1932

\*

X would like to see the Mother and place his difficulties before her. His chief difficulty is how to reconcile the Bliss, Harmony and Unity (Sachchidananda) with the discord, strength and rapaciousness that one finds in the actual world.

You can tell him Mother does not discuss these mental problems even with the disciples. It is quite useless trying to reconcile these things with the intellect. For there are two things, the Ignorance from which the struggle and discord come and the secret Light, Unity, Bliss and Harmony. The intellect belongs to the Ignorance. It is only by getting into another consciousness that one can live in the Light and Bliss and Unity and not be touched by the outward discord and struggle. That change of consciousness therefore is the only thing that matters; to reconcile with the intellect would make no difference.

If he likes, you can lend him the *Conversations* — as he wants to converse with the Mother. 11 November 1932

\*

Does the Divine turn away its eyes from people like X, who disobeys the Mother, and allow them to do whatever they like?

That is the Mother's business. She alone can say what is the right way to deal with people. If she were to deal with people only according to their defects, there would be hardly half a dozen people left in the Asram. 26 March 1933

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I am sure there are reasons for everything the Mother does and that what she does is suited to the needs of each one, but the vital does not believe it, and it is not yet well established

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in the mind. How can I make my vital being understand that the Mother is never partial?

One way is to have entire faith in the Mother — the other is to believe that she is wiser than yourself and must have reasons for everything she does which are better than your mind's judgments.

And how can this understanding be firmly established in my mind, so that it does not yield to any temptation?

It should be established — that is all. So long as the vital or mental think themselves wiser than the Mother and able to judge her how do you expect these stupidities to disappear?

22 March 1934

\*

The Mother's injunction to work in peace and harmony with the others concerned those whom you meet for work, not a personal relation such as you had with X.

The Mother is the sole judge of what is necessary for each and she is not bound to apply the same rule to everybody. The Guru deals with each disciple in a different way and does not keep one law for all. You were allowed to mix with X for a long time like Y with Z and A with B — in all cases it has been bad for those who do not give up the special relation, preventing them from being successful in the Yoga for which they came. The Mother does not interfere decisively for a time but only lets each know that it is better for them not to mix in a specially intimate way and she waits for them to realise it. When one or other of the two or both realises or begins to realise that it is better to break the special connection, then Mother intervenes. If you went back to X, all possibility of Yoga for you would cease. Even your going to the Dispensary has disturbed the progress you were making and brought back the old habits of thought and reactions.

Your one hope of doing anything in sadhana is really and truly and definitely to turn to the Mother alone and follow her

will. There is no going back to the old things — the Mother will not sanction it. If you are sincere in what you have written (in English), then you must also forget the past and live for the Divine and the sadhana. 10 April 1934

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Since the day my sadhana began to come down to the lower levels, some parts of my being have felt that the Mother has restricted the former physical manifestation of her love. But I am sure that this change was meant for the good of my sadhana.

Whatever is done by the Mother is for the good of the sadhak and the sadhana. 9 December 1935

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X wonders why people like Y are allowed here when it is obvious that they have no spiritual possibility in them. But unless X has some understanding of the higher manifestation, such comments are just expressions of his own ignorance.

Obviously. Neither Nature nor Destiny nor the Divine work in the mental way or by the law of the mind or according to its standards — that is why even to the scientist and the philosopher Nature, Destiny, the way of the Divine all seem a mystery. The Mother does not act by the mind, so to judge her action with the mind is futile. But why should X or anyone assume that Y will have no profit for her spiritual future from her stay here?

5 May 1936

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Can the physical mind have a correct understanding of the Mother's dealings?

Not until it is enlightened by the true consciousness and knowledge from above. 4 July 1936

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Why should the Mother be obliged to treat everybody in the same way? It would be a most imbecile thing for her to do that.

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### The Mahakali Method

All these things depend on the person, the condition, the circumstances. The Mother uses the method you speak of, the Mahakali method, (1) with those in whom there is a great eagerness to progress and a fundamental sincerity somewhere even in the vital, (2) with those whom she meets intimately and who, she knows, will not resent or misunderstand her severity or take it for a withdrawal of kindness or grace but will regard it as a true grace and a help to their sadhana. There are others who cannot bear this method — if it was continued they would run a thousand miles away in misunderstanding, revolt and despair. What the Mother wants is for people to have their full chance for their souls, be the method short and swift or long and tortuous. Each she must treat according to his nature. 9 May 1933

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All these years I have been hesitant to write all the details of my life for fear that the Mother will scold me. Now I have become a bit stronger and along with her scoldings I can feel her force working inside me. By her infinite compassion, I am out of the fear.

If you are afraid of the Mother's scoldings, how will you progress? Those who want to progress quickly, welcome even the blows of Mahakali because that pushes them more rapidly on the way. 28 September 1933

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Is it true that when I realise the Divine Consciousness there will be no difference between the Mother's will and mine? I would like her to tell me whatever her will is, even if it is unpalatable to me — not to say "If you like" or "As you like", but to say "Do this" or "Do not do this."

Certainly, when the Divine Consciousness is fully realised, there will be no difference between the Mother's will and the sadhaka's.

For a relation to exist in which Mother can do as you say, the

sadhak must not be afraid of the Mahakali aspect and ask only for sweetness. He must be able to take the blows of Mahakali as a blessing. He must also believe in her vision and judgment and word, otherwise when she says or does something unpleasant to his ego that ego will go sulking, justifying itself, calling her names etc. as is the habit with so many in the Asram when she does not do what they like. There are very few here who can take this attitude even imperfectly, but it is with them that the Mother has this relation. With others, who have a different nature, she cannot but behave differently — for she has to act with each according to his nature.

### Understanding the Mother's Actions

During my talk with X, he spoke about Mother's preferences, about her taking more care of some and paying more attention to them. But it seems absurd and foolish to think that anybody knows more about people than Mother.

It is a favourite form of criticism and quite natural to the human mind which knows nothing about the play of forces through which the Divine Movement has to make its way under the conditions laid down by the play of the Ignorance.

7 May 1933

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I am often guilty of a feeling of ingratitude towards the Mother. I cannot find the way to remove the misunderstanding about her smile or her seeing some persons often or treating European sadhaks specially and other such things which indicate partiality. With reasoning it is easy to understand, but the feeling persists.

But why indulge a feeling which has not truth or good sense or reason at its back? This accusation of partiality rests first on feelings of egoistic vital demand, jealousy etc. which are no doubt fairly universal in human nature as it is, but not the more respectable for that. It supports itself on a crude idea of "equality" of treatment which in practice comes to this

that everyone should be treated in just the same way, which is about as impossible a thing as could be demanded in this world and would make all action and all direction of either work or sadhana impossible. The Mother extends the divine love and protection to all, but the form she gives to her action must vary with the different nature and need of each, the demands of the work, the necessities of their sadhana. The idea about Europeans is quite wrong — since with the exception of X and Y all those who see most of the Mother or are given special positions of confidence are Indians. If one starts comparisons each has something which another has not. And to have that something does not prevent complaints of being worse treated than others. These feelings therefore are merely the product of the restless discontent of the vital and there is nothing to be done with them except to send them away whenever they come as useless disturbers of happiness and progress.

27 December 1933

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Many sadhaks try to judge the Mother from her outer actions without some inner or higher basis.

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?

6 April 1935

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I am uneasy about the treatment accorded to me by the Mother. Several times I have noted that she has acted against me. When I proposed something for Bushy the cat's treatment, she found some tricky replies and then asked X to treat her. When Y wanted to join our class, Mother told me she would try to find someone to replace him at work so he could attend, but then she wrote to him about the class, "It is not necessary." I have other examples also, and each one adds to the wounds she has dealt me. After all, what has she done for me since I came here? I have done my best, I have put the best of my

energy into the work, but not once can I remember that she has cared for me as she cares for others.

I do not know what right you have to invent false imputations against the Mother without even knowing all the facts out of your ignorant egoistic mind and insulting her with these falsehoods calling her a liar and a trickster. X treated Bushy without asking the Mother; she was not even informed and she only knew of it when she heard the poor beast screaming and asked what was the matter. That is how the sadhaks treat the Mother and afterwards they insult and kick her. As for Y, he had already asked and the Mother said no because he works in the night and she thought a class in addition would be too much strain for him. Afterwards when you wrote that he was enthusiastic about it she tried to find someone who would relieve him but she has found no one. That is all. Even when she tries to meet your requests, you seize on it as an occasion for insulting her and putting the most base, vile and sinister motives on her simplest actions. There is no reason for throwing the blame for your condition off your own shoulders and attacking the Mother.

11 January 1936

### **Misunderstanding the Mother's Words**

Why does the Mother not speak directly to me and tell me what she wants? Does she not know that I truly want to do nothing but her will?

What the Mother said was perfectly just and reasonable. It is because your mind was confused and excited and hostile that it put its own imagined words and interpretations and tried to support and justify its hostility by its own inventions and inferences. This trick of putting into the Mother's mouth words that she had not spoken — often the very reverse of what she had said, — or of twisting her words and acts to mean something that she had never intended, is a constant habit of the forces of falsehood when they want to turn the sadhaks from the right way or use them against the Truth and against the Mother. If

you thus make yourself the instrument of a falsehood, how can you expect not to fall away from peace and light and the true psychic condition? You were constantly doing that before and it was the cause of all your troubles, putting yourself on the side of the obscure and false and hostile forces. If you want to get free, you must cease listening to them, justifying them, throwing them against the Mother.

We are perfectly ready to correct you and have no intention of leaving you to your ignorance, — that is another absurd imagination, — but you must also correct yourself as soon as your mind starts this kind of thing; for otherwise you will not be truly ready to receive the correction and will start again believing the Mother to be false and deceptive and the rest of it, as soon as the hostile forces can create or invent an excuse. 1 May 1932

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I find it rather surprising that you should regard what the Mother said to you or what I wrote as a recommendation to relax aspiration or postpone the idea of any kind of siddhi till the Greek Kalends! It was not so intended in the least — nor do I think either of us said or wrote anything which could justly bear such an interpretation. I said expressly that in the way of meditating of which we spoke, aspiration, prayer, concentration, intensity were a natural part of it; this way was put before you because our experience has been that those who take it go quicker and develop their sadhana, once they get fixed in it, much more easily as well as smoothly than by a distressed, doubtful and anxious straining with revulsions of despondency and turning away from hope and endeavour. We spoke of a steady opening to the Divine with a flow of the force doing its work in the adhar, a poised opening with a quiet mind and heart full of trust and the sunlight of confidence; where do you find that we said a helpless waiting must be your programme?

As for light-heartedness and insouciance, the Mother never spoke of insouciance — a light don't-care attitude is the last thing she would recommend to anybody. She spoke of cheerfulness,

and if she used the word light-hearted it was not in the sense of anything lightly or frivolously gay and careless — although a deeper and finer gaiety can have its place as one element of the Yogic character. What she meant was a glad equanimity even in the face of difficulties and there is nothing in that contrary to Yogic teaching or to her own practice. The vital nature on the surface (the depths of the true vital are different) is attached on the one side to a superficial mirth and enjoyment, on the other to sorrow and despair and gloom and tragedy, — for these are for it the cherished lights and shades of life; but a bright or wide and free peace or an *ānandamaya* intensity or, best, a fusing of both in one is the true poise of both the soul and the mind — and of the true vital also — in Yoga. It is perfectly possible for a quite human sadhak to get to such a poise, it is not necessary to be divine before one can attain it.

8 May 1932

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There is no doubt that at times the idea enters the thinking elements among the members of the Asram that the Mother has lost her grip on the physical, and thus she says things that are contradictory or not factual.

It is rather surprising that the Asram does not break down altogether, if the Mother has no grasp of the physical world — those who are in that lamentable condition are not usually able to run anything on the physical plane; but perhaps it is the great grip of the thinking elements here on the physical world that keeps the Asram going in spite of the imbecility of myself and the Mother. What I notice however is that when the Mother says something, the thinking elements very often understand the exact opposite.

You write of being responsive to the Mother. You seem to be saying: Don't concern yourself with whether something is true, whether it is a fact, whether it hurts you — always respond as the Mother leads.

It is not quite like that. Those who respond find on the contrary that the Mother has a greater grasp of truth than they have and

do not judge her by their fallible intellects but try to see that truth and follow it.

February 1933

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It is not *X* alone, but many or most who turn things [*spoken by the Mother*] in that way — the tendency is almost universal in human nature. It is not from dishonesty that he or others do it — it is because when they listen, their minds are not silent but active and the thought of their minds mixes with what they have heard and gives it another turn or shape or colour. Often also the vital interferes and exaggerates or reshapes according to the desire or the convenience. This is much more often unconsciously than consciously done.

In the present instance, the Mother spoke quite generally, not about *Y* or what had happened in *Z*'s case, and she meant that what ought to be remembered is not remembered because of some strong immediate desire which pushes the memory behind until the desire is fulfilled and then only, if at all, the recollection comes. *X* evidently added his own ideas, applied it specially to *Y*'s action and thought that the Mother had said it was consciously done — that *Y* remembered and yet went against her conscious sense of right in order to fulfil her desire. That was not what the Mother said or meant by her general statement.

30 March 1933

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Is it not the Mother who often tells us things indirectly, through the discriminating mind or the psychic?

It is only when the Mother speaks directly that you can say "The Mother has said".

9 July 1933

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It is good if you have freed yourself from this bondage [*a rigid insistence that one must always do what one has said one will do*]. Love of Truth is divine, but this kind of truth is a very mixed product accompanied as it is by hardness or a fierce anger. Truth does not insist on a blind adherence to the spoken word — as

for instance, if a man says that he will kill another under the impression that that other has done him a grievous wrong and afterwards carries out his word even when he has found out that the other was innocent and no wrong done. That is what literal adhesion to the spoken word would come to, if scrupulously held as a principle. Truth on the contrary demands that a man shall cleave to the principle of Truth in things only, and in the case above the principle of Truth would demand that he should break his vow and not keep it. If a man pledges himself to something that is against the principle of Truth, e.g. against the principle of Love and Compassion or against that of obedience and surrender to the Divine, it is not Truth to keep that pledge — for it would be a pledge to follow falsehood and how can truth be rooted in allegiance to falsehood? That would be an Asuric, not a divine Truthfulness.

As for the Mother, you will not find in her this blind adherence to an arrangement once made. If, for instance, she told someone, next time you yield to sex-passion in any way, you will have to leave the Asram and if the man did it and repented, she too might relent and not insist in following out her menace. These matters of interviews are not promises, contracts or engagements, — they are arrangements only and can be altered. If she has arranged for half an hour she can make it in fact  $\frac{3}{4}$  of an hour — or diminish it to twenty minutes. There is a plasticity needed in the movement of time and the Shakti of life cannot afford to be rigid in its movements; otherwise Life would either be turned into a mere mechanism or break to pieces. But in this case there was no intention; it was a pure accident; by some oversight your name had not been written in the morning list and Mother came to the door when those on the list were finished. She could not go back because it was extremely late and it had been a long and exhausting morning spent in a continual struggle with adverse forces and she had to come in, do what still she had to do and come to me to report what had happened.

But even if she had intended it for some reason not known to you, your reaction was not the right one. For the basis you have taken for your Yoga is to obey the Will whatever it may

be. These things, seemingly accidental, happen when they are predestined and they come in as an ordeal for something in the vital which has by this painful process to accept change.

28 September 1933

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The Mother told me in an interview one year ago that the psychic is quite strong in me. Did she say this to bring pride in me? It gave me a sense of superiority to persons like X and Y and many others. But now it would seem I am full of vital difficulties. Did the Mother ever look at the vital difficulties of others as severely as she seems to be looking at mine?

Mother told you about your psychic because she saw it — but she never told you that you were superior in that respect to X and Y. It was not said to bring pride in you, but to encourage you to rely on your psychic and bring it out so that it might get full control on the vital. I may add that the psychic being strong does not necessarily mean that it is in full control of the vital or cannot be clouded over. The condition some of those you mentioned have attained now is that the psychic is in control of the vital so that doubts and revolts are not possible or are rapidly rejected — and that was the condition to which you were coming before this (it seems to me quite causeless and accidental) lapse. So I wrote that there was no reason why you should not speedily have the same psychic consciousness which would prevent all doubt or any radical disturbance.

7 May 1934

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X has often quoted things that the Mother told him, not only about me but about others. He says that she tells him these private things because she trusts him so much. But so many things are said in the Mother's name! Often I have thought about how serious it is when someone says: "Mother said these things."

People have put thousands of things in the Mother's mouth that she never said. I have known them to say this and that to Mother and then go about putting it in Mother's mouth, saying "Mother

said to me.” Also things that they have not said to her and she never said. You should put no reliance on these statements.

15 January 1935

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A lie is a lie whoever speaks it. If you give credit to what someone or another thinks or says as Mother’s motive in an action, take her statement of her motive as untrue and somebody else’s who cannot know as sound and true and on that challenge Mother for want of frankness, is the resulting upset our fault? It is a question of greater confidence in the Mother than in the statements or interpretations of sadhaks or the hasty assumptions or inferences of your mind or the feelings of your vital made without having the needed information. If you could get rid of that movement, things would be easier.

15 May 1936

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How can the maxim “a lie is a lie” apply to all? If a higher motive demands concealing or misrepresenting something by words, I would hardly call it a lie — the motive is superhuman and cannot fall in the same category as an ordinary lie. I think Krishna did not always speak the exact truth and his half-lies always provoke an understanding smile in all who listen to his stories.

If the Mother did a thing for one reason and said that she did it for quite another she did not have, I fail to see how it can be anything but a falsehood. No superhuman motive can make a falsehood not a falsehood. Moreover, if you really believe that the Divine can speak what is not true without being untrue and that that is a part of divinity, why do you resent it when you think the Mother has done it and grow sorrowful and indignant over her supposed unfair and uncandid treatment of you and say she ought to have been frank etc.? You ought rather to think she is acting from superhuman motives and accept gladly whatever she does. At least that seems to be the logic of such a position.

You base yourself evidently on the position that the Divine Consciousness is above good and evil. But that does not mean

that it does evil and good impartially. It can only mean that it acts from a light that is beyond that level of human consciousness which makes the human standard of these things. It acts for and from a greater good than the apparent good men follow after. It acts also according to a greater Truth than men conceive. It is for this reason that the human mind cannot understand the divine action and its motives — he must first rise into a higher consciousness and be in spiritual contact or union with the Divine. But if anyone recognises that, he can no longer judge the divine action with his human mind and from a human point of view. The two things would be quite incompatible.

But this does not fall under any such explanation. To allege a false motive cannot be a movement of a greater Truth and consciousness. To keep silence and not reveal one's motives is one thing — to say I did not act from that motive when I actually did so, is not silence, it is falsehood. It is a matter not of moral, but spiritual importance. The Mother cares for the Truth and she has always said that lying and falsehood create a serious obstacle to realisation. How then can she herself do that?

I do not remember any lies or half-lies told by Krishna, so I can say nothing on that point. But if he did according to the Mahabharat or the Bhagwat, we are not bound either by that record or by that example. I think Rama and Buddha told none.

17 May 1936

### Asking Questions to the Mother

When I think about myself I begin to doubt whether I will ever get any realisation. I go on wishing the Mother would speak to me on this subject so that I may understand. But when I get the knowledge, I also feel that my wish was a way of not accepting the light.

Quite so.

Last night at the meditation, I got the same desire for knowledge. Then I saw the Mother closing her eyes and it was as though her mind was pressing my mind on all sides. Then my

mind became still and I felt the contact of the Mother's mind even in the cells. After that I felt that all my questions were answered and it was no use asking anything at all.

That is the right way. Union with the Mother's consciousness is the true way for knowledge to come.

But always I get this desire for knowledge and feel that it would be a great help if I could know some things.

You should throw away this feeling. It is not by asking questions to the Mother that you can get the knowledge, but by keeping your mind open to her.

25 June 1930

### **Writing to the Mother**

On reading my letter of this morning, I felt as if the Mother was not pleased with me for writing about the bad thoughts I had about X and Y.

Your writing these things does not give any displeasure to Mother. It is better to write if you have them, than to be silent about it.

9 June 1933

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Today a thought came to me: "Why are you forcing yourself so much with regard to the control of the vital being? Better not bother about opening your thoughts and desires to the Mother; rather leave her to work on you."

If you want the Mother to work through you, you must lay before her your thoughts and desires and reject them.

3 September 1933

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You have asked why I stopped writing to the Mother. When I write I ask about the small things that bother me, but often she does not answer. This confuses me, because if she does not explain these things to me, who will?

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When the sadhaks write to the Mother, it is not to get answers from her about the small things of daily life — sometimes they do it when necessary, and Mother sometimes answers, sometimes not. The main object of writing is to put themselves before the Mother, their experiences, their progress, their lives, so as to create a constant connection and invite her presence, force, help, guidance in everything that calls for her intervention. But it is not necessary that the Mother's response should take the form of a written answer. It would not even be physically possible in the course of 24 hours to answer all the correspondence that is addressed to us.

13 October 1933

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When the consciousness is open, to put things (difficulties, needs) before the Mother in a clear form written or otherwise (even if it is not submitted bodily to her), brings very often an immediate relief or response.

27 December 1933

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The experience of being with the Mother and speaking to her is one that one can easily have when one is writing to her and is true because some part of the being does actually meet with her and open itself to her when one writes one's experiences.

23 December 1935

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I find that when I start to write I feel a greater pressure and a deeper concentration on the higher Force.

I suppose it is because in the act of writing or rather beginning to write you enter into contact with the Mother and the Force.

5 May 1936

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You did well to speak to X and also to write to Mother. Of course Mother had observed X's difficulties, — it is correct that the difficulty is the lack of a certain free opening — otherwise all that could be removed quickly and the necessary change of

nature (mind, ego etc.) carried on by smooth gradations. To write as you do is helpful for opening oneself and for receiving the precise touch. X's logic about the Mother knowing and therefore there being no need to write is applicable if there is a free or at least a sufficient flow of giving and reception between the Mother and the sadhak, but when a serious difficulty comes, this logic is not so applicable. Naturally, we shall do our best to help him in his struggle.

14 May 1936

### Leaving the Mother and the Ashram

If you were seeking for a way of making it impossible for me to refuse you the money for going away, you have certainly found it this time. After the letter you have written and the accusations it contains, I am bound to give you the Rs. 50 you ask for.

As to your other reproaches and accusations, I do not think it is necessary for me to reply. I send you the money you ask for and so fulfil the promise which you so imperatively demand that I should fulfil. I do not send you away or give my sanction for your going; it is for you to decide in all freedom whether you will go or stay. But if you stay, there must be no more reproaches of this kind, since you will be staying entirely by your own free will and under no pressure from us. Nor can I allow the claim you seem to have made that the Mother must do what you want and she must not say to you or do anything that does not please you. That is a relation which is not allowed to others and it cannot be allowed to you either. The Mother has shown you every possible favour and kindness; more she cannot do.

12 June 1930

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It is not possible for the Mother to tell you to remain, if you are yourself in your mind and vital eager to go. It is from within yourself that there must come the clear will on one side or the other.

24 February 1932

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My family would like me to go back with them to Bombay

and stay there for some time. I don't find myself bound by any sense of obligation, but there is a dull yet persistent desire in me to go. But as I am not a frigid mental machine, I would much prefer if the Mother spoke to me in a personal interview instead of replying in writing.

But you have already had a personal interview with the Mother in which the question was spoken of for an hour or thereabouts and she told you very positively that she considered it would be harmful, dangerous to you for your sadhana. She cannot say more or otherwise than she did that time. As for these dull persistent desires, it is not by indulging them that they disappear — on the contrary: the only way is to grow out of them or let them die.

7 February 1933

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Can sadhaks who leave the Mother totally forget her Grace after receiving it for so many years while living at her feet?

Some of them seem to forget.

Is there any possibility for them to return again to live at the Mother's feet?

It depends on the person.

How is it possible for someone who feels aspiration and the Divine call in his heart to come to live at the Mother's feet and then afterwards to leave them? Is it through vital depression or something else?

Through the suggestions of the hostile forces, because of pride, egoism, ambition, sexual desire, vanity, greed or any other vital impulse used by the hostile Powers.

Is it because the vital forces are so strong that even if a person has a clear aspiration and a Divine call they can lead him away from the Mother and the Asram?

Every man is free at every moment to consent to the Divine call

or not consent — to follow the lower nature or to follow his soul.

When a person leaves the path, does it not prove that he was unable to judge whether his call for the Divine was true or not?

All this about judging is nonsense — you feel the call or you do not and, if you feel the call, you follow it without calculating or counting risks or asking whether you are fit or not.

When people feel the urge to leave the Mother's feet and go away from her, what is the best way for them to cling to the Mother with faith and not go away?

By understanding that it is the Devil who tempts them and not listening to the Devil. 6 May 1933

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X had almost decided to go away this morning. He thinks the Mother is angry at him and putting pressure on him — and even the general pressure in the atmosphere he cannot bear.

The Mother is not at all angry with him and has not been at any time — that is a sheer imagination. As for the pressure, the only pressure now is to bring down the supramental, but that is a pressure on Nature and not on the sadhaks. For the sadhaks, the only thing given is help, not a pressure. 3 October 1934

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If you insist on going, the Mother cannot say no, as it is only with your own will that we can keep you here. Your difficulty only comes because you cannot recognise that whatever the Mother arranges for you is out of desire for your good and in love for you. This is because you have your own ideas and preferences and if she does something contrary to that you think she does not love you. The Mother's love is always there, but it is through confidence and surrender that you can feel it. You need to recover your health and strength and we wanted you to do

the necessary things for that for a sufficiently long time — food, rest, treatment with the Mother's force behind all that to make it successful. But a full confidence in the Mother and acceptance of her decisions and her guidance is necessary; if you have and keep that, then you can recover your strength and capacity for work and progress in Yoga. 3 December 1934

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The Mother cannot tell you to go because there is no true cause why you should go and it would be very bad for you to do so as well as bad for the work and everything else. The reasons for your not giving up the work are just the same as before and not in the least changed by anything that has happened. Jealousy is no doubt a great defect of the nature, but many here have it; almost everyone has some serious defect in his nature which stands in his way and gives trouble. But it is not a remedy for this to give up work and sadhana and abandon the Mother. You have to go on working and doing the sadhana with the Mother's aid behind you until this and all other obstacles are got rid of. We have told you already that these things cannot be got rid of in a day, but if you persevere and rely on the Mother they will yet disappear. Do not allow an adverse Force to mislead you; reject all depression and go straight forward till you reach the goal. 17 July 1935

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Mother has no wish to abandon you and it has never been her will that you should go away from her. You must put yourself in harmony with her will and then all will go right. Her love will guide you and her protection will be effective.

Rest until you are well. Do not be in a hurry to go to work before you have recovered your strength. 19 July 1935

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What you have seen is quite correct. When the psychic being has been once fully awake as it was all these days in you, then it is not possible for the sadhak to revolt and go away; for if

he does, he leaves his soul behind him with the Mother and it is only the outer being that lives for a while elsewhere. But that is too painful a condition; one has either to come back or life becomes hardly worth living. But there is no danger of that for you, now you have understood and have the true feeling.

Moreover these attacks that now come are not like those that came before when the psychic was still not fully awake. Then each time they came, they increased their force of attack; now they are only spending what force is left to them and losing it. Besides once the psychic being is awake, it is bound to recover control and confirm the mind in the truth so that the true consciousness in the being becomes each time stronger.

All is well. The Mother's child will always grow more in you and the Mother's little star burn brighter and brighter.

20 November 1935

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It is a question between the continuity of your concentrated spiritual life and the call of old demands belonging to the consciousness that you have left behind you. The Mother, as you well know, does not favour even a brief return to the old atmosphere once one is in the spiritual life. For one who has not yet really begun or is living as yet only a tepid half-formed surface sadhana, it might be different. The old life always pulls to have the sadhak back, to renew its ties, to get a fresh lease of control over his vital. If one yields it will redouble its importunities, bring new occasions for calling again; the sadhana here gets broken and has to be picked up again with effort. All the same if people insist on going or have a strong desire to go, they are allowed sometimes to do so at their own risk, but the Mother never sends anybody — unless there is her work to do. That is the position.

15 January 1937

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As for going out, the Asram has seen X go out twice and return with full permission, it has recently seen Y and Z go with the Mother's permission, both with the full intention of returning

— to say nothing of others. As for *A* you yourself were entirely against her going. *A* herself always took the position that she ought not to go and asked for help against the other tendency in her. If she had decided to go and told us so, nobody would have stood in her way, although we would not have been lost in admiration at the spiritual wisdom of her choice. Our view is that once the full separate spiritual life is chosen, to cling and turn back to the ordinary one is an error. But if there are circumstances that make the (temporary) departure either harmless or psychologically or otherwise inevitable then we give permission. If the sadhak goes in a spirit of revolt and defiance or goes back to the ordinary life out of egoistic ambition as *B* and others did then of course Mother does not wish them to come back (so long as that remains) and refuses to allow it. Also if there is treachery, as in *C*'s case — a fact which you yourself asserted and I don't see that it can be denied — unless he atoned or changed, there was no reason why he should return, especially as he said his sadhana was going on admirably there. Mother knew his return with an uncorrected spirit would not be good for him and events showed that she was perfectly right. But I have always noticed that whatever untoward thing happens to a sadhak, many consider that it is we whose bad qualities are to blame for it. And yet they go on accepting us as Gurus and addressing us as Divine! That is truly baffling to the reason. Perhaps it shows that there is something really supramental here!!

In your case I have given the reasons why we accept your going out. There is no ground therefore why we should not support you in your music and other undertakings there. In these respects at least you allow that you have been supported and the support has been effective — there is no reason why that shall not continue — the more so if you keep us informed as others at a distance do when they want some help in any endeavour.

9 March 1937

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You have been able to make progress because you had a certain freedom from demand and repining, an equability and

confidence in turning towards the Mother. This is your main strength and you must not allow it to be disturbed or taken away from you. The attitude described in the birthday poem is the right one for you. It is because you have opened and are on the way that the opposite forces are trying to put in suggestions of dissatisfaction or the impulse to go away. They want to create the same “habit of depression and trouble” that there has been in X and many others so as to use it as a lever against you; but there is no reason why you should allow it. The idea that we are driving away and will drive many by the pressure of our Yoga force is a silly notion among the many silly notions current in the Asram invented by the too idly active brains of the sadhaks. We do not press on anybody to go away — our action has been the opposite. It is a contrary undivine Force which presses on sadhaks to go away from here so that they may lose their chances of sadhana. If their vital is very unquiet, they accept the suggestions of this Force and begin to long to go away; if they long too much, we may have to let them go, for it is not possible to force the Divine on those who do not want him or are not willing to follow the path to the end or decide that sex, fame, pleasure or other things of the kind are preferable.

31 March 1937

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The Mother certainly would not give you money for going away, for she could not approve of or sanction such a step which has no real ground and for which the only reasons you allege are a quite unreasonable despondency and a pique (*abhimāna*) which is also without true cause. The Mother has not in the least changed towards you — she has neither withdrawn her affection nor felt nor expressed any disappointment about your sadhana; her support has not been withdrawn either from your singing. The only thing we can make out in this connection is that the impression was created in your vital by her having discouraged a movement of ego in you, pressed on the removal of some defects which you yourself had admitted and wished to overcome, put aside some suggestions with regard to one

occasion for your music which did not seem to her suitable. But these things she has done before and you used to be very much pleased at her pointing out or letting you understand where you had to change. You yourself wanted to get rid of ego and change the resistant part and had taken steps towards it; it would not have been helpful for your purpose that the Mother should support or indulge any movements coming from there. I can only gather from your recent letters that the resisting part has revolted against the pressure you yourself had put on it and thrown up the impression that it could not change, that the demand on it was more than it could face and it would rather go and that in your depression you have identified yourself with its feeling and misinterpreted the Mother's motives and her attitude — a thing that in your clearer consciousness you would either not have done or else soon corrected the mistake. I hope that this clearer part of you which is the larger part will quickly reassert itself and give you back your former right vision and attitude. I shall do and do always what I can to help towards that and towards the psychic victory in you and your spiritual progress. Your departure and renunciation of the sadhana is a thing which nothing in us accepts for a moment.

# The Mother and the Discipline in the Ashram

## The Mother in Sole Charge of the Ashram

What your vital being seems to have kept all along is the “bargain” or the “mess” attitude in these matters. One gives some kind of commodity which he calls devotion or surrender and in return the Mother is under obligation to supply satisfaction for all demands and desires spiritual, mental, vital and physical, and, if she falls short in her task, she has broken her contract. The Asram is a sort of communal hotel or mess, the Mother is the hotel-keeper or mess-manager. One gives what one can or chooses to give, or it may be nothing at all except the aforesaid commodity; in return the palate, the stomach and all the physical demands have to be satisfied to the full; if not, one has every right to keep one’s money and to abuse the defaulting hotel-keeper or mess-manager. This attitude has nothing whatever to do with sadhana or Yoga and I absolutely repudiate the right of anyone to impose it as a basis for my work or for the life of the Asram.

There are only two possible foundations for the material life here. One is that one is a member of an Asram founded on the principle of self-giving and surrender. One belongs to the Divine and all one has belongs to the Divine; in giving one gives not what is one’s own but what already belongs to the Divine. There is no question of payment or return, no bargain, no room for demand and desire. The Mother is in sole charge and arranges things as best they can be arranged within the means at her disposal and the capacities of her instruments. She is under no obligation to act according to the mental standards or vital desires and claims of the sadhaks; she is not obliged to use a democratic equality in her dealings with them. She is free to deal with each according to what she sees to be his true need or what is best for him in his spiritual progress. No one can be her judge or impose on her his own rule and standard; she

alone can make rules, and she can depart from them too if she thinks fit, but no one can demand that she shall do so. Personal demands and desires cannot be imposed on her. If anyone has what he finds to be a real need or a suggestion to make which is within the province assigned to him, he can do so; but if she gives no sanction, he must remain satisfied and drop the matter. This is the spiritual discipline of which the one who represents or embodies the Divine Truth is the centre. Either she is that and all this is the plain common sense of the matter; or she is not and then no one need stay here. Each can go his own way and there is no Asram and no Yoga.

If on the other hand one is not ready to be a member of the Asram or bear the discipline and is still admitted to some place in the Yoga, he remains apart and meets his own expenses. There is no discipline for him on the material plane, except the rules necessary for the safety of the work; there is no material responsibility for the Mother.

11 April 1930

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The Mother is not bound to give reasons for any change she makes unless she herself thinks fit to do so. In such cases the sadhak is supposed to accept the change without question in the confidence that the Mother has her reasons and if she does not tell them to me it is because I do not need to know.

15 June 1936

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If anyone questions the right of the Mother to control the Asram or to control his own conduct, his place is outside; there he can exercise his full civic or other rights and do what he pleases. Whoever is dissatisfied, has the right to leave the Asram just as the Mother has the right not to maintain in it anyone whose conduct or attitude she finds unsatisfactory. There is no right civic or legal or republican or constitutional or any other entitling anyone to do whatever he likes in the house of another or debars that other from objecting or enforcing his objection. There is a discipline of obedience and of abstention from forbidden acts in

this Asram and whoever refuses to recognise it has no “right” to remain here.

There are certain phrases in your recent letters that might be taken as an intention of refusing control and doing what you had been told you must not do so long as you are here and a suggestion that you do not mind leaving the Asram on that account. The phrases you used were indeed vague and general, but if anything of that kind was intended it will be better if you make it clear and precise. 4 May 1937

### Demands on the Mother’s Time

The Mother has no time at all. Can’t some arrangement be made so that she may have time for rest? If we rest, why not her also?

I wish it could be so arranged; but it seems difficult. 1933

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It is not because your French is full of mistakes that Mother does not correct it, but because I will not allow her to take more work on herself so far as I can help it. Already she has no time to rest sufficiently at night and most of the night is working at the books and reports and letters that pour on her in masses. Even so she cannot finish in time in the morning. If she has to correct all the letters of the people who have just begun writing in French as well as the others, it means another hour or two of work — she will be able to finish only at 9 in the morning and come down at 10.30. I am therefore trying to stop it. 1933

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Mother prefers that when she walks on the terrace people should not be looking at her because it is the only time when she can concentrate a little on herself — apart from the necessity of taking some fresh air and movement for the health of the body. If she has to attend to the pull of so many people, that cannot be done. The interview she gives you is a different matter; she has so arranged it herself and it is part of her work, so there is no

need to change. What was said was only for the walk on the terrace. 1935

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Mother never avoids opening letters or any other work because of absence of time: she deals with all the work that comes to her even if she is ill or if she has no time for rest. 15 February 1936

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I am always committing mistakes, and Mother is always merciful and forgives me. But then why has she not written to me about my problem?

You know that I have had to stop correspondence. Mother cannot take it up or write regular letters as she is already engaged in one activity or another from morning to night, 18 hours out of the 24. 1 February 1938

### **The Mother and Material Things**

The Mother had arranged for the good order of the distribution of dishes and their return. X was to arrange for all necessary facilities demanded by Y, Y was to be responsible for the good order of the work, and for that he was to have full control; for if he has not full control, he cannot be held responsible and good order becomes impossible. All who are concerned with this work ought to report everything that is necessary to report to Y and help him to control this work; but it seems that no one is willing to do according to the Mother's arrangement and orders and each wants to be a law to himself. In that case there is no use in making complaints about insufficient dishes or anything else of the kind to the Mother. We refuse to issue more dishes under the present conditions. Already in a single year more than 250 items belonging to the dining-room have been broken, lost, stolen, taken away without authorisation by the sadhaks for their private use or have otherwise vanished. Indiscipline, carelessness, regard for one's own convenience only, disobedience to rules, utter disregard for economy or proper use or safeguarding

of the property of the Asram are responsible for this result. It is no use any farther protecting the sadhaks against the results of their own wilful disorders or providing them with means of life which they show no will or fitness to use rightly. They must go on as best they can with what is there, sufficient or insufficient, so long as it lasts.

I do not know what you mean by these phrases about jumping into disorder or all being the Mother's children. The Mother gives no sanction to disorder, and it is idle for the sadhaks to sentimentalise about being children of the Mother and at the same time constantly to disregard and disobey her.

3 February 1932

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X of the Washing Department has resolved not to speak while working there and to handle the dishes and bowls very carefully so they do not dash against each other. If they are carelessly tossed about, he says, they may feel bad due to the lack of care, grow restless and be more likely to slip and break.

It is very true that physical things have a consciousness within them which feels and responds to care and is sensitive to careless touch and rough handling. To know or feel that and learn to be careful of them is a great progress in consciousness. It is so always that the Mother has felt and dealt with physical things and they remain with her much longer and in a better condition than with others and give their full use.

15 April 1936

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I did not consider it necessary to say anything about the question of waste beyond assuring you that the undertaking of useless and unnecessary work only in order to keep the men employed was no part of the Mother's principle of action. The Mother did not know to what pipe you referred and had no time or inclination to make enquiries about it. It is quite true that, so long at least as the sadhaks are not siddha Yogis, self-control is the law; they have to learn to refrain from indulgence of excess in any direction — the provision made for them being ample for

a sadhak and much more than is allowed elsewhere — and from negligence, greed or the pursuit of individual fancy. When they do these things, the Mother does not intervene at every moment to check them; a standard has been set, they have been warned against waste, a framework has been created, for the rest they are expected to learn and grow out of their weaknesses by their own consciousness and will with the Mother's inner force to aid them. In the organisation of work there was formerly a formidable waste due to the workers and sadhaks following their own fancy almost entirely without respect for the Mother's will; that was largely checked by reorganisation. But waste to a certain extent continues and is almost inevitable so long as the sadhaks and workers are imperfect in their will and consciousness, do not follow in spirit or detail the Mother's recommendations or think themselves wiser than herself and make undue room for their "independent" ideas. Here too the Mother does not always insist, she watches and observes, intervenes outwardly more than in the individual lives of the sadhaks, but still leaves room for them to grow by consciousness and experience and the lesson of their own mistakes and often employs an inner in preference to an outer pressure. In these matters she must exercise her own judgment and vision and there is no use in anybody offering his approval or censure — for she works from a different centre of vision than theirs and they have not a superior light by which they can judge or guide her.

As regards waste, I must point out that in our view free expenditure is not always waste, to have a higher standard than is current in this very tamasic and backward place is not necessarily waste. In matters of building and maintenance of buildings as in others of the same order the Mother has from the beginning set up a standard which is not that current here — the usual system being to use the cheapest possible materials, the cheapest labour and to disregard appearance, allowing things to go shabby or making only patchwork to keep them up. I suppose "thrifty" minds would consider the local principle to be sound and a higher standard to be waste. If the higher standard has been kept, it is not for the glory of anyone, the Asram or the

Mother — the principle of glory being foreign to Yoga, but from another point of view which is not mental and can only be fully appreciated when the consciousness is capable of understanding the vision of things with which the Mother started her work. I do not consider it useful to write about that now, — the general misunderstanding in these subjects can only disappear when the sadhaks have got rid of the ordinary mind and vital and are able to look at things from the same vision level as that from which the conception of the Yoga and the work took its rise.

As to doubts and argumentative answer to them I have long given up the practice as I found it perfectly useless. Yoga is not a field for intellectual argument or dissertation. It is not by the exercise of the logical or the debating mind that one can arrive at a true understanding of Yoga or follow it. A doubting spirit, “honest doubt” and the claim that the intellect shall be satisfied and be made the judge on every point is all very well in the field of mental action outside. But Yoga is not a mental field, the consciousness which has to be established is not a mental, logical or debating consciousness — it is even laid down by Yoga that unless and until the mind is stilled including the intellectual or logical mind and opens itself in quietude or silence to a higher and deeper consciousness, vision and knowledge, sadhana cannot reach its goal. For the same reason an unquestioning openness to the Guru is demanded in the Indian spiritual tradition; as for blame, criticism and attack on the Guru, it was considered reprehensible and the surest possible obstacle to sadhana.

If the spirit of doubt could be overcome by meeting it with arguments, there might be something in the demand for its removal by satisfaction through logic. But the spirit of doubt doubts for its own sake, for the sake of doubt; it simply uses the mind as its instrument for its particular dharma and this not the least when that mind thinks it is seeking sincerely for a solution of its honest and irrepressible doubts. Mental positions always differ, moreover, and it is well known that people can argue for ever without one convincing the other. To go on perpetually answering persistent and always recurring doubts such as for long have filled this Asram and obstructed the sadhana, is merely to

frustrate the aim of the Yoga and go against its central principle with no spiritual or other gain whatever. If anybody gets over his fundamental doubts, it is by the growth of the psychic in him or by an enlargement of his consciousness, not otherwise. Questions which arise from the spirit of enquiry, not aggressive or self-assertive, but as a part of a hunger for knowledge can be answered, but the “spirit of doubt” is insatiable and unappeasable.

For the same reason I refuse to answer criticisms, attacks and questionings directed against the Mother. Whether in work or in Yoga, the Mother acts not from the mind or from the level of consciousness from which these criticisms arise but from quite another vision and consciousness. It is perfectly useless therefore and it is inconsistent with the position she ought to occupy to accept the ordinary mind and consciousness as judge and tribunal and allow her to appear before it and defend her. Such a procedure is itself illogical and inconsequent and can lead nowhere; it can only create or prolong a false atmosphere wholly inimical to success in the sadhana. For that reason if these doubts are raised, I no longer answer them or answer in such a way as to discourage a repetition of any such challenge. If people want to understand why the Mother does things, let them get into the same inner consciousness from which she sees and acts. As to what she is, that also can only be seen either with the eye of faith or of a deeper vision. That too is the reason why we keep here people who have not yet acquired the necessary faith or vision; we leave them to acquire it from within as they will do if their will of sadhana is sincere.

I have written at length on this question once for all; I do not propose to repeat it. People no longer expect it from me; even those who did expect it formerly have ceased to do so. On other questions, so far as they are not connected or mixed up with these things, I may answer hereafter as I find time.

26 December 1936

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The Mother does not provide the sadhaks with comforts because she thinks that their desires, fancies, likings, preferences should

be satisfied — in Yoga people have to overcome these things. In any other Asram they would not get one tenth of what they get here, they would have to put up with all possible discomforts, privations, hard and rigorous austerities, and if they complained, they would be told they were not fit for Yoga. If there is a different rule here, it is not because the desires have to be indulged, but because they have to be overcome in the presence of the objects of desire and not in their absence. The first rule of Yoga is that the sadhak must be content with what comes to him, much or little; if things are there, he must be able to use them without attachment or desire; if they are not he must be indifferent to their absence.

7 January 1937

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I pray to the Mother to enable me to offer myself body, soul and mind to her. I do not want to have anything which I may call my own. I would therefore like to give all my material belongings to her and use only what comes from her. She may give me the same things for my use but please let her accept them at least once as an offering. To whom should I hand over all these things?

Once you have made the offering in your mind and regard all you have as belonging to the Mother and given to you by her, this outward act is not necessary. If you feel that you must do it, you can give them to Nolini and Mother will give them back to you for your use.

2 September 1938

### **The Mother and the Vital Difficulties of the Sadhaks**

It is now one month since you wrote your letter announcing the new favourable turn in your sadhana. You will have had time to see whether the turn was decisive and how far it has moved towards completeness. The test will be whether it gets rid fundamentally of the Asuric turn in your external being. All ambition, pride and vanity must disappear from the thoughts and the feelings. There must be no seeking now or in the future for place, position or prestige, no stipulation for a high seat

among the elect, no demand for a special closeness to the Mother, no claim or assertion of right, no attempt to thrust yourself between her and others, no endeavour to intercept what she is giving to them or to share in it, no imposing of yourself on her or on other sadhaks. All falsehood must be rejected from the speech, thought and action and all ostentation, arrogance and insolence. A simple, quiet and unpretending aspiration to the Truth and reception of it for its own sake and not for any profit it may bring you, a straightforward acceptance of the Mother's will whatever it may be, a complete casting away of all pretensions and pretences, a readiness to obey completely and without reserve and to accept any position and any discipline given are the only conditions on which a divine change can be effected in you. It is for this that you must strive.

On our side we await a certain conquest on the material plane which is not yet accomplished, before we can tell you to return. As you yourself saw once, till this is done your stay here would not be helpful to you. When you are ready in your inner condition and things are ready here, then the Mother will call you.

4 October 1927

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In meditation with the Mother today, I felt devotion for Sri Aurobindo, not in the mind but in the heart. The mind and body are at peace, but there is still difficulty in the vital and below. Take this difficulty away from me.

If the mind and the heart have a settled devotion and are full of the Mother's presence or in constant contact with her Light and Force, then the difficulties of the vital and physical consciousness in you can be met and conquered. It is that you must get first. To try to deal with the difficulties of the vital without this contact or presence, is premature and cannot succeed.

20 June 1930

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Instead of opening myself to the Mother, I opened to the adverse forces. Then like a friend the Mother showed me my mistakes. But why does my outer nature make me wander

here and there? Why doesn't the Mother protect me with her Force at the time of difficulty? Why does she show me only afterwards what the problem was?

The vital will always find excuses for leaving the straight path and indulging its own propensities — and it is for you, since you have a consciousness and a will, not to listen to what you know to be a lower movement. When you want to be guided externally, you have to put your difficulty clearly and precisely without concealing anything before the Mother. But we cannot at every moment replace your own choice and will — we give you the necessary consciousness and light, it is for you to walk by that.

11 January 1933

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I am glad to see that the right consciousness is returning and the attack is over. As it is past, I need not say anything about what you wrote in the interval since you can with the sight of the true consciousness see for yourself what is the right answer.

Only one thing I must note that no wrong idea may linger in your understanding. You seem to say in one passage of a letter that the Mother had said to you that jealousy is inevitable in true love (in ordinary life) and if it is not there when one sees the other loving elsewhere, then they don't love each other! You must have strangely misheard and misunderstood the Mother. It is just the opposite of what the Mother has always said and thought and the very contrary of all her knowledge and experience. It is the idea of the ordinary mind about jealousy and love, not hers. She remembers very well having told you just the opposite that, even in ordinary life, one is *not* jealous if one has the true love. Jealousy is the common movement of the human egoistic lower vital with its grasping possessive instinct and it cannot be anything else. I thought it better to make this clear so that there might be no misleading impression that such movements of the lower vital nature have any sanction or support in the truth of the soul; they belong to the vital Ignorance, they are fruits of the vital ego.

1 February 1933

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Sometimes I throw away the vegetables or the milk because I don't like to eat them. Why does Mother give us the same food every day in the dining room and not something new — some sweets?

That is the desire of the palate which the sadhak has to conquer.

Sometimes I want to wear nice clothes — my dissatisfaction persists unabated.

Another vital desire. These things are good for people in the ordinary life, but such desires must be overcome in Yoga.

There is a growing disgust with life and a preference for death. I pray to Yamaraja to take me quickly since I don't think I can do anything for Mother in this body — why then live on?

This is the reaction of disappointed desire in the vital. It is a movement that should be rejected completely whenever it comes.

Why do these things arise?

They are brought by the ordinary human nature as obstacles to the sadhana.

Who has put them in me and why? How can I get rid of these disappointing things?

You must reject them when they come and try to replace them by a complete faith and surrender to the will of the Mother and a quiet and very patient aspiration for opening and inner union with her.

I still have a fear of the Mother. Why?

It is the same part of you, the vital, that is afraid of her.

It seems like someone has taken away my life-energy and I am without any strength.

It is the physical consciousness which has no longer the mind's sanction to the old push of vital activity and vital desire and so feels the absence of the rajasic vital strength in which men live. In Yoga that strength must be replaced by the Divine Force that comes from the Mother. 15 May 1935

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We are very glad to hear that you are better and that X has helped you out of the crisis. Surely this jealousy must go and no trace of it remain. Do not doubt that the Mother's love is and will be always with you. Trust in her grace and all this will go out of you and leave you the true child of the Mother which in your mind and heart you always are. 18 July 1935

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This jealousy (which is a very common affliction of the vital) will go like the rest. If you have the aspiration to get rid of it, it can only come by force of habit, and with the psychic growing in you and the Mother's force acting the power of the habit is sure to diminish and fade away. Do not be discouraged by its occasional return, but reject it so that it may be unable to stay long and will be obliged to retire. Very soon then it will cease to come at all. 17 October 1935

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You allowed yourself to be surprised by the old movement of unreasoning jealousy and it brought back the old unreasoned thoughts and feelings — for you are no more than others here as a mere worker, you are here as the Mother's child and the work is there only because it is a part of the sadhana. Also this feeling of jealousy and other doubts and difficulties are not peculiar to you alone, they are common to human nature and most here have them or have had them and found it difficult to be free. So there is no reason to suppose because of their presence that you are unfit or will not be able to do the sadhana. The only danger is in these violent fits of despondency and the movement to go away that comes with them; but that also others have

had who have now got over them and some still have them. There is no reason why you should not get over them as many others have done. The Mother's love and the Mother's grace are with you. The only other thing needed is the growth of the psychic consciousness and the psychic movement within you. That had begun and was fast increasing; it has only to reach a certain point, to occupy the mind and vital consciousness more strongly, then these things will no longer be able to return. What difficulties remain will then be minor things; there will be nothing that will try to take you away from the Mother. Be patient therefore and persevere; recover your confidence in the Mother and let your soul grow in you. Beyond these storms there is a haven of joy and love and happiness that are your true goal. Persevere till you reach it. 25 October 1935

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All faults and errors are redeemed by repentance. Confidence in the Mother, self-giving to the Mother, these if you increase them will bring the change in the nature. 12 November 1935

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If you have difficulties, you should recognise that they come from your own vital and deal straightforwardly with your vital; it is only so that real fitness in the nature (apart from the original psychic urge which can only realise itself through a change of the nature) can come. To have feelings against the Mother because of difficulties created by your own vital is simply one way out of many the vital has of rejecting its responsibility and so resisting the pressure to change. 6 February 1936

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The human vital everywhere, in the Asram also, is full of unruly and violent forces — anger, pride, jealousy, desire to dominate, selfishness, insistence on one's own will, ideas, preferences, indiscipline — and it is these things that are the cause of the disorder and difficulty in the D. R. [*Dining Room*] and elsewhere also in the Asram work. The rule established in order to control

or combat these tendencies is that the Mother's will and the rule and discipline established by her shall be followed and not each worker be led by his own ego. But there are many who insist on their own ego and resent discipline. They are ready to follow the Mother's will and rule and discipline only in name and so far as it agrees with their own ideas and preferences. There is no cure for this except by an inner change. In outside life discipline is enforced because refusal of discipline is visited by severe penalties or else results in so much discomfort of various kinds that the indisciplined man has either to submit or to go. But here in the Asram it is not possible to enforce the rule in this way. An inner obedience has to be given as the source of the outer obedience. The only remedy is the descent into the consciousness of that golden lotus which you saw in your vision. Everyone in whom it is established or even who feels its influence will become a centre of the true consciousness and true action which will change life in the Asram.

14 February 1936

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Small movements of depression caused by unhappiness, dullness, etc. do not usually touch me. But there are also strong movements of depression and despair that come from vital dissatisfaction and revolt. When I get depressed, I would like it to be on account of these big movements, not petty ones such as dullness.

They can hardly be called big movements. The real distinction is that they are rajasic movements, not tamasic.

1 March 1936

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Movements of depression or despair that stem from vital dissatisfaction or revolt — are these not big movements?

They are not big — they are small movements of the vital ego — I mean the movements of vital dissatisfaction which cause people here to be depressed and revolt and despair. If the resultant depression or despair is strong, that simply means that the minds of the people here are seeing things out of all right measure and proportion, magnifying trifles into tremendous things, swelling

little hurts to vanity, petty pride, small ambition, *amour propre* etc. They make a tempest in a tea-cup, a tragedy out of a trifle. Because people are living here under the Mother's shelter and saved from the great sufferings and tragedies of human life, they must needs spin despairs and tragedies out of nothing. The vital wants to indulge its sorrow sense and shout and groan and weep and if it can't have a good or big reason for doing it, it will use a bad or small one.

1 March 1936

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When these things [*anger, depression, etc.*] come you should always try to get back at once to the position you have taken of leaving all to the Mother, — your own difficulties, but also the stumbles of others, — X's rages (he behaves with everybody like that), Y's moods and all.

It would not matter so much about occasional anger coming — these recurrences happen with everybody so long as the peace is not settled permanently in the consciousness. What matters is the suggestions that come, about death and going away and the rest of it. These you must throw away at once. They have no reason for existence when the inner working has begun and the Mother's Force is sure to carry you through. Remain firm within and recover your quietude.

6 July 1936

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I do not know why you suppose that the Mother was displeased with you for your letter. I think my answer was quite kind and without any touch of displeasure in it. I was silent about most of what you had written, because when there are letters of this kind I take it as an unburdening of the mind and always either remain silent in so far as it concerns others or else I say that we must rely on the growth of inner consciousness to get rid of the faults and deficiencies and mistakes of the sadhaks. Silence does not imply that these defects and mistakes do not exist. But all have defects in various forms and make mistakes and the best sadhaks are not exempt. The human way is to get angry and rebuke and condemn and, if the Mother does not do the same

or is not severe, to think she is unjust or partial or unseeing or wilfully blind to the defects of her favourites. But the Mother is not blind; she knows very well the nature of all the sadhaks, their faults as well as their merits; she knows too what human nature is and how these things come and that the human way of dealing with them is not the true way and changes nothing. It is why she has patience and love and charity for all, not for some alone, who are sincere in their work or their sadhana.

It is strange also that you should conclude that she puts no value on you. From the first the Mother has had a special kindness for you; she has appreciated and supported you so steadily that people have accused her of blind partiality towards you just as they accuse her with regard to X. When you were in trouble and difficulty with suggestions and revolts, she was love and patience itself and helped and supported you through all. Afterwards since your sadhana opened, we have been watching solicitously over it, — I have been spending time daily writing answers, giving you knowledge of what you should know, trying to lead you forward with love and care. Why should all this have been done, if we put no value on you?

You know these things but your physical mind has become too active and clouded your perception for a time. You must get back from it into your inner self.

30 August 1936

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I cannot keep quiet and clear due to the hurt feelings within me. I try to forget this thing by thinking of the Mother's goodness, but these feelings still come.

It is the usual thing — you allowed a desire to get hold of you and because it was crossed by X's action and the Mother didn't subscribe to it, you got upset first in the vital and then by reflex action in the body. All this questioning on the basis of an unsatisfied desire is out of place. You must get rid of this idea that you can turn a desire into a demand and then expect as a right its satisfaction and consider it a wrong done to you if it is not satisfied. That is precisely the kind of attitude of the vital which prevents the inner progress and drags back the consciousness

from the psychic to the lower vital level. Full trust with humility and devotion, that is the psychic poise and for nothing should it be lost. No satisfaction of vital desire can replace it.

6 January 1937

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X's letter is all right and I accept it as the apology I demanded from her. But things cannot be quite as before; she must make reparation for her fault not only in words but in her conduct; that must change and change altogether. That she can change it if she wishes to do so, was shown when she began taking my darshan and her behaviour for some weeks was quite satisfactory. Afterwards she called back into her the bad forces which I had thrown out of her and the recent outbreak was the result. That must not happen once more. It is not possible any more that the Mother should show the same indulgence and leniency under great provocation as she did before or that I should remain silent and let such things pass. Our attitude towards her and treatment of her must depend on her attitude towards the Mother and her behaviour.

In the recent outbreak she practically took the position that she refused to change anything wrong in her nature — rather she regarded what is bad and wrong in her as something noble, great and admirable. If that remains her position, she cannot expect that we should accept it, nor would there be any reason for my giving her darshan. People are here to change what is wrong in their nature so that they may do an effective sadhana. If they refuse to do that or even to try, they are not real sadhaks or disciples and can expect nothing from myself or from the Mother.

What was worse, she seemed prepared to be the instrument of an alien Force, acting against the Mother, claiming victories against her, trying to lower her in the eyes of the sadhaks, asserting itself and its ways, traducing the Asram and impairing the respect due to the Mother and spoiling my work as much as possible. It cannot really succeed in this, but it can give trouble, and I do not see why I should tolerate it. If she was not conscious

of what she was doing or the evil Force that used her, the sooner she becomes conscious the better.

Arrogance, violence and self-assertion have always been the bane of X's character. But in her relations with the Mother these things must go. She must learn not to force her will on the Mother but to accept the Mother's will in everything without opposition or murmur. That is the main point. If she does not take this resolve, she will always go on as she has done and relapse into revolts and that will bring no good to her. In short, however difficult it may be to her nature, she must learn self-surrender to the Divine. A "bhakti" which claims everything from the Divine and does not give itself is not real bhakti.

I point out some details —

There should be no more clamouring and shouting and violent insistence when something happens which she does not like. There should be no disrespect, aggressiveness or constant contradiction when she speaks to the Mother. If she has anything to represent she can do it quietly and without violence. And she must accept the Mother's decision in all matters.

She should respect the Mother's time and the heavy work she has to do. She has been allowed to see the Mother very often in the day but she must not abuse the privilege by wasting unnecessarily the Mother's time. There is a heavy strain on the Mother allowing her no time to rest and she must not increase the strain.

In her upstairs work she should try to be in harmony with others and not a cause of disturbance or inconvenience. She should not push herself everywhere and take up a position not authorised by the Mother. I am referring especially to her interference above the stairs when the Mother is giving pranam to the sadhaks. To intervene, speak to people and give them instructions is not in her province and only disturbs the Mother's work.

In her talk with sadhaks and visitors, she should refrain from gossip of a bad kind or drawing a black picture of the Asram which makes a bad impression on those who have joined recently and have had no personal experience of how things are, and on people from outside. There should be no attacks on the

Mother or accusations against her. All that is harmful to my work and I want it to change.

That is enough for the present; but it is a wholesale change in her attitude and conduct that I demand of her. If she is prepared to make a firm resolution to get rid of these habits and keeps the resolution, all will be well. If she is not prepared, then why is she here and what is the meaning of her professed bhakti for myself or for the Mother?

P. S. Explain all this carefully to X. It may be best to make a translation of this letter and give it to her to keep with her.

23 May 1944

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I feel very restless today. I want the Mother beside me at every moment; without her presence I cannot bear this body. What is the use if she is not in it? I wish to give up eating from today — I will eat again only when the Mother comes to me.

You cannot progress or reach the Mother if you indulge in such fancies as not eating. Obedience to the rules of life laid down by the Mother is the first necessity.

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To be turned to the Mother is all right and call to her — but more is needed; for that is only the first thing needed. There must also be a complete self-giving and surrender. For instance to follow your own fancies is not the right thing — e.g. this idea that to stop eating is the proper way to get rid of desires — it is absurd for one may fast and yet be full of desires. You know that the Mother and I disapprove of this kind of self-starvation and yet at the least excuse you bring it up and want to follow it. These and other insistences are your own fancies you must learn to give up. As for the desires, the proper way is to have a sincere aspiration and call on the Mother's force to work in you. When the Mother's light and force are working in you they will show you all that has to be changed in you and will change it provided you give your sincere and full consent.

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How can I live to make the Mother happy? Would living in sorrow and despair please her? I don't think she would like me to be dejected. May she throw these things out of me. I want to live happily beside her.

It is not at all the Mother's wish or will that you or anyone should remain in grief and despair; what she likes is that you should confide in her and be happy and cheerful.

That is what the Mother wants, that you should remain near her always in an inner gladness of heart and outer happiness of the life.

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It is rather surprising that you should so entirely mistake the intention of my letter. I did not regard what you wrote as a complaint against X and there is nothing written from that point of view in my answer. You wrote that what had happened to X had entirely upset you, raised your doubts, been a constant source of harassment to your mind, that it was one of the chief sources of your difficulties and a contributing reason to your wish to go away. I gave what was the only true answer, that this was all wrong from the spiritual point of view — that you should not allow another's difficulties to add themselves to your own and upset you and drive you out of the straight spiritual path — and I gave the reason because each sadhak has his own way and his struggles and difficulties and they concern only himself and the Mother. That is a principle we have always insisted upon and we have written it to many. I do not see why my writing it to you should make you feel abhiman and turn away from the Mother.

If it is the family sense that is your chief stumbling block, all the more reason why you should push it resolutely away from you — not either cling to it or allow it to cling to you. When I said there was no reason for being troubled by X's difficulties, I meant no spiritual reason — vital emotional reasons, attachments have no value in the Yoga. Attachments may be difficult to get rid of, but it must be done; otherwise they will harass you and not allow you to progress.

If it had been possible Mother would have removed you

from the house. But all the same, physical distance, not being in the same place or the same house, is not sufficient to destroy an attachment. It is an inward tie and it is only inward means that can get rid of it. If you do not want the others in the house to make claims on you from the family point of view, it should not be impossible to make them understand it. It is what others in similar circumstances have done.

I wrote to you what I did in order to point out to you what attitude a sadhak must take in the difficulty about which you wrote to me. It does not mean that our help and support are not with you in your difficulties. Everybody's difficulties, yours quite as much as anyone else's, are the concern of the Mother and it is an error to suppose that she is unconcerned and indifferent about them. Her help is there for you and you must not turn away from her in misunderstanding and abhiman or reject it. If your struggle is hard for you, all the more reason why you should cling to our hands for help to get out of them and not for any reason let go.

### **The Mother's Attitude towards Quarrels between the Sadhaks**

Whenever I do something wrong, such as my recent quarrel with X, I am met at Pranam with the same dry reaction from the Mother. Then later she says that there was no difference from her usual expression and attitude. How can it be so? Under these circumstances what clarity can come from the thinking mind or the psychic?

The psychic clarity would have told you that Mother was not likely to tell a lie and that if she says she did not tell you to go and that there was nothing in her mind except to give you help and strength since she saw you were disturbed, she must be telling you the truth and that it was your own observation or the inference you made from it that was mistaken — since the mind and the coloration given to things by the senses, are not infallible — especially when there is a disturbance in the vital. I do not know what you mean by Mother's reaction in the quarrel with

X since I can testify that when she heard of the affair (before you wrote anything at all about it) she blamed X and had no feeling at all of severity or displeasure against you. 7 May 1934

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I must say what I have often written to people, that it is impossible for us to take sides in a clash between sadhaks or assume the role of judge and arbiter or of defender of one party against another. Formerly the Mother used to try to intervene or to reconcile, but we found that this only kept discord alive and fed the ego of the sadhaks. In most cases we pass over all quarrels and clashes in silence and almost all sadhaks have ceased to write about their conflicts because they get no answer. I have written to X once or twice, avoiding any discussion of the merits of a dispute, only to influence him to regard things from a general and impersonal standpoint so as to prepare him to give up that of the person and ego. I passed no personal opinion or judgment for or against this or that person. You must not expect me to take any other attitude. This is a place meant for Yoga and sadhana; personal relations of the vital kind with their attractions and repulsions, quarrels and explanations and reconciliations belong to the ordinary life and nature.

All these clashes which arise whenever you mix with X come from his weakness and yours. I have not imposed on you any rule of not meeting with him; but I have advised you not to give any field for the weakness which you yourself have admitted and which is evidently there in you. Both you and X are to me disciples and I have to deal with each in the way best for him or her. I have not pressed on your weaknesses and defects, I have given you time to find them out yourself and overcome them, for that is the best way. I have pointed out his to X when he was ready to recognise them. It is a pity that you should clash whenever you meet together a little, but you know yourself why it is so. So long as any vital weakness remains it cannot be otherwise. Certainly it cannot be remedied by "submitting to his demands and his ego". 16 November 1935

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I am rather surprised at your description of the people who show contempt towards you. Leaving aside X who is not in question, there is nobody working with you who is far advanced in sadhana or is regarded by the Mother as more specially her own than are others. You are certainly as much her own as anybody else in the kitchen; she has always owned you as her child and little star and what can anybody be more than that? I see no reason therefore why you should care so much if anybody is not behaving well with you. I have told you already that people in the Asram — it is true even of those who have inner experiences and some opening — are not yet free in their outer selves from ego and wrong ideas and wrong movements. It is no use getting distressed or depressed by that. What you must do is to be turned only to the Mother and relying on her go forward quietly with your work and sadhana until the time when the sadhaks are sufficiently awakened and changed to feel the need of greater harmony and union with each other. Let only your spiritual change and progress matter for you and for that trust wholly in the Mother's force and her grace which is with you — do not let things or people disturb you, — for compared with the truth within and the journey to the full Light of the Mother's Consciousness these things have no importance.

6 December 1935

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It is not possible for Mother to intervene personally in these matters. Formerly she used to try to intervene and arrange matters, but the only result was that she got reproaches and abuse from both sides and accusations of partiality and injustice and the quarrels increased tenfold. For a long time that has been given up. If we began again intervening in clashes between housemates or coworkers, all the time would have to be passed in that and the Asram would become a seething cauldron of feuds and collisions. These things can only disappear if the sadhaks become fully sadhaks in their consciousness and temperament, learn how to keep equality in all circumstances and consider each other. Only a long silent spiritual pressure can help towards that

— nothing else is of any use.

4 September 1937

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You must remember what I wrote to you before that the Mother wants you to remain quiet and do your work as well as you can under the circumstances without allowing yourself to be upset by these things. Any improvement in the conditions of life or work in the Asram depends on each one trying to progress and open within to the true consciousness, growing spiritually within and not minding about the faults or conduct of others. No change can come by outer means; for this reason the Mother has long ceased to intervene outwardly in the clashes and disagreements between sadhaks. Let each progress inwardly and then only the outer difficulties will disappear or become negligible.

21 April 1938

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Each one has his own way of doing sadhana and his own approach to the Divine and need not trouble himself about how the others do it; their success or unsuccess, their difficulties, their delusions, their egoism and vanity are in her care; she has an infinite patience, but that does not mean that she approves of their defects or supports them in all they say or do. The Mother takes no sides in any quarrel or antagonism or dispute, but her silence does not mean that she approves what they may say or do when it is improper. The Asram or the spiritual life is not a stage in which some are to be prominent or take a leading part or a field of competition in which one has a claim or can rightly consider himself superior to others. These things are the inventions of the ordinary human attitude to the world and the tendency is to carry it over into the life of sadhana, but that is not the spiritual truth of things. The Mother tolerates all; she does not forbid any criticism of the sadhaks by each other nor does she give these criticisms any value. It is only when the sadhaks see the futility of all these things from the spiritual level that there can be any hope that they will cease.

In all these things there is nothing that ought to drive a man

from the spiritual life or make him go away from his Guru. It seems to me that it is only the Guru who can decide whether one is fit or not; to accept the adverse opinion of someone else on that point seems to me absurd and to act on it an offence against one's own soul; to judge oneself unfit and act on that is most perilous, for this judgment may be merely a fit of depression or a vital disturbance raising the self-depreciation of the tamasic ego. If I did not see that you could progress in the sadhana or had not seen any progress, I would not have persistently asked you to continue nor would I be now writing to you letter after letter (I write to no one else) to meet your difficulties.

### **The Mother and the Satisfaction of Desires**

X said in class that one should not have a desire to possess anything, but if something comes one can accept it. For example, if somebody offers you a sweetmeat, you can eat it.

How can such a rule stand? Supposing someone comes and offers you meat or wine, can you accept it? Obviously not. A hundred other instances could be given where the rule would not stand. What the Mother gives or allows you, you can take.

My belief is that one should not accept anything except what the Mother gives or permits. When one is attacked by an impulse and sees it rise up, one should let it spread as far as it wants, and then tell the Mother to transmute it.

If you do that, the impulse may spread so far as to take hold of you and master you. If a wrong impulse comes, you must reject it as soon as you become aware of it. 24 March 1933

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If our desires are to be rejected, why does Mother sometimes satisfy them?

It is you who have to get rid of them. If the Mother does not satisfy them and the sadhak keeps them, they will only get stronger

by suppression from outside. Each one has to deal with them from within.

4 September 1933

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Sometimes things that I want come to me in a surprising way. But why don't I get what I want from the Mother? Someone told me that the universal Divine gives according to a universal law. But with the Mother, it is her Will which gives or refuses depending on what is good for us.

But what you want from the Mother does not come through a pull in the vital — it can come only by the faith and surrender — the psychic purifying the mind and the vital of all wrong desire.

July 1934

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I sometimes have a desire to eat nice things, and now I feel this desire as I have never felt it before. What to do for it?

The only thing to do for it is to throw the desire away. It is absurd to allow small animal greeds like this to come up and obscure the whole consciousness. You have not come here to eat nice things and Mother is under no obligation to give them. In fact, if you have such desires as that, it is a very good reason for not giving them to you, as it would only feed the desire. Get rid of these movements once for all. Let the true consciousness grow and reject these things.

22 September 1934

### **The Mother and the Control of Sexual Desire**

If a person is here from childhood, is it true that he has no sexual difficulties?

It is not automatically true — it is only possible — but on condition he gets fully into the influence of the Mother, is not too open to the atmosphere of other sadhaks who have it, does not get upset at the critical age and also does not upset himself by reading erotic literature etc. There is no one who has been able to do all that yet.

8 November 1933

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After taking the position of witness, one feels strengthened to change it to that of governor in matters of sex.

That is good. The Mother is pressing for the sex trouble to go out of the sadhaks — as it is a great obstacle. So it must go.

29 October 1934

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How does it matter if I do not have perfect Brahmacharya?

It matters a good deal to the Mother, even if it does not matter to you. It is part of what she asks from all so that her work may be done.

If I become wholly pure I might merge in the Mother, but then there would be no excitement left.

There would be many things left better than excitement.

It is for excitement then that you want to live, not for the Mother?

2 December 1936

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I find that after several years the sex hunger has reawakened in me and clamours for satisfaction. What is the use of my undergoing a slow torture? As nothing else succeeds, I suggest the exhaustion of this complex which somehow has got formed.

The Mother has already told you the truth about this idea. The idea that by fully indulging the sex hunger it will be finished and disappear for ever is a deceptive pretence held out by the vital to the mind in order to get a sanction for its desire — it has no other *raison d'être* or truth or justification. If an occasional indulgence keeps the sex desire simmering, a full indulgence would only sink you in its mire. This hunger like other hungers does not cease by temporary satiation; it renews itself after a temporary abeyance and wants again indulgence. Neither sops nor gorgings are the right treatment for it. It can only go by a radical psychic rejection or a full spiritual opening with the

increasing descent of a consciousness that does not want it and has a truer Ananda.

23 April 1937

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You say physical sex action must be avoided by all means. Why so strict on it while tolerating vital-physical lapses?

Because the physical action breaks a law without which the Asram cannot stand and the work cannot be done. It is not a personal matter, but a blow aimed at the very soul of the Mother's work.

Outside sadhaks indulge and get a child, e.g. X and others. Mother disapproves and the man who does it has no longer the same grace as before, but he is not in the Asram and his lapse hurts only himself and his wife.

2 August 1937

### **Uneasiness in Mixing with Others**

When I mix with X, I experience some uneasiness but I also get some pleasure. And when I mix with too many people, then also I feel some inner uneasiness. What should I do?

Observe carefully the people with whom you have an uneasy feeling and tell the Mother. The uneasiness and the pleasure can go together, because they are two different movements in different parts of you. Mother is not asking you for mental judgment about people, but simply with whom you *feel* this uneasiness.

29 November 1932

### **The Mother's Advice on Some Practical Matters**

It is not without reason that the Mother gives directions such as that—about not going home after nine without a sadhak to accompany you. It is because there are many people of bad character who are about at that time, and if any women go about unprotected by men at that time, they are supposed to be women of bad character, so anything may happen. Even before nine, after nightfall it is much safer not to go about alone.

There would be less difficulties if the sadhaks learned to act according to the Mother's directions and not according to their own ideas or sense of convenience. June 1933

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Mother was giving you eight rupees, three rupees for pocket money and five rupees for any expenses you might have for the cooking or in connection with it or for washing, since you were not giving to the Dhobi. As you said you did not want pocket money, she suppressed the three rupees and gave you the Rs. 5 which was not pocket money, but standing allowance for other purposes. I do not see why this should upset you so much. If you did not understand or did not wish this distinction to be kept up, you could have told Mother so and sent back the five rupees or else asked her why she wanted you to have the Rs. 5 with you. These violent fits of despair or revolt because of trivial difficulties like this are not the right way of meeting them. Mother had not the slightest intention of hurting you or keeping you aloof from her. Why can you not have more confidence and credit her with a reasonable mind and kind intentions even if for the moment you fail to see her purpose in an action? This was a perfectly reasonable arrangement — if you did not want it, you had only to tell her so. Recover yourself and get back into the true attitude in which you can see things simply and naturally; do not allow yourself to be flung off the track by suggestions of the old kind. The only sure basis on which you can go is a quiet mind and confidence in yourself and the Mother. 1 October 1933

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I am not doing any drawing or painting based on inspiration from Nature because I am not inclined to it nowadays. Instead I feel a movement in my inner being in which I aspire for the divine Truth to manifest through my art; when this movement is going on, I see hazy forms in a variety of colours coming down, but it is disturbed by some mental movement. I am waiting for the inspiration from within and not doing any work till then. Is it necessary for me to do some practice work to keep in touch with drawing?

Of course you can do one little study work every day.

Mother is constantly putting you in relation with a world of true harmony and it is that that you feel trying to come down — but you must keep your mind very quiet to receive it.

3 December 1933

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I went to the market with X since he wanted to buy a wrist watch. He bought one on credit and promised to send the amount to me within four days, after reaching Madras. As he did not send the money, I borrowed the necessary amount from Y and paid the shop owner. I have sent a reminder to X but in future I shall not have such money transactions with him.

Yes. Mother not only disapproves of sadhaks running into debt, but she does not like either their being responsible for or having to pay for the debts of others.

6 January 1934

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Mother does not disapprove of your writing the book — what she does not like is your being so lost in it that you can do nothing else. You must be master of what you do and not possessed by it. She quite agrees to your finishing and offering the book on your birthday if that can be done. But you must not be carried away — you must keep your full contact with higher things.

3 May 1934

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In asking for an easy chair I did not mean that I plan to do an easy chair sadhana. I asked because at present the pressures of sadhana are so strong and fiery that I am made to sit for hours continuously and my head becomes so heavy. Please tell me what to do.

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

20 September 1934

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Very often there is such a push of sadhana that I cannot lie down on my bed. Then I sit up for hours. Do you think it proper to give me an easy chair so that I can both respond to the push of sadhana and fulfil the need for rest?

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 X. But he has some things that can be put on a bed so that you can sit there instead of lying. 1 October 1935

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I wish to get rid of my continuous pain and sleeplessness. Are asanas likely to help me? A book I have speaks highly of the headstand, shirshasan, but I am afraid to do it due to weak eyes. What do you think?

Mother thinks that the shirshasan is not safe for your eyes. While some of these asanas are simple and safe, others are not so; they require a training of the body or practice under the eye of an expert. It might not be prudent for you to take them up in an amateur fashion. 5 June 1938

### **Imitation of “Great Sadhaks”**

Observing X’s recent conduct, I have lost half my respect for him. And when I observe other things done by him, it is all the more so. People will not follow a hard-working sadhak like Y or Z; they see what the well-known great sadhaks do. When they see X speaking to the C.I.D. man as if he were his oldest friend or keeping his own kitchen where he invites his relatives and friends; when they see A freely reading newspapers, going to hotels and talking to anybody, they naturally feel justified in following their example. And when, in spite of their conduct, these men get inwardly and outwardly much more than others, I do not think people can be blamed for doing as they do.

Who gets? How does A get more than others inwardly? X does not get more, he receives more — if others had an equal receptivity, they would get as much as he, and some do get plentifully.

Or again, if *B* or *C* prefer not to come to the Dining Room, why should others not follow their example? After all, the Gita's line does apply: *yad yad ācarati śreṣṭhas tad tad evetaro janah*.<sup>1</sup> If the well-known great sadhaks go about loosely, the ordinary sadhaks have few good examples to go by.

The Mother has never set up *A*, *C* or *X* as great sadhaks and examples for others to follow — if people do it, it is their own error and their own responsibility. Even *B* cannot be imitated in everything though he is certainly a very good sadhak. But his not going outside the central compound has been sanctioned by the Mother from early times because it was his spiritual need. *X*'s one merit as a sadhak is that he is entirely passive to the Mother and receives without question all she gives him. As for his separate kitchen that is Mother's arrangement for him, not his own. The friends whom he receives there are people who have great devotion for the Mother or are seeking for light, the others do not come here though some still would. *D* always expresses adoration for the Mother and myself — she has always known us since the Mother first came to India. Even so this time also *X* refused to have her in his house, so she was put in *E*'s. It is not a bad progress for a man who has been here only a little over a year and had when he came a thousand ties with the world. It is also something that a man already marked out by some of the greatest English writers of the day as an equal of Keats and Shelley should renounce all publication and all fame and write only for myself and the Mother and the sadhaks. I know how impossible such a renunciation would be to most poets and writers and it seems to me it should be put to his credit as against any weaknesses he may still be unable to get over. For the matter of that who here has been able to become perfect in a year or two of sadhana? Not even the biggest saints or Yogis.

The whole idea of great sadhaks and imitation of them is in fact a mistake. Not to imitate others but to keep in mind the Mother's will and try to follow it is what is asked from the

<sup>1</sup> *Whatsoever the Best doeth, that the lower kind of man puts into practice.* Gita 3.21

sadhaks. Certainly if any sadhak had to be imitated in outward action, it would be Z and Y, not A or C!! But why do they want to imitate? Obedience to the Mother is the rule of the sadhana, not imitation of A or C. As for the line in the Gita, it is a statement of what happens in the world, not a rule for Yoga and the *śreṣṭha* here is not the Yogin, but those who are socially first, eminent and leaders.

17 August 1934

# Work for the Mother in the Ashram

## All Ashram Work Is the Mother's Work

If anybody in the Asram tries to establish a supremacy or dominating influence over others, he is in the wrong. For it is bound to be a wrong vital influence and come in the way of the Mother's work. If you feel anything of the kind in anybody, you are quite right to resist it and throw off the influence; to accept it would be bad both for him and you.

But there should be no quarrel or ill-feeling or keeping up of resentment or anger; for that too is not good for either. . . .

You must remember that just as the Mother uses your capacities and gives them their field, she must be able to do the same with the capacities of others. If she gives charge of a department of work to one, that must not stand in the way of her consulting or using others. Thus X and Y are in charge of the building work, but the Mother consults Z too because of his scientific knowledge as an engineer and he has the right to make suggestions or criticisms or indicate any possible improvements, although he is not in charge. So too the Doctor is not in charge of the dispensary, but he is associated with the medical work and the Mother makes use of his expert knowledge and experience, whenever necessary, or puts in his hands the treatment of a case of illness. It must be the same between you and Z.

It will be best if you fix in your mind and keep to the true rules of the work; then you will have no difficulty or trouble.

All the work should be done under the Mother's sole authority. All must be arranged according to her free decision. She must be free to use the capacities of each separately or together according to what is best for the work and best for the worker.

None should regard or treat another member of the Asram as his subordinate. If he is in charge, he should regard the others as his associates and helpers in the work, and he should not

try to dominate or impose on them his own ideas and personal fancies, but only see to the execution of the will of the Mother. None should regard himself as a subordinate, even if he has to carry out instructions given through another or to execute under supervision the work he has to do.

All should try to work in harmony, thinking only of how best to make the work a success; personal feelings should not be allowed to interfere, for this is a most frequent cause of disturbance in the work, failure or disorder.

If you keep this truth of the work in mind and always abide by it, difficulties are likely to disappear; for others will be influenced by the rightness of your attitude and work smoothly with you. Or, if through any weakness or perversity in them, they create difficulties, the effects will fall back on them and you will feel no disturbance or trouble.

12 October 1929

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Whose work is it if it is not the Mother's work? All that you do, you have to do as the Mother's work. All the work done in the Asram is the Mother's.

All those works, meditation, reading *Conversations*, studying English etc. are good. You can do any of them dedicating them to the Mother.

Meditation means opening yourself to the Mother, concentrating on aspiration and calling in her force to work and transform you.

18 September 1932

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All work in the Asram is the Mother's.

12 February 1933

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You can take as much rest as you need from the work. The pains are evidently of the nervous system and are probably due to some resistance or obscurity there to the working of the Forces.

What you write in the beginning of your letter seems to indicate an excessive attachment to a particular work, that of the D. R. [*Dining Room*]. All work is the Mother's and there should

be no attachment to this or that to which you are accustomed or to the things or circumstances or people related to it; for that would indicate a sense of possession or clinging in the vital. The vital should be perfectly free and ready to work or not to work, to remain in one field or to go to another, to do in one way or to do in another according to the will of the Mother.

I trust that you will indeed take the opportunity of this rest to make a definite turn in your sadhana. A complete surrender of the mind and the vital both in work and in sadhana is the turn that is needed. Not to be attached to one's ideas, feelings or formations, not to substitute them for those which the Divine Truth finds necessary for its workings, not to indulge one's sentiments, not to have personal preferences or, having them, to be ready to waive them at any moment and submit to the Mother's Will which embodies the Divine Force, not to follow one's own way but hers; this is the psychic submission that is most needed. So long as it is not there, a full opening of the sadhana on the vital and the physical plane is hardly possible. To carry on the sadhana in one's way and according to the counsels of the individual mind and emotional being carries you only a little distance — it does not bring to the goal. 15 September 1933

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I must remind you that all the work in the Asram is the Mother's work and no part of it is the personal property of any sadhak. The Mother can do with it whatever she thinks right. This is too easily forgotten by yourself and others. 7 March 1934

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My mind says that the whole world belongs to the Mother; all works belong to her and whatever is done with her sanction is done directly for her. But in practice there seems to be a great difference between work we all do for her and work done for her personally. When I work directly for the Mother and she says, "Go and bring this for me", my heart is filled with an immense joy. Yet I rarely find an opportunity to place myself at her direct service.

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All the work here is for the Mother and there is no difference between her personal work and the rest of the work for the Asram and all can be done with an equal joy. It is the mind that makes the distinction. This does not mean that all work done in the world is the Mother's work — only that which is consciously done for her.

17 March 1936

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There is no reason for your seeing the Mother nor is this the time for it. Nor is there any room for discussion in this matter.

There are two things that must be clearly understood. The work here is the Mother's and she has the right to give her orders in whatever way she pleases and they must be obeyed. No one can be allowed to flout her orders, however conveyed, or insist on his own ideas, will or fancies. If you are prepared to respect and obey her orders without making conditions, you can be allowed to continue the work, otherwise you must discontinue.

Secondly, all violence must stop. If you want to remain in the Asram, this kind of conduct must cease.

18 July 1938

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You have promised that you would obey the orders of the Mother in the work. Mother has sent you herself the typed instructions for the work with her signature and statement that it was in accordance with her orders. You have returned them to X after cutting off the Mother's statement and signature with a note saying that you do not want this literature. This is a direct act of defiance and disobedience to the Mother. You have either to respect or obey the orders of the Mother or you cannot be allowed to continue the work.

18 July 1938

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(1) It is absurd to keep the certifying signature and reject with contumely the order it signs and certifies. You said you had never received detailed instructions and you said you would obey orders and instructions signed by the Mother. This one was drafted under her instructions and typed after careful examination by her and certified and signed by her. When drafted under her

directions and signed by her, the whole order is hers and must be so regarded and respected as well as obeyed. Even a proposal drawn up by someone else becomes her order as soon as it is accepted, approved and signed by her and must be so regarded. As a matter of fact even if not signed by her, departmental orders should be regarded as hers and obeyed, because they pass through her scrutiny and approval or are made under her general sanction.

(2) You have done good work which has been appreciated by the Mother, but that does not authorise you to claim an independent action in your work free from control. There is and must be a departmental control over all sections of the work and that control, through whomever exercised, is the Mother's. No one in immediate charge of a section of the work has the right to choose which order he shall or shall not obey, or to say that he will not obey orders at all unless they come direct from the Mother.

(3) All arrangements for the work made by the Mother must be accepted by the workers. The Mother has informed you that the arrangement for Golconde in Raymond's absence, agreed on between him and the Mother, is that X shall carry on control and supervision and direction of all the work for the Mother under her sanction or orders. Nobody has a right to question this arrangement or act so as to make its execution difficult or impossible.

As for the pressure you complain of, it is you yourself who have made it necessary by recent refusals to obey orders and the increasing violence of your reactions. The Mother has the responsibility and supreme and total control of all the work and she cannot allow it to be made impossible or ineffective on the plea that her orders are not hers because they are not given directly by her.

19 July 1938

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What is good work and what is bad or less good work? All is the Mother's work and equal in the Mother's eyes.

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### Doing Work for the Mother

Is there any use in the Mother's spending money and taking trouble for useless undivine me? I am giving her trouble by my very existence and I am no good at all.

You have allowed yourself to accept the old wrong suggestions — for a mere trifle — and so got into the wrong condition once more. You were doing the work for the Mother I suppose, not for yourself — to satisfy her, not to satisfy yourself? Then if the Mother was satisfied, why should you be dissatisfied? You should also have understood by this time that the Mother's ideas of what is good or not, what will do or not do, are more correct than the ideas of your mind about it, — for your mind is always worrying and tormenting itself for nothing.

Drive all this away. You know by experience that it is a false road and leads to no progress but only to confusion and trouble. Open yourself again to the Force and Peace and Light — it is that alone that can make you understand and change you.

15 July 1933

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I can only repeat what I have already written whenever these circumstances and feelings come to you. To leave your work is not a solution — it is through work that one can detect and progressively get rid of the feelings and movements that are contrary to the Yogic ideal, — those of the ego.

Work should be done for the Mother and not for oneself, — that is how one encourages the growth of the psychic being and overcomes the ego. The test is to do the work given by the Mother without abhiman or insistence on personal choice or prestige, — not getting hurt by anything that touches the pride, amour-propre or personal preference.

It is a high and great ideal that is put before the sadhak through work and it is not possible to realise it suddenly, but to grow steadily into it is possible, if one keeps the aim always before one — to be a selfless and perfectly tempered instrument for the work of the Divine Mother.

27 September 1935

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It is very satisfying to have closed so well the work you undertook for the Mother, overcoming all difficulties and ending in such a satisfactory result. But your work for the Mother is always sure to be the same, thorough, conscientious and skilful and inspired by a firm faith and openness to her force; where these things are, success is always sure. 24 May 1937

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If you leave it to the Mother entirely, then what the Mother would want you to do is to go on with the work as best you can without allowing yourself to be disturbed or troubled by these things which you enumerate in your letters, without insisting on your own ideas or vital feelings. That is indeed the rule that all ought to follow, to do their work here as the Mother's work, not their own; the worker must not insist on the work being done according to his own ideas; for that is to treat it as his own work not the Mother's. If there are inconveniences, troubles, things done not as he would like them to be, still he should go on doing his work as best he can under the circumstances. That is a rule of the sadhana, to remain unconcerned by outward circumstances and quietly do what one has to do, what one can do, leaving the rest to the Mother. It is not possible to have everything perfect at present, even supposing that what one thinks to be right is the best. There is much in the Asram and the work that is not as perfect as the Mother would like it to be, but she knows that the perfection she would like is not yet possible because of circumstances and the imperfection of her instruments; she arranges all for the best according to what is now possible. The worker should do his work in this spirit according to the Mother's arrangements and he should use his work as a means for growing spiritually in devotion, obedience, self-offering to the Mother, not insisting on himself, his ideas, his feelings and preferences. To be able to do that makes the consciousness ready for inner experience and progress in sadhana.

I have tried to explain what the Mother wants and why she wants it. She wants you to do her work quietly, taking all inconveniences, defects or difficulties quietly, and doing your

best; what X does or arranges should not disturb you — if he makes mistakes he is responsible for it to the Mother and it is for the Mother to see what is to be done. That is what she wants from you — if you can do it, then things will go more smoothly and she will be able more easily to lead things in the direction she wants. It is also, as I have tried to explain to you, the best thing for your own sadhana. 5 July 1937

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Is it beneath your dignity to do work for the sadhaks? It is an entirely egoistic attitude and improper for a sadhak. All the people in the D. R., in the Building Service, in the Stores, in the carpentry department, in the Atelier and Smithy, are all the time doing work for the sadhaks, the Mother herself is doing work for the sadhaks all day; in writing this answer I am spending my time doing work for a sadhak. Would you think it proper for the D. R. and Kitchen workers to say, “We are not going to cook for sadhaks or serve them; it is beneath our dignity. We will consent only to cook food for the Mother alone.” Do you want me to stop writing answers to your letters on the ground that I am doing work for a sadhak and I will write only letters to the Mother and nobody else?

What was X doing in the kitchen so many years if not preparing the food of the sadhaks? And what was Y doing in the granary if not work for the sadhaks? All these ideas are perfectly idiotic. All work given by the Mother is work for the Mother. November 1938

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If you say “I will not eat” or “I will eat only once until you do what I say,” that is not *prārthanā* or *bhikṣā*, that is putting compulsion on the Mother to do what you want.

I do not know what you mean by giving you your service. If it is the old work, that is not possible any longer. Other work will have to be found. But you should remember that the true service and the true Yoga is to do what the Mother wants and not what you want. It is by making one’s will one with hers and

submitted to hers that one can advance and feel unity with her and her constant presence.

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What you write is no doubt correct. There are very wrong ideas in the minds of the workers and not at all the right attitude. But we have not to do the work for the satisfaction of the sadhaks, but rather because it is the Mother's work, the divine work and it has to be done well and in the right way. If the workers or others are not satisfied, it has still to be done well and in the right way. When their nature changes and they see their mistake, then they will recognise the truth and change their attitude. Some have good will and have only to learn to see more clearly and get free from their mental misjudgments. Others are more obscure and egoistic and will take more time to get the right poise. Till that happens, we must go on with a quiet firmness and resolution and a great patience.

### **Work for the Mother and *Kartavyam Karma***

X asked me if for us in the Asram whatever is sanctioned by the Mother can be accepted unhesitatingly as our *kartavyam karma*. I replied, "Yes, if the sanction is asked for in the right spirit." He said, "What do we know of the right or wrong spirit? If the Mother's sanction is there, is it not enough?" I replied in the affirmative, but not with full conviction. Something was lurking in my mind suggesting that the Mother sometimes does sanction an act which may not be according to her will but for which a sadhak may have a strong desire.

If the sadhak has a strong insistence or a strong desire, the Mother may say "Yes" or "Do as you wish" or give her sanction to the thing requested or demanded. That does not make it a *kartavyam karma*, but simply a thing which the sadhak can do. Again if a thing is indifferent or unobjectionable and the Mother is asked by somebody if he can do it, that does not exalt it into a *kartavyam karma*.

31 July 1937

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So far I had the belief that all work sanctioned by the Mother was her work and work done for her is our *kartavyam karma*. Is this not so? If a person gives up all duties to his family, country and society and sincerely does work only for the Divine, as an offering to the Mother, is he not doing the Mother's work and is it not his *kartavyam karma*? Outside it may be difficult to decide this, but here, under the living Presence of the Mother, is this not an assured fact? If not, then what is really meant by *kartavyam karma*?

I was asked [*in the preceding letter*] whether everything done that had the Mother's permission was not a *kartavyam karma*. People ask for permission to a host of things dictated by various reasons — it does not follow that the Mother's permission to all these things are her dictates. What work is given by the Mother is her work — also whatever work is done with sincerity as an offering to the Mother is her work also — that goes without saying. But Karma covers all kinds of actions and not work only.

31 July 1937

### Work, Sadhana and the Mother

You need not be so much concerned as to what others in the Asram may think about you or say to you. It is only what the Mother says to you or thinks about you that has any importance.

All you need to be concerned with is your own work and sadhana, whether you do it well and sincerely and with the right spirit. As to that the Mother alone can judge; you should not be troubled or moved by the praise or blame of others.

19 February 1931

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I aspire to be divinised rapidly by the Mother so that she can take me up for her work. It seems to me it will be spiritual work, like she is doing.

How can you do like the Mother or do the work she alone can do? That is the ambition and vanity coming in.

5 November 1932

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My condition today is that my inner eyes wish to turn towards the Mother and call her by closing my outer eyes. In fact, my eyes tend to close while doing any work. Is this all right?

If you are working you have to see your work, so it is no use closing the eyes; but one can always do the work in a concentration in which the inner being is turned towards the Mother while the outer does the Mother's work. 12 February 1933

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The adverse forces have been active the last two days, but each time they came I sent them away. The report about X was false, but the information confused me and brought wrong suggestions of all kinds.

When things become confused outside, you must put on your mind at once the rule of not judging by appearances — refer all to the Mother's Light within with the confidence that all will be clear. 16 September 1933

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In my ambition to serve the Mother, I asked for work, but now I find that I am losing the joy and cheerfulness I was enjoying before. If you think my withdrawal from the work will bring me relief, kindly grant it.

It is a pity if you have to give up the work as your work had been of great help and was very much appreciated, especially by X — but if it comes in the way of the joy and cheerfulness which is necessary for the smooth inner progress, Mother cannot ask you to continue. The necessity of the sadhana is the first thing to consider. 6 September 1934

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The spirit and attitude you express in your letter are the right spirit and attitude, but you must keep to it always. Work done for the Mother without claim or desire alone has a spiritual value — you must not bring your ego into it.

If work is given that you think ought not to be given or have any other grievance, you have to say it or write to X and

ask him to remedy it or take the orders of the Mother. But to complain to others and create the idea that you are ill-used so that it spreads through the Asram is to create disturbance and a current of forces against the Mother and her work which may have a serious consequence.

I do not wish to insist on this any more. Everybody makes mistakes and one has only to learn from them and avoid them in future. I am sure you will try to live up to the ideal you have expressed in your letter.

15 September 1934

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Yes, that is the most important thing — to get over ego, anger, personal dislikes, self-regarding sensitiveness, etc. Work is not only for work's sake, but as a field of sadhana, for getting rid of the lower personality and its reactions and acquiring a full surrender to the Divine. As for the work itself, it must be done according to the organisation arranged or sanctioned by the Mother. You must always remember that it is her work and not personally yours.

23 March 1935

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You told me that if I get a miscellany of thoughts when I do not read during work, it is better to read, and since I have the Mother's "express permission" for it the idea of its being improper should not come in. But does her express permission prevent one from feeling uneasy? Suppose she gives someone a sanction to read novels and newspapers — does it mean that one will not feel a lowering of consciousness while reading them? One might just read and read and not attend to the work at hand.

The Mother's express sanction should remove any feeling of uneasiness due to the idea that it ought not to be done. As for lowering of consciousness, that is quite another thing — the sanction will not remove that. Also naturally one would have to read with one eye ready to be on the work at need, which might not be agreeable.

8 June 1935

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I am glad of your resolution. The greater the difficulties that rise in the work the more one can profit by them in deepening the equality, if one takes it in the right spirit. You must also keep yourself open to receive the help towards that, for the help will always be coming from the Mother for the change of the nature.

29 September 1935

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What you say is perfectly correct. There is a stupid spirit of competition and claim, as if by being here and working one were doing a favour to the Mother, as if her permission to be here were not a grace and her giving work also were not a grace. If the sadhaks could get rid of this wrong attitude, they would go much faster in their spiritual progress and the atmosphere of the Asram would be clearer and purer.

5 January 1936

### Vital Energy and the Mother's Work

This [*renewal of energy for work*] is the thing that used to happen daily to the physical workers in the Asram. Working with immense energy and enthusiasm, with a passion for the work they might after a time feel tired — then they would call the Mother and a sense of rest came into them and with or after it a flood of energy so that twice the amount of work could be done without the least fatigue or reaction. In many there was a spontaneous call of the vital for the Force, so that they felt the flood of energy as soon as they began the work and it continued so long as the work had to be done.

26 March 1936

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Don't be afraid of vital energy in work. Vital energy is an invaluable gift of God without which nothing can be done, — as the Mother has always insisted from the beginning; it is given that His work may be done.

I am very glad it has come back and cheerfulness and optimism with it. That is as it should be.

26 October 1936

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### The Mother and the Organisation of Work

There are certain things that X must fix in his mind and feel and act in their spirit, if he is to get rid of his depression and unrest and feel happy and at home. You will explain clearly to him what I write here.

(1) He is not here as Y's nephew, but as a child of the Mother.

(2) He is not here under the care, guardianship and control of Y, but under the Mother's control and care and he owes allegiance to her alone.

(3) The work given to him in the stores is the Mother's work and not Y's; he must do it with that idea, as the Mother's work, and no other.

(4) Y is at the head of the stores, garden, granary and receives his directions from the Mother or reports his arrangements to her for approval — just as Z in the B. D. [*Building Department*] or A in the Dining Room or B or C in their departments. Others in these departments are supposed to receive their directions from the head and act in accordance. But this is because it is necessary for the discipline and good order of the work; it does not mean that the work is Y's or the building work is Z's or the dining room work is A's — all is the Mother's work and must be done by each, by the head as by the others, for her. It would not be possible to get the work done if each and every worker insisted on being independent and directly responsible to her or on doing things in his own way; there is too much of this spirit and it is the cause of much confusion and disorder. The Mother cannot see to the whole work herself physically and give orders direct to each worker; therefore the arrangement made is indispensable. On the other hand, the head of a department is also supposed to act according to the Mother's directions — or in their spirit where he is left free — and not otherwise; if he does according to his mere fancy or obeys his own personal likes and dislikes or misuses his trust for his personal satisfaction or convenience, he is answerable for any failure in the work that may result or wrong spirit or clash or confusion or false atmosphere.

(5) Any work done personally for Y or another (not for the

Asram) is not part of the Mother's work and the Mother has nothing to do with that; if such work is asked, X may do it if he likes or not do it if he thinks it is improper.

(6) X has been given one work at least by the Mother direct — that is the cleaning of the kitchen vessels. Let him do it according to the Mother's directions and with scrupulousness and perfection; it will be an opportunity for him to show what he can do and the rest can be seen to hereafter.

(7) He is not bound to accept food from *D* and *Y* or presents etc.; if he does not like it, why does he receive these things? He is perfectly free to refuse. His staying here and everything else does not depend on *Y*, but on the Mother alone — so he has no reason to fear.

(8) Finally, he should clear his vital of restlessness and desires — for that in him as in everybody is the root cause of depression, and, if he were elsewhere and under other circumstances, the depression would still come because the root cause would still be there. Here if he turns entirely to the Mother, opens to her and works and lives turning towards her, he will get release and happiness and grow into light and peace and become in all his being a child of the Divine.

19 March 1932

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I saw X's notebook and found that there were big signatures of Mother. I thought: in what way is my work inferior to his so that Mother signs in my book with small signatures, as if she did not appreciate my work?

A small signature does not mean lack of interest — usually it means more concentration than a large one.

4 April 1933

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I do not get copies of messages from the Mother. Would it be possible for her to arrange for copies to be sent to me regularly?

It is quite impossible for the Mother to see to every detail of the organisation of the Asram in person. Even as it is she has no

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time free at all. It is understood that you can have the copies sent to you, but it is with those who have charge that you must insist on the execution of any arrangement. 20 July 1933

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Yes, that is correct. Mother does not care for the food for itself; but she allows X to do it as an offering. So with the work — although the work has its own importance. Y and Z are not given physical or practical external work because their energy cannot run in that direction and they cannot do it — not because training in physical and practical work is not good for all. In ideal circumstances a many-sided activity of the being would be the best — but as yet it is not always practicable.

26 September 1933

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X told me that Mother requires one person to do exactly as she wants him to, but it is difficult to find anyone. I do not see how the complete obedience of one person would be sufficient for your work or affect the general atmosphere. I can understand that if there were complete obedience and peace and light in many people, it would hasten the progress of the work. Perhaps even one person would be a good example for many to follow, but I wonder how many would do so. Anyway, there is some mystery in this “one man required”.

Such ideas are rather a mental way of emphasising the desirability of something — here, of such persons existing, or of such a consummation being reached even in one person — than true in the form in which it is put. What can be said as true behind the statement is that each person arriving to a certain perfection of the Yogic state becomes a force for the expansion of the same Yogic force, a *point d'appui* for it to work. How far that working through him can go depends on the person and on the receptivity of those with whom he comes into inner contact. Men like X, Y or Z for instance who have the push and communicating faculty do have an effect on others, even as it is, though it cannot be said that they have reached anything near perfect perfection in

obedience and peace and light, only an approach towards it. Naturally, the persons they affect are those who are capable of the contact.

22 June 1934

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It is impossible for the Mother to arrange the work according to personal considerations as then all work would become impossible.

25 July 1934

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X told me that the Mother disapproved of preparing a small platform near the window since it would look awkward. I conveyed the news to Y, but she took it much amiss. She thought that X must have told Mother that it was not possible.

I don't know why people always assume that it is X or someone else who has influenced Mother and otherwise she would concede everything they ask. Especially in an aesthetic consideration! On an engineering question, it might be different.

15 November 1934

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X has written a very fine letter — it shows that he is very open to the Mother for he proposes at all points what she herself suggested to me today.

The Mother accepts X's willingness to remove his shoes if he has to go to the Dispensary, but there is this to consider. It is not only a clash between two sadhaks, but Y has throughout been seized, as he himself admits, by a Power or Impulse that puts false ideas into his head and impelled him to offer an obstinate resistance to the Mother's orders and to use every device — even the most childish and, to say the least, strange — to defeat her intentions. He does not reject or dismiss this action but justifies it and proposes to continue it unless the Mother yields to him altogether in this matter. The Power that got hold of him will consider itself as victorious and almost inevitably find other ideas or excuses to push him again to a similar action. Where that will lead, the example of the others has already shown

any number of times. If that happens, then the Mother will have to come back again to the steps she had contemplated and commenced this time. It is quite impossible that an important department of the Ashram should remain in the hands of one who goes on making it a sacred duty to disobey in favour of his own ideas the clear orders of the Mother. 28 December 1934

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Is it the atmosphere of the Dispensary that raises these things? Your letter marks the beginning of the same attitude towards X as Y's was before it became acute, the idea that you alone are medically great and competent (which was his), a big "I" sprawling egoistically all over the pages, the sense of being in charge = a masterful possession of the Dispensary, the disposition to arrange and command everything imperiously and imperially in that kingdom. Please stop all that before it grows. The work is the Mother's and has to be carried out in harmony and the big "I" has to draw in its horns and become small, even if it cannot disappear altogether.

The Mother has given charge of the Dispensary not to you, but to you and X together (she does not want to renew a one man rule there, after what has happened). She accepted the arrangement suggested by both of you, because you were working in harmony and it seemed the one possible arrangement. She expects you to continue working in harmony — otherwise the running of the Dispensary will become impossible.

5 January 1935

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The Mother has her own reasons for her decisions; she has to look at the work as a whole without regard to one department or branch alone and with a view to the necessities of the work and the management. Whatever work is done here, one has always to learn to subordinate or put aside one's own ideas and preferences about things concerning it and work for the best under the conditions and decisions laid down by her. This is one of the main difficulties throughout the Ashram, as each

worker wants to do according to his own ideas, on his own lines according to what he thinks to be the right or convenient thing and expects that to be sanctioned. It is one of the principal reasons of difficulty, clash or disorder in the work, creating conflict between the workers themselves, conflict between the workers and the heads of departments, conflict between the idea of the sadhaks and the will of the Mother. Harmony can only exist if all accept the will of the Mother without grudge and personal reaction.

Independent work does not exist in the Asram. All is organised and interrelated, neither the heads of departments nor the workers are independent. To learn subordination and co-operation is necessary for all collective work; without it there will be chaos.

10 March 1936

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The Mother has taken away my small terrace work. She has not reconsidered my case and given me my work back. This disturbed me very much.

You are disturbed because of your vital ego. It is evident that your faith and attitude cannot be perfect, if because Mother makes other arrangements for her work, you at once regard her as unjust, false and tricky. Every sadhak ought to realise that the work given him is not his property — it is not his work but hers; she must be perfectly free to make an arrangement and to change it whenever she thinks right to do so. To challenge her action and demand an explanation from her or claim the work as personal property is an entirely mistaken and egoistic attitude.

15 June 1936

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What I meant in my letter was that the Mother does not usually think about these things herself, take the initiative and direct each one in each instance what they shall do or how, unless there is some special occasion for doing so. This she does not do, in fact, in any department of work. She keeps her eye generally on

the work, sanctions or corrects or refuses sanction, intervenes when she thinks necessary. It is only a few matters in which she takes the initiative, plans and designs, gives special and detailed orders. In the line of embroidery, X refers to her anything necessary or any of the workers undertakes something and informs the Mother that she would like to do something for her, handkerchief, apron, cover or sari. The Mother approves or disapproves what is suggested or suggests something herself or changes what is proposed. Work done in this way is as much work done according to the Mother's will as anything initiated, thought of and planned in whole and detail by her alone. I do not quite understand why you should consider that this way of work implies an absence of unity with the Mother's will or of surrender on your part. It is the offering within you that is important and brings in time the full completeness of surrender. 17 September 1936

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I do not quite understand on what you want the *anumati*. If it is about embroidery, I have said that to follow the existing arrangement, viz., when you have the will or the inspiration to do some work of embroidery, then to put it before the Mother and take her sanction or ask for her decision, is quite a right way to work according to the Mother's will; it is not at all inconsistent with surrender. But if you prefer to leave everything to the Mother and not suggest or propose anything yourself, you can do that.

Mother only asked me to write to you about the way things are usually done, because as she is not in the habit of thinking herself about these things, it is not as easy for her to remember and think out something as to decide upon suggestions put before her. 18 September 1936

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The Mother can give indications and open out possibilities [*about how to do the work*], but if the mind interferes and if they are not followed up, what can be done?

### The Mother's Use of Department Heads

Now that the Granary has moved to a building which belongs to the Mother and has been repaired at much expense, it is necessary that there should be someone among its inmates charged with seeing to the place and to the proper order and maintenance of things there — a manager. The Mother wishes you to take up the charge of manager. You will see to the observance of the general rules that have to be followed if the house is to be maintained in good condition and also to all matters pertaining to the management. Whenever you are in doubt, you can refer or report to the Mother. I trust you will find that all the inmates when they know of the Mother's wishes will sincerely cooperate with you in seeing that all goes well and in an orderly way in the Ganapati House.

25 September 1933

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My complaint about X is his attitude towards the Dining Room workers — he is simply too harsh with most of them. With all his experience it should be possible for him to be a little more generous in speech and expression. Why should he make a wry face when someone asks for an extra piece of bread? It does not remove the person's greed; rather it gives rise to eating bazaar food. When Y breaks down weeping, could X not bend a little to indulge her? With a more pleasant mood and face, he could satisfy so many people and avoid the clashes which have been continuous under his regime.

I do not agree. It is impossible to maintain order if one is indulgent to everybody and strictness is indispensable. That is what Mother found when she was herself looking after the work; indulgence only brought absolute disorder, people became entirely selfish, undisciplined, taking every advantage they could. I do not see either how a system of indulgence to the moods of the women is likely to help their sadhana, — it is likely rather to nourish what is wayward and exacting in them. If they do not learn discipline and self-control, on what basis can they build their sadhana and character?

21 November 1934

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Why should the conditions of work be such that one is compelled to act and be guided by the will of X? It amounts to the surrender of one's intellect, energies and capacities to him instead of to the Mother. How does working under such a person help one's sadhana?

It is not physically possible for the Mother to give the work direct to each worker and exercise a direct control, so that physically as well as inwardly he may offer it to her. For every department there must be a head who consults her in all important matters and reports everything to her, but in minor matters he need not always come for a previous decision — that is not possible. X is there in the B. D. as the head because he is a qualified engineer. That is a necessity of outward organisation which is unavoidable here as elsewhere and has to be accepted if the work is to be done. But it does not mean that X or any other head is to be considered as a superior person or that one has to surrender to his ego. One has to get rid of his own ego as far as possible and regard the work done under whatever conditions as an offering to the Mother.

20 August 1936

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X is not wrong in giving importance to persons. It is quite true that the work would go on if the persons now in charge were not there and others were in their place, but in most cases it would go on badly or at least worse than now and there would be no certainty that those others would be adequate instruments of the Mother's will. For the work of the charge of departments for instance done by men like X, Y, Z, there is needed a combination of qualities, a special capacity, a personality and the power of control called organisation and above all fidelity and obedience to the Mother's will, the faith in her perceptions and the desire to carry them out. It is not many in the Asram who have that combination. Before the Mother took up directly through X the work, now concentrated in Aroumé and the granaries, all was confusion, disorder, waste, self-indulgence, disregard of the Mother's will. Now though things are far from perfect, because the workers are not at all perfect, still all that is changed. In

that change your presence in the kitchen and A's in the granary has counted for much; without you there it would have been far more difficult to realise the organisation of things the Mother wanted and in these two parts of the work it might even have been impossible. The Divine Will is there but it works through persons and there is a great difference between one instrument and another — that is why the person can be of so much importance.

December 1936

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In fact, if X and a few others had not made themselves the instruments of the Mother and helped her to reorganise the whole material side of the Asram, the Asram would have collapsed long ago under the weight of a frightful mismanagement, waste, self-indulgence, disorder, chaotic self-will and disobedience. He and they faced unpopularity and hatred in order to help her to save it. It was the Mother who selected the heads for her purpose in order to organise the whole; all the lines of the work, all the details were arranged by her and the heads trained to observe her methods and it was only afterwards that she stepped back and let the whole thing go on on her lines but with a watchful eye always. The heads are carrying out her policy and instructions and report everything to her and she often modifies what they do when she thinks fit. Their action is not perfect, because they themselves are not yet perfect and they are also hampered by the ego of the workers and the sadhaks. But nothing can be perfect so long as the sadhaks and the workers do not come to the realisation that they are not here for their ego and self-indulgence of their vital and physical demands but for a high and exacting Yoga of which the first aim is the destruction of desire and the substitution for it of the Divine Truth and the Divine Will.

9 January 1937

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From the letters you write about X there can be only one conclusion that his behaviour is the cause of all the trouble, a constant cause of friction and disturbance. If that is so, the only way is to withdraw him from the kitchen so that there may be

peace and things may go on there more smoothly. If you are so upset by his conduct and ways of action and all he does is wrong and disturbing, so much so that Y also gets upset and you want to be relieved of the work or go home, there is no other course possible. We have no other reason for withdrawing him than this — for personally the Mother has had no reason to complain of his management of the work. But there must be some solution for this constant friction and trouble. If on the other hand the trouble lies in yourself, then it is that that must be put right and there is no use in these letters full of complaints against his behaviour; for then you should bear whatever trouble comes as quietly as possible and concentrate on receiving the Mother's force to cure you. It must be one course or the other. My proposal made by the Mother to X was that he should now withdraw from the work he is doing in the kitchen so as to diminish the causes of friction and even as head of the Aroumé interfere with your work as little as possible, leaving you to do things in your own way. If that is not done, something at least must be arrived at which would be a clear understanding and a practicable arrangement. It seems to me that as you have been doing the work so long, there ought not to be so many occasions for X telling you what to do. But I am writing to him telling him what you say about his telling you plainly what to do; he and you must talk it over and arrange it and X must let us know clearly what is proposed to be done.

3 June 1937

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X spoke to the Mother this evening about the proposal of more work in the kitchen for you. But before that we had received your letter and what you write makes it necessary to make certain things precise and clear.

I gather that what you want is to be independent in your work, taking from X what you need, and after a time improve the cooking according to your own ideas. But this is not the understanding with which you were given the work and it is not possible. The understanding is that you do the work with the materials given you and nothing more, as you are doing

now. Also you seem to say that you will find it difficult to work under the control of X and will resent it if in a clash with him Mother upholds him against you. In that case it is better not to go farther with the proposal of extending your work. For there has been too much clash and disharmony already in the D. R. and kitchen and the Mother wants no more, especially as a more harmonious working has been established after long difficulty.

The arrangements of the work are not X's but the Mother's. Several years ago she put him at the head of the food departments and organised them through him according to her own will not only in general but in detail. All changes since then have been made in the same way. He is there so that she may exercise through him her single control over all the work. It is the same system in all the departments and it cannot be changed. There has been much resistance owing to the wish of the workers to be independent, to impose each his own ideas and arrangements, and to resentment against the control of the head of the department. But all that could only lead to friction and clash of ideas and clash of egos and constant disturbance. The Mother has succeeded finally in getting rid of that and imposing some amount of harmony and discipline. It is not therefore a question of X's independent control but of the Mother's control of the work through the person chosen by her.

I may remind you of what I wrote about the spirit in which work should be done to be helpful for sadhana. It has to be done as an offering, without vital egoism or assertion of self-will, as the Mother's work and not one's own, to carry out her ideas and will and not one's own. It is work done in that spirit that opens the vital to her and allows her Force to work in the being and the nature.

10 June 1938

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We did not say that you must do *everything* X tells you; but if you work under anyone who is the head of the department (X or another), the work must be done according to his instructions, as he is responsible.

The work itself is the Mother's and it is the Mother who gives you the work.

The suggestion to go, like the desires which support it, come from adverse forces. If you take the right attitude of self-giving, all that will disappear.

### **The Mother and Clashes between Workers**

You need not mind X's quick temper. Remind yourself always it is Mother's work you are doing and if you do it as well as you can, remembering her, the Mother's Grace will be with you. That is the right spirit for the worker, and if you do it in that spirit, a calm consecration will come.

1 March 1933

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You have written, "Harmony cannot be brought about by external organisation only . . . ; inner harmony there must be or else there will always be clash and disorder." What is that inner harmony?

Union in the Mother.

21 April 1933

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Everybody says his report or account is true and all the others are liars. Our experience is that each pulls his own way and arranges the facts in his own mind so as to be most convenient for his own case. But that is not the point. The point is that the rules laid down by the Mother must be kept in the spirit as well as the letter.

22 August 1933

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Do not allow yourself to be grieved or discouraged. Human beings have unfortunately the habit of being unkind to each other. But if you do your work in all sincerity, the Mother will be satisfied and all the rest will come afterwards.

15 October 1933

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It is quite impossible to take you away from the kitchen and leave the others to work in your place. Such a solution would be very bad for you, for it would mean your losing a work in which the Mother's force has been long with you and sitting in your room with your thoughts which will not be helpful or according to your active nature. It would be very bad too for the kitchen; your place cannot be filled by anyone else there, however well they may work in their own limits — none of them could be trusted with the responsibility the Mother has given to you.

The difficulties you have are the difficulties which are met in each department and office of the Asram. It is due to the imperfections of the sadhaks, to their vital nature. You are mistaken in thinking that it is due to your presence there and that if you withdrew all would go smoothly. The same state of things would go on among themselves, disagreements, quarrels, jealousies, hard words, harsh criticisms of each other. X's or any other's complaints against you are because you are firm and careful in your management; there are the same or similar complaints against Y and others who discharge their trust given to them by the Mother scrupulously and well. There are against them the same murmurs and jealousies as are directed against you in the kitchen because of their position and their exercise of it. It would be no solution for Y or others trusted by the Mother to withdraw and leave the place to those who would discharge the duty less scrupulously and less well. It is the same with you and the kitchen work; it is not the way out. The way out can only come by a change in the character of the sadhaks brought about by the process of the sadhana. Till then you should understand and be patient and not allow yourself to be disturbed by the wrong behaviour of the others, but remain quietly doing your best, anchoring yourself on the trust and support given you by Y and the Mother. It is the Mother's work and the Mother is there to support you in doing it; put your reliance on that and do not allow the rest to affect you.

14 July 1935

All that has happened between you and X, as described by you, are trifles and a little good sense and good will on both sides should be enough to deprive them of importance and to get over any slight disturbance they may create. Quarrels take place and endure because both sides think the other is in the wrong and has behaved ill; but neither side can be in the right in a vital quarrel. The very fact of quarrelling like that puts both in the wrong. Moreover, it is not right to be so sensitive about being dominated or controlled. In the work especially one must accept the control of anyone whom the Mother puts in charge, so far as the work goes. In other matters, one can keep one's due independence without breaking off relations or any kind of quarrel.

There would be no use in changing your work or your residence, even if it were possible under the circumstances. It is the inner attitude that has to be kept right, the will to harmony must be fully established. A change of work is not the remedy. The idea of a good atmosphere or bad atmosphere in the house is also a thing not to be indulged. One must create one's own atmosphere not penetrable by other influences and one can always do that by union and closeness to the Mother. 2 October 1935

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But why allow the behaviour of others to affect you so much? To go on with your work as if nothing had happened is all right and a progress in the right direction, but inwardly also nothing should be affected.

You must never think or imagine that the Mother is not looking towards you with love and blessing or that she can for a moment turn her face away from you. You are her child and her love is steadfast towards you. 23 January 1936

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I wrote that your letter showed an attack of the old consciousness because of its tone: "I will not bear these things — it is better for me to go away from here etc." These are the old suggestions, not the attitude of your inner being which was to

give yourself and leave all to the Mother. The attitude of your inner being must also extend to your attitude to these outer things — knowing that whatever imperfections there are have to be worked out from within by each one, just as your own imperfections have to be worked out from within yourself by the Mother's aid and working in you.

That is with regard to your former letter. As to the present — to say what you see is all right but there is also in what you write a judgment passed upon what you see. These judgments you have expressed in a statement of what you think to be X's wrong motives, actions and mistakes. You put these statements and judgments before the Mother — for what? That she may take some action? But for that she must form her own judgment, and this she cannot do without facts, precise facts — she cannot act on a general statement by anyone. It is only if the person whom X blindly trusts is named that she can judge whether X is making a mistake in trusting him. If he listens to certain people and not to others, she must know who these people are and what are the circumstances in which he does that; then only can she judge whether he is right or wrong in doing so. So with everything. Many general statements have been made against X by others, but whenever it has come to particulars in dispute, Mother has seen that it is only sometimes in details that she had to change what he decided, his general management was in accordance with what she had laid down for him as the lines to follow. Ways of speech, defects of character, errors of judgment in particulars, these are a different matter. Each one has them and, as I have often said, they must be changed from within; but I am speaking of outer things, particular actions, particular ways of doing things. There she must be told with precise facts what is complained of in his action.

If it is not a general complaint you make about the D. R. and Aroumé work but in regard to yourself and your work particularly, there too you must give the precise facts of what he has done or failed to do before Mother can judge or say or do anything. What is it that he has not reported to her or has stated wrongly to her about your work or you? What are the

conveniences that he has not conceded to you?

I write all that because you seem to expect Mother to do something. But she must know what it is, what it is based on and whether she can do it or not with benefit to the work. Quarrels and clashes of ego there have been plenty in the D. R. and Aroumé, but that she cannot accept as a base of her action; she does not side with one or against another in these things. What is proper or necessary for the work is the thing she has to consider.

3 October 1936

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Your whole upset is founded on imaginations. X has not made any “lying” report to the Mother; the Mother did not show any displeasure to you for two days or any days. Your vital thought she must be like yourself and make a huge fuss about the perfectly insignificant trifle out of which you have made something gigantic, desperate and catastrophic. There was never any rule that Y’s permission must be taken for anything to be done in the kitchen; it is X who is head of the kitchen and whose permission has to be taken.

All the rest is pure self-inflation of an imaginary trouble because you choose to think of the Mother as a capricious tyrant acting according to the ideas of false reports of her favourites, an idea which has no better foundation than the fact that she does not flatter or pamper your ego by agreeing with you and taking your side or giving value to your mental reasons, each one of course thinking that his own “reasons” are the only right way and to disagree with them is high treason against Truth and Justice.

What is amazing is that you should have got into such a state about anything so trivial as this boiling of milk and Z going to Y for an explanation. No man in his senses ought to quarrel over such matters or magnify into a stupendous tragedy. It shows that egoistic sensitiveness not only in your case but in that of many others in the Asram has reached enormous and fantastic proportions. It is time that the sadhaks of this Asram realised what they have come here for; — it is not to nourish the ego and

to insist on its being considered and fondled, but to abnegate the ego and seek only after the Divine. 10 November 1936

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It is very good that you have spoken and cleared up things. Certainly, it is quite true that the inner being should be turned to the Mother and her alone.

As for the work, the inner development, psychic and spiritual, is surely of the first importance and work merely as work is something quite minor. But work done as an offering to the Mother becomes itself a part of the sadhana and a means and part of the inner development. That you will see more as the psychic grows within you. Apart from that the work is important because necessary to the maintenance of the Asram, which is the frame of the Mother's action here. December 1936

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I do not know why there should be so much difficulty about the instructions; you have been doing this work for many years and must surely know the lines on which it has been conducted by X and what to do in most cases. In the others where there is no guide in past experience, you have to do your best and in case X's instructions are incomplete and you have to act on your own judgment, you can point it out to him if he finds fault with what is done.

For the rest your judgment about his method of work does not agree with the Mother's observation of him and his work. She has found him one of the ablest organisers in the Asram and one of the most energetic workers who did not spare himself until she compelled him to do so, one who understood and entered completely into her views and carried them out not only with great fidelity but with success and capacity. She has known more instances than one in which he has organised so completely and thoroughly that the labour has been reduced to a minimum and the efficiency raised to a maximum. I may say however that the saving of labour is not the main consideration in work; there are others equally important and more so. As for the principle

that everyone should be allowed to do according to his nature, that can apply only where people do independent work by themselves; where many have to work together, it cannot always be done — regularity and discipline are there the first rule.

I do not understand your remark about the Mother. The whole work of Aroumé, of the Granary, of the Building Department, etc. was arranged by the Mother not only in general plan and object but in detail. It was only after she had seen everything in working order that she drew back and allowed things to go on according to her plan, but still with an eye on the whole. It is therefore according to the Mother's arrangement that people here are working. When it was not so, when Mother allowed the sadhaks to do according to their own ideas or nature, indicating her will but not enforcing it in detail, the whole Asram was a scene of anarchy, confusion, waste, disorderly self-indulgence, clash and quarrel, self-will, disobedience, and if it had gone on, the Asram would have ceased to exist long ago. It was to prevent that that the Mother chose X and a few others on whom she could rely and reorganised all the departments, supervising every detail and asking the heads to enforce proper methods and discipline. Whatever remains still of the old defects is due to the indiscipline of many workers and their refusal to get rid of their old nature. Even now if the Mother withdrew her control, the whole thing would collapse.

You are mistaken in thinking that X conceals things from the Mother or does as he pleases without telling her. She knows all and is not in a state of ignorance. What you write in your second letter is nothing new to her. There were hundreds of protests and complaints against X (as against other heads of departments), against his methods, his detailed acts and arrangements, his rigid economy, his severe discipline and many things else. The Mother saw things and where there was justification for change, she has made it, but she has consistently supported X, because the things complained of, economy, discipline, refusal to bend to the claims and fancies and wishes of the sadhaks, were just what she had herself insisted on — without them he could not have done the work as she wanted it done. If he had been loose, indulgent,

not severe, he might have become popular, but he would not have been her instrument for the work. Whatever defects there might be in his nature, were the Mother's concern; if there was too much rigidity anywhere, it was for her to change it. But she refused to yield to complaints and clamour born of desire and ego; her yielding would only have brought the old state of things back and put an end to the Asram.

7 January 1937

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Certainly, I cannot say that the ideas you put forward in this letter are true. They are errors of the physical mind which seldom gets hold of the real truth of things. It is not a fact that the Mother got displeased and frowned on you every time you wrote about X. That is the kind of thing the sadhaks are always thinking and saying about the Mother, that she is frowning on them in displeasure for this reason or smiling on them for that, and the reasons they assign are those suggested by their own physical minds, but have nothing to do with anything in the consciousness of the Mother which is not in a constant bubbling of human pleasure and displeasure. I have tried to explain that to the sadhaks again and again but they prefer to believe that their own minds are infallible and that what I say is untrue. So I will only say that your idea is mistaken.

It is also not a fact that you cannot do sadhana, for you were doing it for a time and doing it very well. But your physical mind came across and took you outside and is trying to keep you outside instead of allowing you to go and remain within. That is why I have been trying to persuade you to go within and not live in these outside ideas and reactions of the physical being which prevent sadhana and only give trouble.

It is not a fact that the Mother wants you to be a puppet of X. Of the two questions that have arisen, in one, as to the vital relation which entered into your personal friendship with him, she has fully supported your view that this vital element must not be there and from what X has written I believe he is himself now convinced that he made a mistake and that it must stop. If he still has any desire for it, you need not in any way yield to

him, but on the contrary must be firm about it. But there is the work. As regards the work it is not at all clear that all you think is right and all X does is wrong. You speak of your personality and what you seem to say is that X is in the work trying to impose his personality and that you want to affirm yours against it and Mother ought to have supported you, but she does not regard your personality at all but insists on your subordinating it to X's. But the Mother does not at all look at it from that standpoint or regard anybody's personality. In her view people's personalities which means their ego ought to have no place in the work. It is not your work or X's work, but the Divine work, the Mother's work and it is not to be governed by your ideas or feelings or X's ideas or feelings or Y's or Z's or A's or anybody else's, but by the vision, perception and will of the Mother which does not express any human personality (if it did there would be no justification for the existence of this Asram), but proceeds from a deeper consciousness. It has been the great obstacle to the full success and harmony of the work that everybody almost has had this idea of his own personality, ideas, feelings etc. and more or less tried to insist on them — this has been the cause of most of the difficulties and of all the disharmony and quarrel. We want all this to stop; for when it stops altogether then there will be some possibility of the differences and turmoil ceasing and the work will better serve the purpose for which the Mother created it. That is why I have been trying to explain to you about the necessity of subordinating the personality and doing the work for the Divine, not insisting on one's own personality, ego, ideas, feelings as the important thing.

P. S. When I say that you are mistaken or do not agree with you, you seem to think my letters show displeasure and that my disagreeing with you means that I am vexed with you for writing your views; but that is not so. If I answer what you write, it must be to tell you what seems to myself and to the Mother the true way of seeing things and acting. That does not imply any displeasure.

4 July 1937

I do not think I said anywhere you had done anything contrary to X's instructions in your work. I was speaking of what you had written in criticism of his way of doing things, and especially I wanted to remove your idea that the necessity of acting under his instructions meant a disregard of your personality or a desire on Mother's part to make you a puppet of X. Where there is a big work with several people working together for a purpose which is common to all and not personal to any, it cannot be done unless there is a fixed arrangement involving subordination and discipline in each worker. That is so everywhere, not here alone. X has to act under the Mother, carry out her instructions, work according to the ideas she has given him. She has laid down the lines on which he must work, and whatever he does must be on those lines. He is not free to change them or do anything contrary to the ideas given him. Where he makes decisions in details of the work, they must be in consonance with these lines and ideas. He has to report to the Mother, to take her sanction and accept her decisions on all matters. If the Mother's decisions are contrary to his proposals or contradict his own ideas of what should be done, he has still to accept them and carry them out. The idea that the D. R. work is done according to his ideas and not the Mother's is an error. But all that is simply the necessity of the work, it is not a disregard of X's personality. In the same way you have to carry out X's instructions because he is charged by the Mother with the work and given authority by her. All the D. R. workers are in the same position and are supposed to carry out his instructions and keep him informed, because he is directly responsible to the Mother for everything and unless he has this authority he cannot carry out his responsibility. In the same way Y has been asked to carry out your instructions in the kitchen because you are at the head of the kitchen. All that is not a disregard of your personality or of Y's personality or an assertion of X's — it is the necessity of the work which cannot be smoothly done if there is not this arrangement. That is what I wanted you to understand so that you might see why the Mother wanted you to do like that, not for any other reason, but for the necessity of the work and so that it may be smoothly done.

On the other hand as you are at the head of the work and the practical working is in your hands, you have every right to put any difficulties before X and ask for a solution. He on his side will often need information from you and may need also to know what you think should be done. But if even after knowing, he thinks it right to follow his own idea of what should be done and not yours, you should not mind that. He has the responsibility and must act according to his lights subject to the sanction of the Mother. Your responsibility finishes when you have informed him and told him your idea. If his decision is wrong, it is for the Mother to change it.

I hope I have made the conditions clear. There is no necessity for you to agree with X's ideas nor outside the work are you under any obligation to do what he wants you to do. There you are quite free. It is only in the work that there is this necessity in action — for the sake of the work.

I have written so much because you wanted to know what the Mother expected you to do. It is not meant as a pressure upon you, but only to explain things and show you the way and the reason for which they have to be done. 5 July 1937

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It seems that there is friction between you and X. He says that you are keeping him at a distance from his work and asks to be given work elsewhere. The Mother does not approve of this and she wants all friction to be removed and work harmoniously done. Personal feelings ought not to be allowed to come into the work or disturb it in any way. It is you and X who know the Bakery work thoroughly and are the best workers; for some time you two carried it on between you. Mother has relied on this collaboration for the Bakery work to go on well. If personal misunderstandings are allowed to break up the collaboration, it will be bad for the Mother's work and also for the sadhana of both. If misunderstandings arise, they ought not to be cherished in silence on either side, but cleared up by a frank and friendly explanation. I am writing to X to the same effect. Mother expects you both to remove all misunderstanding between you and work

together in a friendly spirit.

30 June 1938

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The fact that people do work for the Mother does not mean that she must do all that they ask for with regard to that work and that if she does not do so it means lack of support or disapproval. That is the attitude of most workers in the Asram including X, that is an entirely mistaken attitude.

If sadhaks get upset when the Mother does not do what they ask from her or begin to get suggestions of this kind, that means that they are bringing their vital ego into the work, — they are thinking, “My work is not supported, the Mother is upholding someone else and not *me*” and other “I”s and “my”s of the same kind. It is only they who are feeling the work to be theirs, it is not the Mother who is so regarding it.

The Mother knows perfectly well X’s character which is not alterable — it was for that very reason that she asked not only you but Y and everybody else in the Garden Department to avoid quarrelling with him even in case of extreme disagreement. Quarrels and clashes are a proof of absence of the Yogic poise and those who seriously wish to do yoga must learn to grow out of these things. It is easy enough not to clash when there is no cause for strife or dispute or quarrel; it is when there is cause and the other side is impossible and unreasonable that one gets the opportunity of rising above one’s vital nature.

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You say that Mother showed her severity or displeasure towards you and she always does so when you write about X; but this is not a fact. It is your mind that creates the severity and displeasure out of its own feeling or imagination. At the time you came to the Mother I had not spoken a word to her about your letter and she did not even know that you had written about X. I wanted to read the letter over again and see that I understood everything in it before speaking to her (that was why I wrote it would take me a day or two) and I told her only in the evening after your letter of today reached me. As

a matter of fact the Mother's feeling to you was just the same as it is always — there was no severity or displeasure. This has happened before; it is not the first time. It ought to show you that the mind is not infallible and in following its observations and inferences it is quite possible to fall into entire error.

I do not think it is any use going into the detail of the things you write of — most of them are trifles which could easily be set right if there were not a settled misunderstanding between you and X which makes both nervous about everything the other does so that you magnify small things and give them an undue importance. It is the natural result of personal feelings getting into the work and there is no remedy except doing the work without personal feelings. I had hoped from what you said in your letter a few days ago that you had determined to get rid of it altogether on your side and do the work looking to the Mother alone and not mind what X did or did not do. If you could do that, Mother would have been better able to put a persistent pressure on him and make him gradually change and become less self-occupied, tactless and sensitive.

We shall have to consider the whole problem of the work and see on what new basis it can be put. Some temporary arrangement may be possible meanwhile, but not at the present moment. I hope till then you will try to carry on in spite of the friction with X. At the moment things are difficult for the Mother and you must give her some time to find out what is to be done and how to make it possible to do it.

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The remedy for these things is to think more and more of the Mother and less and less of the relations of others with yourself apart from the Mother. As X is trying, so you should try to meet others in the Mother, in your consciousness of unity with the Mother and not in a separate personal relation. Then these difficulties disappear and harmony can be established — for then it is not necessary to try and please others — but both or all meet in their love for the Mother and their work for her.

**The Mother and Mistakes in Work**

Mistakes come from people bringing their ego, their personal feelings (likes and dislikes), their sense of prestige or their convenience, pride, sense of possession, etc. into the work. The right way is to feel that the work is the Mother's — not only yours, but the work of others — and to carry it out in such a spirit that there shall be general harmony. Harmony cannot be brought about by external organisation only, though a more and more perfect external organisation is necessary; inner harmony there must be or else there will always be clash and disorder.

26 February 1932

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Do not allow yourself to be so much disturbed by so small a matter. It is not at all necessary to apologise to X. When one has a wrong movement, all one has to do is to recognise it and reject and be more careful to avoid it in the future. As you have told the Mother, let the thing disappear from your mind and recover your movement.

16 March 1932

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Something in my consciousness stops me before going the wrong way or doing a bad action, but sometimes it does not. I want there not to be a single wrong action which Mother does not like.

If you want strongly and if you always try to be careful, then that too will come.

8 February 1933

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Since the material world is only one of the several worlds, only a small portion of the total manifestation, should we not attach very little importance to material things, material work and its details? Also, from what Mother said yesterday it seems that one should attach little importance to errors in work — one should not mind them if others commit them, one should not care to correct them in others.

What Mother said was that she was perfectly aware of errors done in the work, but as she had to work out a certain Force in these things looking at them from an inner viewpoint, not with the external intellect, she found it often necessary to pass over imperfections and errors. This does not at all mean that the sadhak worker has not to care whether there are errors in his own work where he is responsible. If other sadhaks commit errors that is their responsibility, one can observe and avoid similar mistakes in oneself, but one sadhak cannot correct the errors of others unless that comes within his responsibility — each has to correct himself and his own defects and mistakes.

We are here in this material world and not in the others except by an inner connection. Also our life and action lie here, so it will not do to neglect the material world and things, though we should not be attached and bound to them by *āsakti* and desire. We have to acquire a knowledge of the nature and powers of other worlds (planes) so far as they are connected with this one and we can use them to help and uplift the action here. But still the field of action is here and not elsewhere. 21 August 1936

# Relation between the Mother and Her Children

## True Relation with the Mother

What is our true relation with the Mother — the relation of the Mother and her child?

The relation of the child to the Mother is that of an entire, sincere and simple trust, love and dependence.

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The relation of the disciple to the Guru in the Guruvada is supposed always to be that of worship, respect, complete happy confidence, unquestioning acceptance of the guidance. It is only in this Asram that another theory has sometimes been advanced and reached its height as a result of the *misapplication* or wrong extension of the relation with the human Mother (which in itself, rightly understood, was not to be discouraged as a phase) and also of certain other misunderstood notions — not only *abhimāna*, but egoistic unspiritual demand, hostile criticism, revolt, anger and other still more undesirable vital reactions (usually supposed to be foreign to the spiritual consciousness) have been put forward by some, admitted by many in practice, as a part of the Yoga! I do not see how such a method can lead to any good results in the spiritual life. 12 January 1932

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The connection between myself and the Mother is always there, but my vital is interfering, colouring it and making it impure.

Yes, the connection is always there, in the self and in the psychic; but if there are obstacles in the mind, vital and physical, then the connection cannot be manifest or, if it is at all manifest, it is

mixed with elements which make it imperfect and unstable. The true connection is the psychic and spiritual relation; the relation in the other parts must be built up on this psychic and spiritual connection and then it can be permanent. 24 April 1932

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One rule for you I can lay down, “Do not do, say or think anything which you would want to conceal from the Mother.” And that answers the objections that rose within you — from your vital, is it not? — against bringing “these petty things” to the Mother’s notice. Why should you think that the Mother would be bothered by these things or regard them as petty? If *all* the life is to be Yoga, what is there that can be called petty or of no importance? Even if the Mother does not answer, to have brought any matter of your action and self-development before her in the right spirit means to have put it under her protection, in the light of the Truth, under the rays of the Power that is working for the transformation — for immediately those rays begin to play and to act on the thing brought to her notice. Anything within that advises you not to do it when the spirit in you moves you to do it, may very well be a device of the vital to avoid the ray of the Light and the working of the Force. It may also be observed that if you open yourself to the Mother by putting the movements of any part of you under her observation, that of itself creates a relation, a personal closeness with her other than that which her general, silent or not directly invited action maintains with all the sadhaks.

All this, of course, if you feel ready for this openness, if the spirit moves you to lay what is in you bare before her. For it is then that it is fruitful — when it comes from within and is spontaneous and true. 18 May 1932

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It was certainly true that you saw the Mother and she was teaching secrets to your inner being — for your inner being is in close relation with her. It is only by your opening yourself that this inner being can come out and change the relations of

your external self with her, remove from it its sense of not being connected, its misunderstandings, wrong attitudes, confused movements. That is why I am always pressing on you to open and keep in touch with the Force—for it is your inner being that feels naturally in touch with it,—it is only the external and physical mind and vital that feel it is as if it were not real, not truly connected etc. etc. This you have experienced yourself more than once when the inner being came into the front.

3 November 1932

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It is perfectly true that in your inner being there is nothing that stands between you and nearness to the Mother; but in your outer there are many reactions that make it difficult—and the chief cause of these reactions is the readiness with which your outer mind listens to the suggestions and accepts the reasonings and obeys the movements of the obscure ignorant physical Nature. That is why I want you to get rid of this habit of the outer mind and to recognise that it is the inner being which is the real truth of yourself and not this outer consciousness with its confusions which is a present fact but not your true permanent being.

9 December 1932

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This morning I sent a letter to the Mother through X, but I have received no reply. Have I done something wrong? Waiting for a word from her I am suffering greatly.

The Mother replied to you through X that you could take the rest you wanted—at any rate she told him to tell you that; I hope he did so.

Feelings of this kind ought to be rejected always and there is nothing else to be done with them. The relation with the Divine, the relation with the Mother must be one of love, faith, trust, confidence, surrender—any other relation of the vital ordinary kind brings reactions contrary to the sadhana,—desire, egoistic *abhimāna*, demand, revolt and all the disturbance of ignorant

rajasic human nature from which it is the object of the sadhana to escape. 26 April 1933

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I am afraid you have allowed some old movement of the vital to come up and obstruct the work that was being done.

You know perfectly well that your inner being is near to the Mother, can feel her peace and force, can receive her thought, can respond and that that is the one thing that helps you. When you speak of the Mother seeming aloof to your senses, you are referring evidently to the physical nearness. You know very well what was the reason why it could not be for the time. But even there there was a great improvement recently and it was becoming possible and natural for you to approach the Mother physically without the old vital reactions, and the Mother was welcoming the change. This is not a time to allow the old reactions to come up and impede or throw back the progress made. Cast off this invasion, let your consciousness recover the quietness it was more and more gaining, let your soul go on growing as it was growing—throw out this reaction that impedes it. Let the Divine work in you and establish in time the true outward and inward relation which is the only one that can satisfy and endure. 7 September 1933

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Why do I get angry and make myself miserable when Mother proposes something I do not like, such as putting X with me in my house? If Mother herself wants it, why should I object and feel sorry about it?

It is desire and jealousy that are the cause of these movements. It prevents you from seeing that each is dealt with according to the needs and possibilities of his case. Your vital wishes on the contrary to impose a rule by which you shall get what the vital wants and if it does not, and if another gets it, you consider it a personal wrong and an injustice. So if something disagreeable to your vital, e.g. putting X, is suggested, you consider that because the Mother's proposal was disagreeable to you,

therefore it was wrong. The whole thing is that — that you are putting a personal standard — the standard of your desires and feelings — as the measure of truth and right. Most men do that — almost all practically; but to do Yoga you must free yourself from that altogether. You are concerned only with yourself and the Divine; in your relations with the Divine you are concerned not with the Divine's satisfaction of your personal desires, but with being pulled out of these things and raised to your highest spiritual possibilities, so that you may become united with the Mother within and as a result in the outer being also. That cannot be done by satisfying your vital desires — to do so would only increase them and give you into the hands of the ignorance and restless confusion of the ordinary Nature. It can be done only by your inner trust and surrender and by the pressure of the Mother's peace and Force working from within and changing your vital nature. It is when you forget this that you go wrong and suffer; when you remember it you progress and the difficulties become less and less insistent. 13 September 1933

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I have heard that the Mother gives flowers to those waiting for her on the stairs at noon. I feel I should try to be present there, to break my habit of shyness and to recognise her not only as the spiritual Mother but as the loving and compassionate human Mother as well.

The Mother is not giving every day, only from time to time. But why do you want to meet her as a "human" mother — if you can see the divine Mother in a human body, that should be enough and a more fruitful attitude. Those who approach her as a human Mother often get into trouble by their conception making all sorts of mistakes in their approach to her. 2 May 1934

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You are the Mother's child and the Mother's love to her children is without limit and she bears patiently with the defects of their nature. Try to be the true child of the Mother: it is there within

you, but your outward mind is occupied by little futile things and too often in a violent fuss over them. You must not only see the Mother in dream but learn to see and feel her with you and within you at all times. Then you would find it easier to control yourself and change, — for she being there would be able to do it for you.

30 May 1934

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The sadhak feels alone and suffers when he does not have the Mother's presence. Does the Mother likewise feel alone in the absence of her child? Is she more miserable than a human mother would be?

If that were the case the Mother would have to be in a profound state of million-fold misery all the time — for why should she be miserable only for the sadhak — why not for each soul that is wandering in the Ignorance? The child need not be miserable, but simply come back when the Mother calls.

24 September 1934

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If one looks into his own heart, he cannot fail to find the Mother's smile there. Why go out of one's heart, then, and seek for her smile outside? Why are so many here burdened with difficulties, falls, attacks, gloom and despair? Is it not because they seek the external part of the Mother, her physical nearness, touch, etc., instead of going inside?

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.

21 April 1935

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You have written to some people about “an inner close relation” with the Mother. I want to know what is the truest and most real relation with her. Isn't the soul relation with her the only true one? What is the soul relation? How am I to recognise it?

An inner (soul) relation means that one feels the Mother's presence, is turned to her at all times, is aware of her force moving, guiding, helping, is full of love for her and always feels a great nearness whether one is physically near her or not — this relation takes up the mind, vital and inner physical till one feels one's mind close to the Mother's mind, one's vital in harmony with hers, one's very physical consciousness full of her. These are all the elements of the inner union, not only in the spirit and self but in the nature.

I do not recollect what I had written, but this is the inner close relation as opposed to an outer relation which consists only in how one meets her on the external physical plane. It is quite possible — and actual — to have this inner close relation even if physically one sees her only at pranam and meditation and once a year perhaps on the birthday. 29 June 1935

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I don't feel any personal relation with the Mother. There lies the whole difficulty of the sadhana.

One has to become conscious by the awakening of the inner mind and vital — or best of all by the awakening of the psychic. It is quite possible for two persons to have a relation of which one is conscious and the other is not — his mental blindness or vital misunderstandings coming in the way. That is frequent even in ordinary life. Very often one becomes conscious of it only when he loses it (by the death of the other person or otherwise) and is then full of repinings for his blindness. 20 July 1935

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This thought of yours that Mother cares for all as her children and does not care for you is evidently a quite groundless idea and does not rest on any solid basis. She is as affectionate in her love and care for you and in her way towards you as to any others and more than to most. There is nothing solid or specific that we can see on which the idea can rest. Certainly, it corresponds to no reality in the Mother's feelings.

But I have noted that this kind of idea *always* comes up in the minds of sadhaks and sadhikas (especially the latter) when they become despondent or listen to the suggestions from outside them. Always they say the same thing as you, “You love and care for all; only for me you do not love and care. I am evidently unfit for the Yoga or you would not keep me far from you like that. I shall never arrive at anything. What is the use of my remaining here only to trouble you? What have I to live for?” But when the psychic being is well awake, then these thoughts, this despondency, these wrong notions are bound to go away. What you feel therefore is just this despondency and the wrong suggestions it brings; it does not correspond to any reality in the Mother’s feelings or behaviour towards you. It will go with the rest as the inner being, the soul in you comes more and more forward — for the soul in you knows that it loves the Mother and the Mother loves you; it cannot be blinded by the suggestions that deceive the mind and the vital nature.

Do not therefore remain in these thoughts that have no foundation but are only a mood of despondency or a suggestion from outside. Let the psychic being in you grow and the Mother’s force work. The relation of the child and the Mother is there in your soul; it will make itself felt in your mind and vital and physical consciousness till it becomes the foundation of the whole consciousness on which all the sadhana can be firm and secure.

26 July 1935

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The connection between you and the Mother is there and has always existed. Inside it is very evident and, when you are in the psychic condition, that which is inside begins to work. It is only the physical mind that suggests the idea to the contrary because outward circumstances are still inharmonious and unfavourable. Do not allow these suggestions to sway you. Seek the connection within you in your psychic being; then even through the outward circumstances it will shine out and change all into oneness.

5 June 1936

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My condition is changing so often; it is as if I were walking on hilly ground with plenty of ditches on the way. I am hardly out of one ditch and able to get a breath of fresh air than I find myself in another ditch. I often feel that I am hopelessly bad. I know that I would not feel this way if I knew myself to be the Mother's. I pray, make me feel that. Open my eyes to see, or rather give me the eyes to see, for I seem to have lost them.

You know now what this depression and the feelings that come with it are — they are the recurrences of the old unconsciousness attempting to prevent the rapid or full flowering of the inner consciousness which was growing in you. You should therefore not accept the suggestions of the depression or the idea of not being the Mother's. The eye within is growing — it is sure to be full and open after a time. It is why the old consciousness is trying hard to return and keep hold. You must get more and more to say no to its suggestions and efforts — so that the development may go more quickly. July 1936

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If a man feels, "I am the happiest child of the Mother", is it due to ego-feeling?

It depends on the source of the feeling. If it is true happiness, then it is not ego. If it is due to a feeling of superiority, then it is ego.

### **Inner Contact with the Mother**

Let the inner contact with the Mother increase — unless that is there, the outer contacts if too much multiplied easily degenerate into a routine.

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Today while going to the Mother, I felt concentrated in the mind, with a will to get contact with the Mother. Then I found that my mind was opening to the Light. I saw flashes of golden light two or three times. In the morning I remained peaceful and quiet and later I saw the Light many times.

It was the contact with the Mother that originally brought the opening to the Light, the descent of the golden light, the wideness and the knowledge. The two things naturally go together or follow one on the other; it is a mistake to think that there is any incompatibility or opposition between them.

11 September 1931

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On waking up this morning, I felt myself in contact with the Mother's consciousness; it gave me a good feeling and even Ananda. While meditating this morning, my mind opened up above and the contact deepened and I felt aspiration and peace. I have been able to progress and get experiences by keeping contact with the Mother's consciousness; but I have the idea that this contact is not enough to give me all the experiences I aspire for.

That is your mistake to think the contact is not enough. The contact with the Mother's consciousness will lead to *all* necessary realisations and the fulfilment of all true aspirations.

14 January 1932

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In my waking consciousness I feel that I flow always in the stream of sadhana, but in my sleep I am quite a different person. I want to be changed in my sleep also. During sleep I want to keep in constant contact with the Mother. Is there any process or should I simply call her help before I retire to bed?

Aspire and want it always — that is the first thing. As for methods, perhaps it is best not to go to sleep straight in the ordinary way, but to meditate and through meditation pass into sleep.

At least before going to bed have a meditation.

13 September 1932

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I was feeling very happy alone in my room, with an inner feeling of the Mother's consciousness. When I went to see X, I felt ill at ease and I lost the inner contact with the Mother. Mixing with people destroys the inner feeling, but I cannot

always remain secluded. What is the best thing to do?

You have to learn to live in yourself with the Mother, in contact with her consciousness, and meet others only with your exterior surface. 9 April 1933

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Today while engaged in work I felt a peaceful energy and something like ice touching my head. Then the knowledge came to me: "The Mother is always near us, though physically we do not see her, and she is removing all kinds of weakness with the touch of her affectionate hand. In every way she stands behind us secretly." This thing was like a feeling and a vision, almost like a realisation. Was it the psychic feeling of the Mother's presence in us?

It is a realisation attended with vision and feeling. It is the psychic and the mental together that produced it. 9 June 1933

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The one thing that is most needed for this sadhana is peace, calm, especially in the vital — a peace which depends not on circumstances or surroundings but on the inner relation with a higher consciousness which is the consciousness of the Divine, of the Mother. Those who have not that or do not aspire to get it can come here and live in the Asram for ten or twenty years and yet be as restless and full of struggle as ever, — those who open their mind and vital to the Mother's strength and peace can get it even in the hardest and most unpleasant work and the worst circumstances. October 1933

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I would like the Mother to fix my timings as to what should be done at what time for the whole day. I will abide by whatever she determines for my progress.

To fix times is not possible or desirable — you must yourself organise your day in such a manner as to make the best use of it and let the Mother know how you do it.

I am ready to give up all my relations with everyone and be merged in the Mother alone. Please tell me what rules I should follow to overcome all obstacles. May Mother help me both inwardly and outwardly.

The most important thing is to be turned inwardly towards the Mother and to her alone. To avoid too many outward contacts is necessary only in order to help in this — but it is not necessary nor desirable to avoid all contacts with people. What is necessary is to meet these contacts with the right inner consciousness, not throwing yourself out — treating them as things of the surface — not getting attached to them or absorbed by them in any way.

28 October 1933

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I wanted to ask you whether what I have said about my inner contact with the Mother is true or not. It may be that my vital mind is deluding me about this.

At any rate if you want the Mother's contact always, you must get rid of depression and the mental imaginations that bring it. Nothing comes more in the way than that.

3 January 1934

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No one need be jealous of anything or anybody, since each has his own point of contact which nobody else has — apart from what all have.

4 January 1934

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You wrote to me that making Pranam to the Mother would bear fruit “if one keeps the right contact with her inwardly all day”.<sup>1</sup> What exactly did you mean?

I meant the inner contact in which one either feels one with her or in contact with her or aware of her presence or, at the very least, turned towards her always.

18 March 1934

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<sup>1</sup> See letter of 16 March 1935 on page 532–33. — Ed.

For a long time I was thinking of meeting the Mother but was hesitating to ask for an interview. Last night in dream I met her and had a talk with her. Was it the real Mother I met or some constructed figure of my dream-mind?

Of course, it was the Mother you met and the meeting must have been due to your thought about meeting her. 9 June 1935

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If it is like that, it is probably because you are living outside, allowing yourself to be disturbed by outward contacts. One cannot find happiness of a lasting character unless one lives within. Work, action must be offered to the Mother, done for her sake only, without any thought for yourself, your own ideas, preferences, feelings, likes and dislikes. If one's eyes are fixed on these latter things, then at every step one gets some friction either in the mind or vital or, if these are comparatively quiet, in the body and nerves. Peace and joy can only become stable if one lives within with the Mother. 2 January 1937

### **The Right Way of Loving the Mother**

The contact between mother and child means not only that the mother should love the child but that the child should love the mother and obey her. You want to be the true child of the Mother, but the first thing for that is to put yourself into her hands and let her guide you and to follow her will — and not disregard it or revolt against her. You know all this perfectly well — why do you ignore it?

It is part of the true Mother's love not to do whatever the vital of the child demands, for she knows that it would be extremely bad for him. Do not obey the impulse of the vital, but follow rather your true perception and make yourself a channel for the will of the Mother — because her will is always that you should grow into your true being.

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The love which is turned towards the Divine ought not to be the usual vital feeling which men call by that name; for that is not love, but only a vital desire, an instinct of appropriation, the impulse to possess and monopolise. Not only is this not the divine Love, but it ought not to be allowed to mix in the least degree in the Yoga. The true love for the Divine is a self-giving, free of demand, full of submission and surrender; it makes no claim, imposes no condition, strikes no bargain, indulges in no violences of jealousy or pride or anger — for these things are not in its composition. In return the Divine Mother also gives herself, but freely — and this represents itself in an inner giving — her presence in your mind, your vital, your physical consciousness, her power re-creating you in the divine nature, taking up all the movements of your being and directing them towards perfection and fulfilment, her love enveloping you and carrying you in its arms Godwards. It is this that you must aspire to feel and possess in all your parts down to the very material, and here there is no limitation either of time or of completeness. If one truly aspires and gets it, there ought to be no room for any other claim or for any disappointed desire. And if one truly aspires, one does unfailingly get it, more and more as the purification proceeds and the nature undergoes its needed change.

Keep your love pure of all selfish claim and desire; you will find that you are getting all the love that you can bear and absorb in answer.

Realise also that the Realisation must come first, the work to be done, not the satisfaction of claim and desire. It is only when the Divine Consciousness in its supramental Light and Power has descended and transformed the physical that other things can be given a prominent place — and then too it will not be the satisfaction of desire, but the fulfilment of the Divine Truth in each and all and in the new life that is to express it. In the divine life all is for the sake of the Divine and not for the sake of the ego.

I should perhaps add one or two things to avoid misapprehensions. First, the love for the Divine of which I speak is not a psychic love only; it is the love of all the being, the vital and vital-physical included, — all are capable of the same

self-giving. It is a mistake to believe that if the vital loves, it must be a love that demands and imposes the satisfaction of its desire; it is a mistake to think that it must be either that or else the vital, in order to escape from its “attachment”, must draw away altogether from the object of its love. The vital can be as absolute in its unquestioning self-giving as any other part of the nature; nothing can be more generous than its movement when it forgets self for the Beloved. The vital and physical should both give themselves in the true way — the way of true love, not of ego desire.

1 August 1931

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What I want of you is not to love the Mother from a distance, but to become accustomed to feel her presence, her help, the working of her forces even when she is not physically present and this not only in your sleep or inward-drawn condition (which seems to be sufficiently easy for you) but in your waking consciousness whether in meditation or in ordinary hours. And this I want because it would give a great push to your Yoga. It would besides give a deeper meaning and power to your physical contact with her. I am sure that all this will come fully in time.

22 November 1931

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I have been here for one and a half years but I know nothing of the sadhana. I meditate, but nothing happens in the meditation. I feel there is no love in me towards the Mother. What shall I do to feel this love?

Become truthful, pure, sincere, straightforward. 1 July 1935

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Parts of my being are insisting on a physical expression of the Mother’s love. Although at present there is no attack or depression, there is only dryness and dullness. Even if the sadhana returns and I get very high or deep experiences, they will be worth little so long as my love for the Mother does not return.

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.

23 October 1935

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Both the love for the Mother which you feel so strongly and the other tendency of harmony and affection with those with whom you live or work come from the psychic being. When the psychic intensifies its influence, this love for the Mother becomes strong and is the main mover of the nature. But there is also a feeling of good will, harmony, kindness or affection towards others which also comes up and is not so much personal as the result of the soul's inmost relation to all souls who are children of the Mother. There is no harm in this psychic feeling, on the contrary it creates happiness and harmony — it is only the vital love between persons that has to be rejected because it draws away from full consecration to the Divine. But this helps the growth of the soul into the Mother's consciousness and helps the work and helps also the inner life to grow.

10 February 1936

### **Receiving What the Mother Gives**

The Mother gives whatever is necessary for each one; she does not withhold what one requires and is capable of receiving. It is we who are not ready to receive what she gives.

Yes, Mother is always willing to give and nothing pleases her better than to see her children receiving what she has to give.

### **Telling the Whole Truth**

The unwillingness to tell the whole truth, the wish to conceal or justify things is another general trait of human nature which is common in the Asram. It is perfectly true that to do that is to stand in the way of one's own progress, but the lower nature is

strong and overcomes the *buddhi*. People also think that Mother will not know if they do not tell or at least she won't know the physical facts even if she can read the inner movements and they prefer to conceal or else to write in such a way that they may stand well in her eyes. This weakness like others can only go by the growth of the psychic and its taking hold of the mind and vital so that they will not be able to hide from themselves their own wrong movements or try to hide them from the Mother.

30 January 1936

### Psychic Relation with the Mother

Your dream was certainly not a mere dream or an imagination, but a true experience. It expressed the relation between your psychic being and the Mother.

That relation is always there; it is prevented from filling up the whole vital and physical consciousness by the old habitual movements that return upon the lower vital and physical and by the assent some part of the mind, when it is obscured, gives to these movements. Do not allow your mind to give this assent, and do not allow any demand to rise in your vital, for it is usually some vital demand or disappointment of demand that is the occasion for these returns.

The whole mental, vital and physical consciousness will then begin to be filled with the permanent relation which is natural to the psychic part of you. There would then be no serious difficulty or disturbing struggle.

26 April 1932

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Throughout the day my vital has wept. It feels that the Mother is unsympathetic to it and laments that it is deprived of her affection. It stumbles at her silence; it shrinks at her neglect.

All that is simply the unregenerated vital which is full of ego and desire and demand and therefore of dissatisfaction, complaint, false ideas and self-made sorrow.

But there is another movement in me which wants to avoid all

such sorrows and joys and just depend on the Mother. It does not want anything from her, but wants to give itself to her, and prays to her to come down and uplift it. This movement is in the heart. Its principal feature is surrender.

What you write here is an exact description of the psychic being and its relation to the Mother. That is the true relation. If you want to succeed in this Yoga, you must take your stand on the psychic relation and reject the egoistic vital movement. The psychic being coming to the front and staying there is the decisive movement in the Yoga. It is that which happened when you saw the Mother last — the psychic being came in front. But you must keep it in front. You will not be able to do that if you listen to the vital ego and its outcries. It is by faith and surrender and the joy of pure self-giving — the psychic attitude — that one grows into the Truth and becomes united with the Divine.

26 February 1933

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You wrote that when I saw Mother last time my psychic being was in the front.

No. I said it came out as the result of your last coming to Mother — I meant by that what Mother put there. It was evident to me afterwards by your condition.

Now I remember my inner state at the time, but I do not recall anything special in it. When I met Mother I was simply quiet and a little dependent on her.

That was enough to allow Mother to work. It is when the vital demands, complains, becomes sorrowful and tragic that difficulty is created.

27 February 1933

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How can I know the Mother's will? If I feel that it is inconvenient to do something, does it mean that it is against her will?

How can your convenience or inconvenience be the indication of the Mother's will? You have to develop the psychic feeling which distinguishes the truth from the falsehood, the divine from the undivine.

11 April 1933

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Do love and faith have the same meaning? I feel that where there is faith in the Mother, love is also there. Without the faith, there is no love; without the love, there is no faith. Am I right?

Not always. There are plenty of people who have some faith without love, though they may have a certain kind of mental bhakti, and plenty who have some love but no faith. But if it is the true psychic love, then faith goes with it, and if there is the entire faith, then the psychic love becomes soon awake.

Speaking with X, I said: "Where there is faith in the Mother, there is love as well."

You are right — if it is the soul's faith, the soul's love — but in some there is only a vital feeling and that brings, when it is disappointed, revolt and anger and they go away.

8 May 1933

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What kind of feeling is it that gets satisfaction and Ananda only in seeing the Mother?

It is psychic.

What kind of feeling is it that gets satisfaction and Ananda only in remembering the Mother?

Psychic.

What kind of feeling is it that gives a wound in the heart on hearing anything against the Mother?

Psychic.

What kind of feeling is it that makes one feel the Mother's presence in the heart, even though one is physically far from her?

Psychic.

How shall I be able to judge that I am in the full state of psychic love?

By the absence of ego, by pure devotion, by submission and surrender to the Divine. 9 May 1933

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When all is calm and quiet I feel a depth in my heart; a sweet feeling wells out constantly, equally for all. It goes up to the Mother continuously. There is a sense of sweet relation with the Divine. It softens all the being — it is calm, quiet, full of sweet peace and satisfaction.

That is the psychic love. 26 October 1933

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From the morning there has been a feeling of nearness to the Mother, almost as if there were no difference between us. But how can that be possible, as there is such a great gulf between her and me? I am on the mental plane and she is on the highest Supramental.

But the Mother is there not only on the Supramental but on all the planes. And especially she is close to everyone in the psychic part (the inner heart), so when that opens, the feeling of nearness naturally comes. 11 December 1933

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Why do I not feel love and Ananda every time I see the Mother?

As for the love and Ananda, it depends on the psychic coming up. 29 July 1934

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For two days there was an intense love for the Mother and for you; the whole being was possessed with this love. Then there was only a partial effect of it — a high and deep reverence for the Master and the Mother and a happiness that no worldly pleasure can give.

That was obviously psychic.

I often mark that when an inner love springs out for the divinity, tears follow.

These are psychic tears of devotion etc. 25 August 1934

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A visitor was leaving the Asram today. When the Mother finished the Pranam ceremony and began to go up the stairs, this lady began to weep. Was it due to her psychic coming in front for a while?

It is not a question of the psychic coming in front. She has a psychic being which is awake and has long been in connection with the Mother on the inner plane. 28 August 1934

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During my turn at darshan, the consciousness was simply held in a spell and thrilled. It was quite wonderful and brought my psychic in front. What is this thrill that passes through my whole body and makes the adhar still for a time?

Of course it is the thrill of the Mother's touch coming from above and felt by the psychic and vital together.

28 August 1934

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Can there be a conscious contact with the Mother through the psychic being in the heart before the psychic comes forward fully?

Yes. The psychic is always there. 21 September 1934

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That which calls is your own psychic being whose place is deep inside behind the heart-centre. Many people feel at times the call for the Mother going on from there. It comes more easily in sleep or in a half-waking condition because then the surface mind is not active so that what is going on within in the inner being can manifest itself. 29 October 1934

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When I spoke of “loneliness”, I meant that some part of the being feels that although the Mother loves me very much, I am unable to love her — as if there were no element of love in my nature.

It can't be the psychic in that case. The psychic never feels that it cannot love the Divine. 4 December 1934

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If the present intensity prolongs itself, I hope that within a few days you will see my whole nature engrossed only in feeling, thinking, acting round the word “Mother”.

That would of itself be the psychic state. 5 December 1934

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I pray: “Dear Mother, either give me psychic love or give me death. Let no third thing come to me. This is my final resolution.”

This 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? 2 March 1935

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My consciousness is concentrated only on the Mother's heart, as if it were there in her and one with her. It thinks only of oneness with her; it says, “I am there in her and I must be there. I need nothing else — that is enough.” It does not allow any other thought, not even higher or spiritual thoughts. How do you look upon this attitude?

The attitude is good for the awakening of the psychic and the inner being generally. But if higher experience comes, it should not be stopped.

12 March 1935

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Am I right that for the last four years my psychic is always active and in front? Can the Mother now deal with me without any consideration of upsetting my nature parts?

If your psychic is in front and active, i.e. busy changing and controlling the mind, vital and physical, how is it that there is an upsetting of your nature by the Mother's dealings with you? If the psychic is in front and active, it would immediately tell any part of the nature that wanted to get upset, "Whatever the Mother does or decides must be accepted with surrender and gladness. The mind must not believe that it knows better than the Mother what ought to be done, the vital must not want the Mother to act according to its wants and preferences. For such ideas and desires belong to the old nature and have no place in the psychic and spiritual. They are the errors of the ego." And if it had the control of the nature, the upsetting would at once cease or fade away. Indeed if it had full control, such upsets would be impossible. It must be assumed therefore that the psychic may have been exerting some influence on the being, but that its control is far from complete or that the vital has risen up and covered the psychic and suspended its influence. But if the psychic is fully in front, not veiled or not merely emerging, then it would be impossible to cover it up altogether — there could only be at most an upsetting on the surface while within all remained quiet, conscious and devoted.

2 July 1936

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When I called down the Purity from above, the whole being was filled with Peace and Purity and I felt the Mother's Presence in the heart. An intense aspiration rose from the heart, from below, in fact, from all parts of the being. The heart was filled with adoration for the Mother; there was devotion and genuine surrender.

That is one of the most important things for the psychic opening and the inner relation to the Mother.

I pray for Purity and Peace above all. With these I am sure of union with the Mother. Am I not correct?

Yes.

I pray for your observations regarding this psychic experience. Was it not psychic?

Yes, certainly, it was a psychic opening and at the point emphasised, which is very important — the opening to the higher Purity. 14 July 1937

### The Vital Element of Love

As for the *eagerness* to see the Mother, it depends on the nature of the feeling. If there is no demand or claim in it, no dissatisfaction when it is not fulfilled, but only the feeling of the will to see her whenever possible and the joy of seeing her, then it is all right. Of course no trace of anger or jealousy must be there. The vital has also to participate in the sadhana, so the mere fact that there is a vital element does not make the thing wrong, provided it is a vital element of the right kind. 6 December 1931

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Yesterday I found a picture of a pretty peacock, which I cut out and put on the envelope with my letter to the Mother. But in answer Mother sent me an envelope with a picture that seemed meaningless to me. Then I got confused in my thoughts and feelings. I thought, why did the Mother not understand what I wanted to say? Like this I lost connection with the true attitude and felt all wrong and in confusion.

It is again your own misunderstanding that you have erected between yourself and the Mother. The picture-flower which she sent to you in return for your peacock is the pomegranate-flower, the flower of Divine Love and I do not know what better answer you could have expected. Yet merely because you could

not recognise it in its reduced picture form, you jumped to the conclusion that the Mother had not understood you or else that she refused to make any response to you. This with still worse feelings was what you used to do when she was giving flowers and it was because of this violent and ignorant wrong reaction that she had to stop giving flowers to you. How can you expect any answer to your expression when you meet the answer in this way? It is quite true that there is still behind your reaction or associated with it a measure of vital demand and expectation of return and the old want of confidence. The movement may have come from the psychic but around it there was this vital mixture. You must first learn, therefore, to give yourself without demanding a return and you must learn to accept the Mother's action, whatever it may be, without judging it, since it is repeatedly proved that in judging you put an ignorant misconstruction upon it. The inmost being, the psychic, accepts without question, because it has faith in the Divine; by that psychic acceptance the soul opens, the mind clarifies, the vital is purified and enlightened and a spiritual change becomes possible. 3 May 1932

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What you have felt is a revival or return on you of the lower vital with its demands and desires. Its suggestion is, "I am doing the Yoga, but for a price. I have abandoned the life of vital desire and satisfaction, but in order to get intimacy with the Mother — instead of satisfying myself with X and the world, to satisfy myself and get my desires fulfilled by the Divine. If I do not get the intimacy of the Mother and immediately and as I want it, why should I give up the old things?" And as a natural result the old things start again — "X and Y and Y and X and the wrongs of Z." You must see this machinery of the lower vital and dismiss it. It is only by the full psychic relation of self-giving that unity and closeness with the Divine can be maintained — the other is part of the vital ego movement and can only bring a fall of the consciousness and disturbance. 20 June 1933

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It will not do to indulge this restless vital movement. It is not by that that you can have the union with the Mother. You should aspire calmly — eat, sleep, do your work. Peace is the one thing you have to ask for now — it is only on the basis of peace and calm that the true progress and realisation can come. There must be no vital excitement in your seeking or your aspiration towards the Mother. 20 October 1933

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Though I know the Mother is giving me divine things from deep within, my lower nature wants her love and affection to be expressed outwardly. Help me to get rid of this vital demand for some outer expression by the Mother.

That is what you must get rid of — the demand of the vital in the relation with the Mother. It has been the cause of much disturbance and several frictions, for behind it is a claim of the ego. The psychic relation is the true relation, the psychic gives itself without any demand asking only for love and surrender and union with the Divine, and even in that the asking is not a vital demand but an aspiration. 28 November 1933

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Why does one feel so happy after seeing the Mother? The whole day is filled only with her. Is it because the nature of vital love is to feel happy and satisfied when it gets something?

There is no harm in the vital love provided it is purified from all insincerity (e.g. the self-importance etc.) and from all demand. To feel joy in seeing the Mother is all right, but to demand it as a right, to be upset or in revolt or abhiman when it is not given, to be jealous of others who get it — all that is demand and creates an impurity which spoils both the joy and the love.

13 September 1934

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Up to now my effort towards the Self has progressed rapidly, but inside I am dry as an empty coconut shell. When love, emotion, bhakti come, my vital consumes them and leaves my

heart like a desert. Even when there are no vital demands, I hardly feel the Mother's love, though my heart is yearning for it. If the Mother approves, let my psychic be in full activity.

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 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?      2 March 1935

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When a physical manifestation of the Mother's love is absent, I cannot remain unmoved.

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.      8 October 1935

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I have heard that some ladies have so much love for the Mother that they are even ready to die for her! But they can love her only when she makes a manifestation of her love. This is not, then, a self-existent love — for when the physical love is absent, a few go so far as to revolt, to weep or to 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.

15 October 1935

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It is not possible for my sadhana to go on without devotion and love. I am ready to give up desires and demands if that will put me on the side of love and devotion.

Love and devotion depend on the opening of the psychic and for that the desires must go. The vital love offered by many to the Mother instead of the psychic love brings more disturbance than anything else because it is coupled with desire.

8 September 1936

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If you have no abhiman against the Mother, that also is surely very desirable. Abhiman, disturbance, etc. may be signs of life but of a vital, not of the inner life. They must quiet down and give room for the inner life. At first the result may be a neutral quiet, but one has often to pass through that to arrive at a more positive new consciousness.

2 January 1937

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Why am I suffering? Why am I so far from the Mother? How can I get over this?

Reject the suffering. Reject every vital movement that would take you away from the Mother.

Cling close to her always with your inner being — without demand or question, in perfect faith.

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There are always in a sadhak two sides of the nature, one that wants the Divine, the other that wants only its own way and will and expects the Divine to satisfy it. When you were in the first, the Mother was always close to you and you were happy; when you indulged the second, then all went wrong. Your mistake recently has been to indulge this second part too much. But you can always recover the constant closeness of the Mother in your inner being and happiness and progress in the sadhana. But to do so you must make it a point to give your love without asking for anything at all except the inner nearness — for unless you do that very strongly, it will be difficult for you to get rid of the other tendency and change the demanding vital part in you.

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We find that by meeting the Mother or being in her presence we come out of depression and experience the ecstasy of joy. Does this take place by a psychic meeting or a meeting on the inner vital level?

It depends on whether it comes by drawing vital force from her or simply by the joy of seeing her or by receiving something from her. In the two latter cases it is usually psychic or psychic-vital, in the former it is vital.

### Devotion or Bhakti for the Mother

When the Mother looked at me this evening from the terrace, I felt a deep upsurge of devotion towards her. It is this I have hungered for, and so long as I feel this bhakti I feel as though I have little else to desire. Grant that I may have the *abaitukī bhakti*. Sri Ramakrishna used to say that the desire for bhakti is not a desire at all. So I trust I am not making any bargain by desiring it — as bhakti is of the essence of the Divine, to ask for it must be legitimate, no?

The desire for the Divine or of bhakti for the Divine is the one desire which can free one from all the others — at the core it is not a desire, but an aspiration, a soul need, the breath of existence of the inmost being and as such it cannot be counted among desires.

28 December 1932

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How can I have pure bhakti for the Mother?

Pure worship, adoration, love for the Divine without claim or demand is what is called *śuddha bhakti*.

From which part does it manifest?

From the psychic.

How can I unravel the confusion I feel between self, mind, vital and physical, and how to distinguish them?

One has to separate oneself in thought from mind and vital and body and look at these as not oneself but only outer instruments or movements of nature. In the end one begins to be aware of something behind them which is the real self, the true being.

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Is psychic bhakti perfect devotion?

It is the basis of perfect devotion.

How can I develop psychic bhakti?

By sincere aspiration.

What is the character of psychic bhakti, mental bhakti and vital bhakti for the Mother? How to recognise them?

The psychic is made up of love and self-giving without demand, the vital of the will to be possessed by the Mother and serve her, the mental of faith and unquestioning acceptance of all that the Mother is, says and does. These however are outside signs — it is in inner character quite recognisable but not to be put into words that they differ.

Is there no place for mental and vital devotion in this Yoga?

Who says there is not? So long as it is real devotion, all bhakti has a place.

28 April 1933

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It is always a mistake to attach importance to what others say — it is enough to have true devotion and the right attitude towards the Mother. You need have no apprehension of this kind at all.

28 April 1933

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How to get pure and complete devotion?

Get quiet first — then from the quietude aspire and open yourself quietly and sincerely to the Mother. 15 November 1933

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Mother, in spite of my thousand and three imperfections, this one sense remains in me — that you are my mother, that I am born from your heart. It is the only truth I seem to have realised in all these six years, but I thank you very much that I have been enabled to feel this much at least.

It is an excellent foundation for the other truths that are to come — for they all result from it. 17 September 1934

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My meetings with the Mother, instead of being occasions for giving and receiving love, joy and happiness, bring fear! There must be something wrong in my nature.

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 are 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. You must impose the truth on this vital part. 6 May 1935

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Do not allow mental anxiety to harass you. Wait on the working of the Mother's force which will open the lotus of the heart. In the light from above devotion will blossom in you.

25 October 1936

### **Consecration to the Mother**

Sometimes when I sit in meditation, I say “Ma — Ma — Ma.” Then everything becomes quiet and I feel great peace inside and outside me. Even in the atmosphere around me, I hear “Ma — Ma — Ma.” Is this real or is it only echoes?

The atmosphere you carry around you is part of your consciousness as much as the rest that you feel inside you. When you

repeat the name of the Mother, it begins to echo in all your consciousness, outside as well as inside you. What you experience therefore is quite true and it is a good experience.

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When I asked what attitude I should hold during the silence of the mind, you replied, "Consecration." Please explain this to me in a wider sense.

It means the devoting of all that comes to you, all your experiences and progress to the Mother.

What should I do to keep the silence alert and constant while reading, talking and working.

The same thing — do all with a quiet mind, not throwing yourself out in what you do, but seeing quietly what is done and what happens. 16 January 1934

### **The Mother's Love**

There is no need to ask for pardon, for the Mother has not in the least been angry or displeased with you. You may be sure of her love always. 29 September 1933

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No more shall I seek signs of the Mother's love in an outward way. What difference does it make if she touches me a little or more or does not touch me at all? If the love is received properly within, that alone is the true thing. If it is not received or if it is diffused or dispersed or misdirected after receiving it, that is like throwing pearls before swine.

Yes, that is the truth and it is the attitude every sadhak should take. 8 May 1934

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We all want Mother's love, but I wonder how many of us truly love the Mother. Where indeed do we see one-pointed,

ever-sacrificing, never-failing love? Who has love only for the Divine?

It does not mean that there is no love, but that the love is mixed up and covered with egoism, demand and vital movements. At least that is the case with many. There are some of course who have no love at all, or “love” — if it can be called so — only for what they get, one or two who love truly — but in a great many there is a psychic spark hidden in much smoke. The smoke has to be got rid of so that the spark may have a chance of growing into a blaze.

9 November 1934

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Do not think whether people agree with you or do not agree with you or whether you are good or bad, but think only that “the Mother loves me and I am the Mother’s.” If you base your life on that thought, everything will soon become easy.

30 April 1935

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It is because of the thoughts about others and your “badness” that you feel far from the Mother. All the time she is very near to you and you to her. If you take the position I told you and make it the basis of your life, “the Mother loves me and I am hers”, the curtain would soon disappear, for it is made of these thoughts and nothing else.

1 May 1935

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The Mother loves because she is Love and cannot but love. Still, we feel that she cannot love as we do, and on our part we cannot bear the constancy and wideness of her Love.

Obviously, if people expect the ordinary kind of love from the Mother they must be disappointed — the love based on the vital and its moods. But that is just the kind of love that has to be overpassed in Yoga or transformed into something else.

14 March 1936

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Certainly, it is not necessary for you to become “good” in order that the Mother may give you her love. Her love is always there and the imperfections of human nature do not count against that love. The only thing is that you must become aware of it always there. For that it is necessary for the psychic to come in front — for the psychic knows, while the mind, vital and physical look only at surface appearances and misinterpret them. It is that for which the Mother’s force is working, and whenever the psychic comes near the surface, you have felt love and nearness coming up. But it needs time to prepare the other parts so that they also may know and feel. Therefore the patience is necessary and the confidence that through all the delays and difficulties of the sadhana the Mother is leading you and will surely lead you home to her.

24 June 1936

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X is probably making two mistakes — first, expecting outward expressions of love from the Mother; second, looking for progress instead of concentrating on openness and surrender without demand of a return. These are two mistakes which sadhaks are constantly making. If one opens, if one surrenders, then as soon as the nature is ready, progress will come of itself; but the personal concentration for progress brings difficulties and resistance and disappointment because the mind is not looking at things from the right angle. The Mother has a special kindness for X and every day at Pranam she is trying to put a sustaining force upon him. He must learn to be very quiet in mind and vital and consecrate himself so that he may become conscious as well as receive. The Divine Love, unlike the human, is deep and vast and silent; one must become quiet and wide to be aware of it and reply to it. He must make it his whole object to be surrendered so that he may become a vessel and instrument — leaving it to the Divine Wisdom and Love to fill him with what is needed. Let him also fix this in the mind not to insist that in a given time he must progress, develop, get realisations and experiences — whatever time it takes, he must be prepared to wait and persevere and make his whole life an

aspiration and an opening for the one thing only, the Divine. To give oneself is the secret of sadhana, not to demand and acquire a thing. The more one gives oneself, the more the power to receive will grow. But for that all impatience and revolt must go; all suggestions of not getting, not being helped, not being loved, of going away, of abandoning life or the spiritual endeavour must be rejected. 1 September 1936

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As for the feelings about the Mother and that her love is only given for a return in work or to those who can do sadhana well, that is the usual senseless idea of the vital-physical mind and has no value. 17 January 1937

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It is not Mother who makes you cry. It is forces from the vital Nature that make you sorrowful and think of dying and of the past. What comes from Mother is love and light and peace and joy and the spiritual life of the future.

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Never mind about the purity of the body. The love of the Mother purifies both heart and body — if the soul's aspiration is there, the body also is pure. What happened in the past does not in the least matter.

### **Inner Union and Outer Relation with the Mother**

Some part or parts of my being seem to be trying to live in the Mother all the time, and to leave the other parts completely in the hands of the Mother's Force.

That did not succeed in the past.

I mean "live" not in an impersonal sense, but live into her very manifested physical form. In such a case, is it still necessary to aspire for bringing down her Force?

I do not know how you are going to *live into* the manifested physical form. To live in the Mother's consciousness even to the physical with the manifested form as the centre of this unity is possible. Perhaps you mean that? But how are you going to do that if the other parts are left to remain as they are? They will go on pulling you out of the true consciousness as they do now. And how are they to be changed if the Mother's Force is not there in them to change them?

14 January 1936

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It is true that the Mother is one in many forms, but the distinction between the outer and the inner Mother must not be made too trenchant; for she is not only one, but the physical Mother contains all the others in herself and in her is established the communication between the inner and the outer existence. But to know the outer Mother truly one must know what is within her and not look at the outer appearances only. That is only possible if one meets her with the inner being and grows into her consciousness — those who seek an outer relation only cannot do that.

10 August 1936

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The spiritual union must begin from within and spread out from there; it cannot be based on anything exterior — for, if so based, the union cannot be spiritual or real. That is the great mistake which so many make here: they put the whole emphasis on the external vital or physical relation with the Mother, insist on a vital interchange or else physical contact and when they do not get it to their satisfaction, enter into all kinds of disturbances, revolt, doubt, depression. This is a wrong viewpoint altogether and has caused much obstruction and trouble. The mind, vital, physical can participate and are intended to participate in the union, but for that they must be submitted to the psychic, themselves psychicised; the union must be an essentially psychic and spiritual union spreading out to the mind, vital and physical. Even the physical must be able to feel invisibly the Mother's closeness, her concrete presence — then alone can the union be truly based

and completed and then alone can any physical closeness or contact find its true value and fulfil its spiritual purpose. Till then any physical contact is of value only so far as it helps the inner sadhana, but how much can be given and what will help or hinder, the Mother only can judge, the sadhak cannot be the judge — he will be led away by the desires and lower vital ego, as so many have been in fact. Such means of help by physical contact as the Mother had established have been largely spoiled by the sadhaks' misuse of them, the wrong attitude of which I have spoken. When the vital demand is there with its claims and revolts and takes the desire for the exterior contact or closeness as a cause or occasion for these things, then it becomes a serious hindrance to the development of the inner union, it does not help at all. The sadhaks always imagine in their ignorance that when the Mother sees more of one person than of another, it is because of personal preference and that she is giving more love and help to that person. That is altogether a mistake. Physical closeness and contact can be a severe ordeal for the sadhak; it may raise the vital demands, claims, jealousies etc. to a high pitch; it may on the other hand leave him satisfied with an outer relation without making any serious effort for the inner union; or it becomes for him something mechanical, because ordinary and familiar, and for any inner purpose quite ineffective — these things are not only possible but have happened in many cases. The Mother knows that and her arrangements in this matter are therefore dictated by quite other reasons than those which are attributed to her.

The only safe thing is to concentrate on the inner union foremost and altogether, to make that the one thing to be achieved and to leave aside all claims and demands for anything external, remaining satisfied with what the Mother gives and relying wholly on her wisdom and solicitude. It ought to be quite evident that a desire which raises revolt, doubt, depression, desperate struggles cannot be a true part of the spiritual movement. If your mind tells you that it is the right thing, then surely you must distrust the mind's suggestions. Concentrate entirely on the one thing needful and put away, if they come, all ideas and

forces that want to disturb it or make you deviate. The vital assent to these things has to be overcome, but for that the first thing is to refuse all mental assent, for the mental support gives them a greater force than they would otherwise have. Fix the right attitude in the mind and the deeper emotional being — cling to that when contrary forces arise and by your firmness in that psychic attitude repel them. 14 March 1937

### **Relation with the Mother and with Others**

I feel hurt when somebody tells me I am doing something wrong in my sadhana. I get restless and depressed. But today by the Mother's compassion, I can see that I have been childish and stupid. Is my experience true?

You ought to train yourself not to mind what people say — for what they say is also childish and stupid. Your sadhana — and your life also — lies between you and the Mother; other people do not matter. 23 March 1933

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I have a deep regard for X and an inner affection for him. Now when I begin to meditate by thinking of the Mother, I sometimes see him meditating with us. This brings a happy feeling, yet I worry lest it should bring any harm in my sadhana. I hope it will not bring trouble.

If you bring somebody in between you and the Mother, it is bound to give trouble. 5 April 1933

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It was your mistake to listen to what people say about you and X and Y and attach any value to their foolish chatter. X did not grow serious with you because of that. He was puzzled by your change of manner, the stiffness of your attitude towards him and your apparently diminished interest in the work. It is what the Mother says that is true and matters and not what people say; if you listen to what people say, you will lose touch with the Mother's consciousness. It is because of that that these thoughts

have come back on you about your badness and the rest of it. The Mother had told you to work freely with X; she told you that his influence was good for you, and for many days you had peace and joy and freedom from the restless mind and you had the psychic opening. Now you must go back to that and do as you were doing before. Turn to the Mother only and let her consciousness and her will work in you. Then you will recover what you had got, silence the mind and be free. 29 April 1933

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X would like to have a “pure” relation with me, a relation of quiet friendliness. But when I look within, I find always the same answer in the heart — no more relation of any kind with anyone, except the one, sole relation with the Mother, an undivided devotion of all of myself solely to the Mother. The vital clamours for relation, but let it. The one who speaks within has only an unmixed aspiration for union with the Mother. I shall follow whatever guidance you give me.

To be turned wholly to the Mother and have nothing but friendly relations with the sadhaks, the same for all, is a counsel of perfection; but not many can carry it out — hardly one here and there. Yet to have that in tendency is to have the real turn towards the one-pointedness of sadhana; but people take time to arrive at it. 12 July 1935

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Yes, it is the thing to be attained — not to receive any other influences than the Divine, as human nature ordinarily does. Then under the sole influence of the Mother’s Light and Force, all that has to be changed in the nature can be quietly and smoothly changed, all that has to be developed can be developed without disturbance or trouble. 3 June 1936

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The direct relation with the Mother is always open to you and it is there whenever you can feel it; for it is a thing of the inner being. Whenever you go deep within yourself you find it; it has

to come out and govern the outer nature and life. That is why I want you to give time for going inside and for inner progress in the sadhana. The relation with X which the Mother thought of establishing was of two friends and fellow workers in her work, it was never intended that she should be between you and the Mother. In Y's case there was a help to be given to you so that you might not be carried away by the attacks from which you suffered and might have time and support till you could reach a point at which you could seek the Mother's presence within you and with you. That you can do now and there is no reason why anyone should be asked to intervene in any way — our work is directly in you and upon you and not through anyone.

22 December 1936

### **False Suggestions of the Mother's Displeasure**

It is not surprising that you could not find out what you had done to make the Mother change her attitude towards you, and this for two good reasons, — first, that you had done nothing, and, second, that the Mother's feeling for you and her attitude had not changed at all — *not in any smallest respect, not in the least shadow of a degree*. She has the same care and love as she always had and during the last few days of which you speak, they were not clouded for a moment.

Then you ask, if so, why do I feel like this or like that? I can only answer that, in their origin, these were not your own feelings at all, but rather ideas, impressions, impulses pushed into your lower vital from outside; your mistake has been to admit them and identify them as your own — from want of knowledge and experience in these matters. There are certain vital forces of this lower vital plane that are constantly wandering about the Asram and trying to push their movements now on one, now on another, now on several at a time. The process is always the same. First, suggestions: the Mother has done this or not done that, she has said this or not said that, she has had this or that thought about me or feeling towards me, she is displeased with me, unfair to me, partial to others etc. etc. etc.;

next, discouragement, wounded feelings, jealousy, despondency, revolt or any other kindred vital downfall or upheaval; result, the impulse to withdraw from the Mother, not to give her flowers or take flowers, to go away from soup or Pranam, not to come there, to shut oneself away from her altogether, to give up the Yoga, to go away — or worse. I give you the whole round in its ground plan, omitting many variations, so that you may be on your guard the next time these suggestions try to come. If you don't want to be misled by them and to go through much quite groundless and unnecessary disturbance and trouble, you must recognise them immediately they come, cast them out by the neck or break their backs as you would a snake's.

For they are in their nature not only irrational, but strongly mechanical. Irrational, because they have no true ground in reality. They are ready enough to seize on some (usually trifling) outward appearances and twist them this way or that in order to convince the easily deceived physical mind; they will even create circumstances and make them appear to have that colour. But if they cannot find or create, they will go on just as merrily with no other ground than imaginations or impressions which they persuade their victims to take for realities. And they are mechanical because, once they can make the mind their field, they always recur with the same inevitable round of suggestions, the same ideas, the same feelings, the same impulses, the same actions in consequence. It is like a recurrent illness with always the same series of symptoms and the same "course". And the object is always the same, to create a distance between the sadhak and the Mother and so to break the sadhana. It is a great mistake to think, as some do, that the Mother in such cases pushes the sadhaka away from her; on the contrary, it is he who pushes her away from him under the influence of these forces and believes all the time — for they have a great power of blinding the mind and clouding the judgment — that she is to blame.

To show how these suggestions mislead once one starts listening to them, I may instance the matter of your sister's letters. The Mother and I have always accepted without reservation your sister's coming and neither today nor at any other time had

she the least idea in her mind against it. On the contrary, when you came in the midst of a hard and trying morning, she gave you full time, heard all you had to say, made her own suggestions and gave her full acquiescence. What more could she have done? And yet you have this suggestion made to you that she does not really want, that she is not frank, that she is cold to you about the matter. Why? Precisely because there was this predisposing influence at work on the lookout for any pretext to mislead you, — any, even less than a shadow's shadow.

I must ask you therefore to dismiss this kind of suggestion, these feelings and all the cycle in future the moment they try to come. Never mind what circumstances or justifications they may allege. Nothing is more dangerous than the inferences of the physical mind trying to build up conclusions upon outward appearances — they have nine chances out of ten of being false. One must learn to distrust hasty conclusions from surface appearances — is not that the first condition of true knowledge? — and learn to see and know things from within.

You ask how to stem these movements? To begin with, observe three rules:

(1) Keep always confidence in the Mother's care and love — trust in them and distrust every suggestion, every appearance that seems to contradict.

(2) Reject immediately every feeling, every impulse that makes you draw back from the Mother — such as that about the Pranam — from your true relation with her, from inner nearness, from a simple and straightforward confidence in her.

(3) Do not lay too much stress on outward signs — your observation of them may easily mislead you. Keep yourself open to her and feel with your heart — the inner heart, not the surface vital desire, but the heart of true emotion, — then you are more likely to find her and be always near her in your self and receive what constantly she is working to give you. 27 June 1931

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When I see the Mother in the evening, I notice that some being in me is trying to bring catastrophes, such as the idea, "Mother

does not look at you”, even though she may be looking at me. This has become very common. I always try my best to reject it, but still it comes constantly and forcibly and makes my consciousness disordered. I pray that the Mother may remove it. What is this being — is it vital?

Yes, it is a being of falsehood from the vital world which tries to make one take its false suggestions for the truth and disturb the consciousness, and get it to leave the straight path and either get depressed or turned against the Mother. If you reject and refuse to listen or believe always, it will disappear. 30 March 1933

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All these [*suggestions of ill treatment, severity, lack of support*] are the mere ravings of the vital Force that attacks the mind with its lying suggestions until it succeeds in getting the sadhak to turn away from the Mother and against her. There is a part of the vital that accepts it, luxuriates in an exaggerated misery and suggestions of personal tragedy and catastrophe, the blame for which it wants to lay on the Divine. If you want to get rid of these attacks, it is this part of your vital being that you must change, its acceptance of these false suggestions, its want of fortitude in facing the difficulties of the sadhana. If you refused to indulge this vital tamasic tendency and the voices of darkness that come with it, there would be no such violent ups and downs in the sadhana. 24 January 1934

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It is of course the resistance of the old vital in the past that is being redeemed which creates this irritation and these imaginations about the Mother’s displeasure. For as a matter of fact there was no dissatisfaction against you in the Mother’s mind and this idea is usually a suggestion to the sadhak’s mind from the Force that wants to create the wish to go or any other kind of discontent or depression. It is a curious form of delusion that has taken root, as it were, in the Asram atmosphere and is cherished not so much by the individual vital as by the forces that work upon it to break, if possible, the sadhana. You must not allow any

harbourage to that or else it will create any amount of trouble. The absence of proper sleep naturally brings a state of fatigue in the nerves which helps these things to come — for it is through the physical consciousness that they attack and if it can make that consciousness tamasic in any way, their entry is more easy.

15 September 1936

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The Mother has in no way changed towards you nor is she disappointed with you — that is the suggestion drawn from your own state of mind and putting its wrong sense of disappointment and unfitness on to the Mother. She has no reason to change or be disappointed, as she has always been aware of the vital obstacles in you and still expected and expects you to overcome them. The call to change certain things that seem to be in the grain of character is proving difficult even for the best sadhaks, but the difficulty is no proof of incompetence. It is precisely this impulse to go that you must refuse to admit — for so long as these forces think they can bring it about, they will press as much as they can on this point. You must also open yourself more to the Mother's Force in that part and for that it is necessary to get rid of this suggestion about the Mother's disappointment or lack of love, for it is this which creates the reaction at the time of Pranam. Our help, support, love are there always as before — keep yourself open to them and with their aid drive out these suggestions.

26 January 1937

### **Nearness to the Mother and Progress in Sadhana**

“Early” or “late” has nothing to do with what you call nearness. Some who were “early” — and also some who are “near” to her see the Mother only at “pranam” time — physically; some who are late, have the occasion to see her every day because their work compels it. But they see her because of the work; the work was not given to them in order that they might be near! You have taken the thing by the wrong end — not for the first time.

You are mistaken in thinking that you are the only one to

ask with such persistence — there are others. Each one calls it a need, but when their “need” is freely given to them, they cease to value it — as happened with the soup and the pranam. And this shows that it is not a need, but a desire. The principle of all sadhana is to fix the will not on desires — even if presented to the mind as needs — but on the realisation only.

Our object is the supramental realisation and we have to do whatever is necessary for that or towards that under the conditions of each stage. At present the necessity is to prepare the physical consciousness; for that a complete equality and peace and a complete dedication free from personal demand or desire in the physical and the lower vital parts is the thing to be established. Other things can come in their proper time. What is the real need now is not insistence on physical nearness, which is one of those other things, but the psychic opening in the physical consciousness and the constant presence and guidance there.

I do not know what you mean by our wanting to use you for all practical purposes. We did not insist on your doing any work for us; it was you who asked for work, and we gave you what could be found for you. But we could not very well invent work with the express purpose of creating an occasion for physically meeting the Mother. That has not been done for anybody.

16 February 1932

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As usual, all you have written in the letter under the wrong influence is based either on false inferences or a wrong attitude.

It is quite false that the Mother gives your letters or X's or those of others to Y to read. The letters and books are read and kept not by the Mother, but by me; it is I who read them to the Mother, put by those that are done with in my files and return the books and the answers which are sent immediately I have finished with them through Nolini. Other things like Y seeing your envelopes on a table etc. are mere trifles with no harm in them; if you twist and exaggerate and put a dark meaning on every harmless trifle and erect it into a grievance and a torture, how do you expect to have any quiet or peace or progress in the sadhana?

As for the advantages given to Y by her working here and seeing and speaking with the Mother being an injustice to you and a sacrifice of you to her development, she might equally complain, and most of the people in the Asram might complain that they are not allowed to send a book to Sri Aurobindo every second day and get an answer from him and a constant outward help, but are left out in the cold and an unjust partiality is being shown by him and they are being sacrificed to the development of Z [*the correspondent*]. These jealous recriminations are foolish and stupid in the extreme. I therefore hope that this is the last time you entertain them and that consequently, as you say, it may be the last time you write them. If you can clear this out of you, there will be some chance of the liberation of your physical consciousness and a straight progress in the sadhana.

4 September 1932

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People say that the sadhaks whom the Mother calls for interview now and then, and the sadhaks to whom she sends things personally, are those who are very close to her and they progress rapidly in every way. What is the truth in this?

It is all nonsense. Some of the best sadhaks are among those whom the Mother seldom or never calls and she sends them nothing. Nor do they expect it—they feel the Mother always with them and are satisfied and ask for nothing else.

27 July 1933

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Is there any special effect of physical nearness to the Mother?

It is indispensable for the fullness of the sadhana on the physical plane. Transformation of the physical and external being is not possible otherwise.

Is it not likely that with more outer nearness and familiarity with the Mother, there may be less inner growth of consciousness and perhaps less aspiration?

It depends on the person. Some profit, some do not. No general statement can be made.

Is it possible to receive the Mother's help at a great distance — say Bombay or Calcutta — almost in the same way as here in the Asram?

One can receive everywhere, and if there is a strong spiritual consciousness one can make great progress. But experience does not support the idea that it makes no difference or is almost the same. 18 August 1933

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I want to be close to the Mother. If I was close to her, the hostile forces would not attack me.

You are quite mistaken. Among those who are physically near the Mother there are some who have much worse attacks than you have ever had. It is the inner nearness that saves, not the physical nearness. 17 November 1933

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It is the inner nearness that matters. The idea of the mind — quite natural, of course — that the outer closeness is the sign of the relation or a special favour or the means of rapid progress is not borne out by experience. There are some who see the Mother daily and are very little advanced from what they were years ago — there were others who got worse because it fostered the vital demand in them — on the other hand there are some quite close to the Mother and forward on the path and cherished by her who come to her only very occasionally — and I could instance one case in which there is an interview only once a year, yet there is no one who has made more rapid progress or in whom the love relation has grown to a greater intensity and fervour. In all these things it is best to have an entire confidence in the Mother and the light that guides her. 10 December 1933

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One who is called to see the Mother often is fortunate because then one gets a chance to talk with her and to receive more Light in her presence. Is it not so?

No. It depends entirely on the condition of the person and his attitude. Especially, if they insist on seeing her or on remaining when she wants them to go or are in a bad mood and throw it on her, it is very harmful for them to see her. Each should be content with what the Mother gives them, for she alone feels what they can or cannot receive. Mental constructions of this kind and vital demands are always false. 3 April 1934

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If one has the close inner relation, one feels the Mother always near and within and round and there is no insistence on the closer physical relation for its own sake. Those who have not this, should aspire for it and not hanker after the other. If they get the outer closeness, they will find that it means nothing without the inner oneness and closeness. One may be physically near the Mother and yet as far from her as the Sahara desert.

11 June 1934

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My dissatisfaction and inner struggle are constant. My eyes are constantly on the outer nearness of the Mother, of which I have none at the moment, and I am left out completely.

And if you had the physical nearness, you would be no happier or calmer so long as the inner being is unchanged. Those who do physically approach her have just the same difficulties and struggles as yourself and some have not even the experiences of peace etc. that you have.

Since all this is in me, it has been expressed. Now let it burn into ashes, never to rise again.

It would be most foolish to call back this meaningless delusion — for nothing can be farther from the actual and practical truth than to suppose that those who have a physical nearness to the

Mother or have frequent physical approach are happier or more satisfied than others; it is not in the least true — or to allow it to prevent the progress of the inner peace. If you could only get rid of this delusion, nothing would be able to prevent the growth of the Peace and that inner nearness which alone makes people in this Asram divinely happy. Happiness comes from the soul's satisfaction, not from the vital's or the body's. The vital is never satisfied; the body soon ceases to be moved at all by what it easily or always has. Only the psychic being brings the real joy and felicity. 8 September 1934

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I have completely recovered from the bad effect caused by the suggestion that the Mother was not seeing me enough. Now I am in peace.

As you have recovered, I do not write anything about that, for discourse on such matters does not help. The one thing important is to keep the inner attitude and establish the inner connection with the Mother independent of all outward circumstances; it is that that brings all that is needed. Those who are most deep in the Yoga are not those who physically see most of the Mother. There are some who are in constant nearness or union with her who apart from the Pranam and the evening meditation come to her only once a year. 13 November 1934

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Those are the Mother's children and closest to her who are open to her, close to her in their inner being, one with her will — not those who come bodily nearest to her. Did coming inside help X or Y? It is impossible for Mother to satisfy the demands of everybody, the external demands — it only wears out her body but helps no one. 25 December 1934

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While at the staircase I got an intense desire to see the Mother's rooms. X suggested that when one is in difficulty, one should ask to go near to the Mother.

But the coming near to the Mother should be in the inner rooms, not the outer. For in the inner rooms one can always enter and even arrange to stay there permanently. 28 January 1935

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X showed me a copy of your letter to Y in which you say: "Those are the Mother's children and closest to her who are open to her, close to her in their inner being, one with her will — not those who come bodily nearest to her." But have not those who are bodily nearest come nearest because they were already "open to her", "one with her will" and "close to her in their inner being"? And are there not certain special advantages of this bodily nearness?

It is not so easy to be "one with the will" of the Mother or to be entirely open. To be bodily close imposes a constant pressure for progress, for perfection, which no one yet has been able to meet. People have romantic ideas in this matter which are not true. 7 March 1935

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If one does not take care of one's ego from the beginning, it may develop into a strong spiritual ego which says, "I am progressing wonderfully; the Grace is with me. I am the Mother's instrument more than others." It may demand that the Mother show some special Grace to it. This ego wants to show others that "Mother loves me more than all of you", and it wants a physical manifestation of her love.

You are quite right. 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 revolts and disturbances that made it necessary for Mother to limit the physical manifestation of nearness to a minimum. 17 April 1935

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Whatever you may say to suppress our desire for the Mother's nearness . . .

If one has the desire or the claim, one brings in all sorts of

demands, anger, jealousies, despairs, revolts etc., which spoil the sadhana and do not help it. To others the nearness becomes a mixture.

I find that people are greatly fortunate who can approach the Mother often.

If they know how to approach her which hardly any do.

If you say that there is always an interchange going on between people . . .

A vital interchange. But there is a difference between the interchange of “people” and interchange with Mother.

surely one who often comes to Mother, will automatically take something precious from her.

And what if their condition is such that it merely passes or is spilt or is spoilt by their reactions?

And this is the easiest way of receiving.

If they know how to receive.

The Mother was giving freely of her physical contact in former years. If the sadhaks had had the right reactions, do you think she would have drawn back and reduced it to a minimum? Of course if people know in what spirit to receive from her, the physical touch is a great thing — but for that the constant physical nearness is not necessary. That rather creates a pressure of the highest force which how many can meet and satisfy?

22 April 1935

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Why should X complain when he knows full well that he can have Mother’s contact for an hour and be near her for two hours more? He has no need of writing or receiving letters from her. Or maybe he understands Mother better on account of his long contact with her.

I am afraid all these are mental constructions. You are constructing in your mind what *X* ought to feel. But as a matter of fact neither *X*'s nor anybody's difficulties are removed by their coming to Mother or by their sitting one hour or two hours or even three hours with her. Plenty of people have done that and gone away as glum, desperate and revolted as they came. Among the people who see the Mother are some who have crises as bad as yours and as frequent. It is also not true that those who have talked much with Mother (about houses, repairs, servants etc.) understand her better. In former days some people used to see much of Mother in another way, i.e. to talk with her on all sorts of subjects — but even those did not really understand her. I repeat that all that is mental building and constructed inference and does not square with the facts. It is only when one is inwardly open to her that one profits by the "contact" with her, not the physical but the spiritual or inner contact, and then the mere thought of her or a mere thought from her can set right anything wrong; then the physical contact also can help, but it is not indispensable. And as for understanding her, it is only by entering into the spiritual consciousness that one can understand her, or if not understand in the mind, at least feel and respond to what she is through an increasing oneness. 4 August 1935

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To come physically to the Mother for getting rid of a disturbance is unnecessary and useless; it is inwardly that you must take refuge in her and throw away the wrong movement, as you have seen on this occasion. To come physically would only create a habit of getting wrong and coming to her to get right and it would also lead to the wrong movement of throwing the difficulty on her instead of inwardly giving it up, making its surrender. But it is the general surrender that is needed which would prevent these useless disturbances over trifling matters, egoisms, insistences on one's own point of view, anger because one does not have one's own way or a due recognition of one's independence or importance. It is these feelings disguised by reasonings and self-justification that are at the bottom of more

than half of the difficulty in the work of the Asram.

18 May 1936

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Is it true that the Mother is taking away her physical nearness from us because our inner closeness to her is increasing, so there is no need of outer closeness?

The Mother has for a long time past been limiting the outer contact with the sadhaks as much as possible. The reason you speak of is one of the reasons, but there are others which it is not necessary to speak of.

27 July 1936

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How is it that X so easily finds defects in Y's work and Y seems to be glad when I criticise X? If those who have an opportunity to be with the Mother for half an hour daily have not been able to have a fine, affectionate harmony, what to say of others?

X has not the opportunity you speak of; he sees [*the Mother*] only for a minute or two in the morning when taking back his daily report. But in fact it is a mistake to think that those who meet the Mother physically are any nearer the goal of perfection than those who do not meet her except at Pranam and meditation. All depends on the inner being and how it can meet her from within and receive her force and profit by it. Of course, if people meet her with their psychic prominent, and not with the outer consciousness only, it should be different, but —

29 July 1936

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You have said that those who are doing sadhana outside the Asram cannot do it fully — the daily touch and nearness of the Mother, gained by living in the Asram, alone can bring a possibility of transformation. Carrying this idea a little further, it naturally follows that those who live nearer to the Mother and meet her more often are of the inner circle, and even outwardly are more intimate, that is, nearer transformation. Q.E.D.?

Living in the Asram is one thing, living with the Mother in close proximity is another. Your Q.E.D., like most mental logic, is contradicted by the facts of life. One could argue on that basis that *A* who lives in the same house as the Mother is nearer perfection than *B* and much nearer than *C* or *D* who live outside. *D* never meets the Mother except at Pranam and on her birthday, so she must be an utterly backward person and *E* who meets the Mother daily for 5, 10, 15 or 20 minutes must be far ahead of her, well on towards perfection. But these things are not so. So the argument breaks down at every point. Progress in sadhana or superior capacity is not dependent on one's being near the Mother or meeting her more often. Q.E.D. 30 July 1936

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There is a confusion here. The Mother's grace is one thing, the call to change another, the pressure of nearness to her is yet another. Those who are physically near to her are not so by any special grace or favour, but by the necessity of their work, — that is what everybody here refuses to understand or believe, but it is the fact: that nearness acts automatically as a pressure, if for nothing else, to adapt their consciousness to hers which means change, but it is difficult for them because the difference between the two consciousnesses is enormous especially on the physical level and it is on the physical level that they are meeting her in the work. 27 April 1944

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I have a great desire to see the Mother. Why is she not allowing me to do so? Please tell me, what is the value of my desire?

There is more profit to be had by being open to the Mother than by coming physically to her at the present stage. Some even who make a point of her calling them go backward rather than forward — because they make a point of it, introducing thus a basis of vital demand which makes a very shaky foundation for relations with the Mother.

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Although the Mother is looking after me well, I feel that she is keeping me away from her. I feel as if covered in egoism and darkness. I ask her forgiveness for past mistakes.

You are mistaken in thinking that the Mother keeps you at a distance; you have only to open yourself to her sincerely and entirely. What has been done in the past does not matter if there is a sincere aspiration and resolution to change. Neither to lament nor to complain or be angry will help; a confident and happy opening of oneself to the Mother without insistence on personal demands and desires is the only thing to do.

### **Closeness to the Mother and Speaking French**

Is it right to say that those who know French will be able to serve the Mother better in the years to come?

It is mostly that it brings a certain closeness to one side of the Mother.

3 May 1945

### **Special Relation with the Mother**

I did not agree to your going for the same reasons as the last time. First, there was no good reason why you should go; a fit of quite causeless jealousy and pique could not be considered a sufficient ground for your wanting to leave us. You started your "revolt", as you call it, because the Mother took X to a private sale to buy things for her: you continued it because the next day (it being the first of the month) and the day after she was too busy with accounts and other affairs to occupy herself with you as you wanted. There could not be more absurd grounds for wanting to go away.

What you seem to claim from the Mother is impossible. No one can be given the right to control or question her actions and decisions or to dictate whom she must or must not take with her or what time she shall give to one or another. The Mother can do her work only if she is free always to do what she sees to be right and her decisions are accepted by all concerned. This is

now generally understood in the Asram and no one makes this kind of demand; it is not possible that you alone out of eighty people should have the right to do it.

In fact, you have been given privileges of close daily personal contact with the Mother which very few in the Asram have and which all would be only too glad to have. It is not because you have a greater claim than theirs. If it were a matter of ordinary claim, there are many who would precede you. Some have been here since the beginning; some are more advanced than most in the spiritual life; some occupy a responsible position in the work of the Asram; yet many of them cannot come to the Mother separately every morning or meet her again in the afternoon as you have been allowed to do. This privilege was given you because she felt that you had a special need of her care and of help and support from her. For she does not act for her personal satisfaction or decide out of personal preference, but according to the necessities of the work and the true need of each one in the Asram. And she gave you as much as she could consistently with the call of her work and the time at her disposal. But instead of being satisfied and happy, you create in your mind flimsy grounds for revolt and "quarrel". You did this once and it was excused as a mistake which you recognised and would try not to repeat. It is discouraging to see you start the same folly all over again as if you had understood and learned nothing.

You have not been asked to do any Yoga; you were too young and unripe for that. You have therefore no reason to complain of being asked to do something beyond your power. But, without doing any Yoga, it was quite possible for you, merely by your work and by daily contact with the Mother and her silent influence, to grow quietly and easily and happily in consciousness and character and capacity until you were ready. But if you refuse to learn self-control and discipline, (these are not matters of Yoga, but what everyone has to learn unless he wants to waste his life and bring his capacities to nothing), and if you cannot be content and happy with the much that is given you, you yourself will make your own life here impossible.

My second reason for not agreeing to your departure was that I did not believe that you really wanted to go or that what spoke of going was the true Y. But if your desire to go is serious and deliberate, if you cannot be happy here with us, then it would not be right for me to keep you against your will. That is a thing which I never do with anyone.

My third reason was that I could only sanction your going if I saw that you were too young or otherwise unfit to bear the pressure of the Asram atmosphere. I know that there is in you the capacity if you choose to exercise it. But a certain attitude towards this life and towards the Mother is needed which you seem unwilling to keep. If you cannot be satisfied, if you are constantly revolting and discontented and unhappy, if you again and again violently insist on going away, if you are constantly driven by something in you into these outbreaks which might have been excusable when you were a young child but are no longer proper to your age, it will be difficult for me to avoid coming to the conclusion that, as yet at least, you are not ready, not only for the Yoga, but even for living here.

One thing I wish to make clear. Neither myself nor the Mother wishes you to leave us. I do not approve or sanction your going, still less do I decide that you must go. But if your desire to go is real, insistent and imperative, if you cannot be happy here and feel that you would be happier elsewhere, then I shall be obliged to withdraw my refusal.

This is the situation. Try to get back to yourself, your real self, the real Y and see if he wants to go, if it is true that he cannot be satisfied by what the Mother gives him. It is upon that that the decision will rest.

3 September 1929

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At times I feel that Mother is not pleased with me. This feeling makes me very uncomfortable and I get the idea of going away from here. If she is not pleased, what is the use of my staying?

Mother is not displeased with your work or with you — there was no such thing in her mind. But the progress of no one here is complete — there is, as you know yourself, still much to change

and from time to time the Mother puts a pressure that it may be done. You must not take that pressure for displeasure. As for going away, you must yourself realise that the suggestion can only come from a hostile source and you should not allow it to dwell in you for a moment. Mother is quite ready to tell you in what points more progress is necessary, though I think you must for the most part know it yourself. Especially she wants you to be more guarded in your speech. You are in a special position and one of great trust and whatever you say is taken up and commented on, so you must be careful that nothing should go out from you which ought not to be said or known. To talk less and not be too unguarded in your speech should be part of your discipline of sadhana.

Keep yourself open to the Mother and in perfect union with her. Make yourself entirely plastic to her touch and let her mould you swiftly towards perfection.

9 March 1934

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It is certainly true that the Divine has no preferences or dislikes and is equal to all but that does not prevent there being a special relationship with each. This relation however does not depend on the more or less identification or union. The purer soul has an easier access to the Divine. The more developed nature has more lines on which to meet Him. The identification creates a spiritual oneness. But there are other personal relations which are created by other causes. It is too complex for all relations to be determined by one cause.

Yes, Yogis whose progress does not depend on the personal intervention of the Mother, need have no personal relation with her — only the spiritual contact in distance. Some may have a special relation, but that is due to special aspects of their sadhana. On the other hand one may have a personal relation with the Mother even though no progress has been made in the sadhana. There are all kinds of possibilities in this matter.

There is such a relation with all of those who have come here with a psychic sufficiently developed to admit of the relation. In other cases it is more a possibility than a thing realised.

There are roughly speaking three parts of the being in manifestation which come into play here — 1. the psychic being in evolution which brings with it its past experience of past lives and something of the old personalities, so much as it can make helpful for the present life; 2. the present formation due to this birth and made up of many complex factors; 3. the future being, which in our case means the great lines of higher consciousness above the present manifestation by joining which the transformation becomes more possible and the work attempted can be done.

It is the psychic being which brings in the contact through past lives or personalities, i.e. through something essential and still operative in them which it has kept.

But, in addition, some psychic beings have come here who are ready to join with great lines of consciousness above, represented often by beings of the higher planes, and are therefore specially fitted to join with the Mother intimately in the great work that has to be done. These have all a special relation with the Mother which adds to the past one.

As for the present formation, it may obviously have elements which, not being joined or met with the Mother, may feel themselves strange to her. It is such an element which many feel standing in the way; but it is an exterior formation and does not belong to the past or to the future evolution, at any rate in its present figure. It must either disappear or change.

10 June 1935

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Yesterday we discussed the Divine Love in relation to the sadhaks. My points were these:

1. It is said that the psychic being of each sadhak has a special relation to the Divine; this must mean that the psychic gets from the Divine the response that is proper to it. But does it mean that one sadhak gets more love and another sadhak gets less?

2. If the Divine loves one person more and another person less, this implies partiality on the Divine's part — but the Divine cannot be partial.

3. People say that the Mother loves those who are physically near her more than those who are not. I think this judgment is apt to be wrong.

I hope you will correct me where I am wrong in my understanding.

To launch into too many mental subtleties in this connection is not very helpful; for it is a subject which is beyond mental analysis and the constructions of the mind about it are apt to be either very partially true or else erroneous.

There is a universal Divine Love which is equal for all. There is also a psychic connection which is individual; it is the same essentially for all, but it admits of a special relation with each which is not the same for all but different in each case. This special relation stands apart in each case and has its own nature, it is, as is said, *sui generis*, of its own kind and cannot be compared, balanced or measured with other relations, for each of these again is *sui generis*. The question of less or more is therefore perfectly irrelevant here.

It is quite wrong to say that the Mother loves most those who are nearest to her in the physical. I have often said this but people do not wish to believe it, because they imagine that the Mother is a slave of the vital feelings like ordinary people and governed by vital likes and dislikes. "Those she likes she keeps near her, those she likes less she keeps less near, those she dislikes or does not care for she keeps at a distance", that is their childish reasoning. Many of those who feel the Mother's presence and love always with them hardly see her except once in six months or once in a year — apart from the Pranam and meditation. On the other hand one near her physically or seeing her often may not feel such a thing at all; he may complain of the absence of the Mother's help and love altogether or as compared to what she gives to others. If the childishly simple rule of three given above were true, such contrasts would not be possible.

Whether one feels the Mother's love or not depends on whether one is open to it or not, it does not depend on physical nearness. Openness means the removal of all that makes one

unconscious of the inner relation — nothing can make one more unconscious than the idea that it must be measured only by some outward manifestation instead of being felt within the being; it makes one blind or insensitive to the outward manifestations that are there. Whether one is physically far or near makes no difference; one can feel it, being physically far or seeing her little; one can fail to feel it when it is there, even if one is physically near or often in her physical presence. 11 June 1935

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Sadhaks whom the Mother has accepted have some personal physical relation with her. I want to know if there is any personal relation with me.

There is a personal relation with most, but what is a personal physical relation?

Suppose a child wants to remain faithful to the Mother and tries to remain faithful, but he sees he is not getting any response. Is it not an illusion for him to try to remain faithful when the Mother never shows him her sweet side? Finally the sadhak will become unfaithful.

If the sadhak becomes unfaithful to the Mother, it means he did not want the sadhana or the Mother, but the satisfaction of his desires and his ego. That is not Yoga.

There are so many ways the Mother expresses herself physically to some, but it is to some only. Some she never gets tired of meeting for hours; with others she finishes in a few minutes. For example, she has spent a lot of time with X.

The Mother meets nobody for “hours” — if anybody stayed for hours she would get very tired.

Mother did not meet X more than others because she loved him more than others, but because she was trying to get something done through him for the work which, if done, would have been a great victory for all. But precisely because he took it in the wrong way, grasping at it as a “personal physical” relation

and satisfaction of his egoistic desire, he failed and had to go away. 25 June 1935

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You wrote once: “Those are the Mother’s children and closest to her who are open to her, close to her in their inner being, one with her will — not those who come bodily nearest to her.”<sup>2</sup> I do not deny the truth of this. But why then has the Mother taken a body and why are we in Pondicherry? One can have an inner relation anywhere; there is no need of coming here.

Mother has taken the body because a work of a physical nature (i.e. including a change in the physical world) had to be done. She has not come to establish a “physical relation” with people. Some have come with her to share in the work, others she has called, others have come seeking for the light. With each she has a personal relation or the possibility of a personal relation; but each is of its own kind and none can say that she must do equally the same thing with each person. No one can claim as a right that she must be physically near to him because she is physically near to others. Some have a close personal relation with her, yet she sees little of them — some have a less close personal relation, yet for one reason or another may see her much oftener or longer. To apply the silly mathematical rules of the physical mind here is absurd — your physical mind cannot understand what the Mother does; its values and standards and ideas are not hers. It is still worse to make your personal vital demand or desire the measure of what she ought to do. That way spiritual ruin lies. She acts in each case for different reasons suitable to that case.

<sup>2</sup> See letter of 25 December 1934 on page 496. — Ed.

# Meeting the Mother

## Right Attitude during Interviews with the Mother

The right attitude in approaching the Mother when she sees one, is to keep the being perfectly quiet and open to receive, without any activity of the mind or desire in the vital, with only the surrender and the psychic readiness to accept whatever is given.

Tomorrow, 24th, the Mother sees you — for meditation, so that she may see and do whatever is needed. 23 February 1932

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It is a strange thing, but it seems to be absolutely clear that the Mother wants me to go to her. Everything in me says, “Yes, yes, it is true — there is no doubt about it.” And I would surely go to her in spite of this fear that holds me so tight, if only I knew how and where to meet her.

This fear is an absurd and irrational feeling in the subconscious physical — there is no reason for its existence — unless it is the fear of the egoistic physical clinging to its own individuality and unwilling to be “swallowed up” in the Mother. Otherwise it can only be a sort of tamasic counterpart to the rajasic revolt and pride — for these two things often go together or alternate. Mother was and is quite ready to see you. But you must get rid of the fear, distrust and unwillingness, for there should be a trust and openness in you, when you come. If you wish she can fix a time — next Thursday at 9.30. In the meantime we can try to get this obstacle out of you. 21 April 1933

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Is it true that having seen Mother, there may be a struggle for a few days? Should I be on guard against attack?

It is better to be on guard for the struggle is possible, though not inevitable. Something is put in you to develop — usually the

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hostile forces try to interfere to prevent the inner evolution. A little more vigilance is therefore advisable. 9 May 1933

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Four months ago I begged the Mother for an interview, but up to this time she has not accepted my prayer. I have decided to cut off all my vital connections with Bengal, but if two of my friends there meet with spiritual death, I will never recover. At this critical juncture of my life, will Mother give me an interview?

When one comes to the Mother, one must not come with these things in the mind — but in quietude and light solely to receive from her what one can assimilate. 10 April 1934

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Mother, give me an immutable and constant peace.

The Mother is always ready to give you peace. It was for that Mother called you last time, but you were very restless. Sometimes you can receive very well. Try to be like that always, — always with the door of your being open to receive the Mother in you and her peace but shut against any other influence or pressure. Then you will have the immutable peace and feel the Mother always in you and yourself in her. 21 July 1934

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I feel very dissatisfied with myself. I wish to see the Mother and arrive at something real.

You would arrive at nothing real by seeing the Mother when she herself does not think it the right thing. It is not by seeing the Mother that one gets realisation but by doing her will and allowing her true inner working within you.

Though I do not want the Mother to act under compulsion, I feel sure that if I give an ultimatum that I am going away, she will do all I ask.

You are mistaken. Mother will do what she considers to be the right thing for each. If it is right for you to go away or for anyone to go away she would not ask to stay. She does not think it right for you to go — so she would say No. But on the same ground she would say No to your vital desire. 28 September 1935

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The Mother does not usually speak with those who come for an interview before starting. If she had to speak, she would not give an interview at all to most, for she would have no time. Moreover it is not by speech or instruction or answering questions that Mother works on the consciousness of the sadhaks, it is by a silent influence to which they have to learn to open themselves. As for his readiness for the Asram life, it should be evident to himself from his reactions, especially about his family, that he is not ready — he would have been pulled away by these feelings and it would have been a serious fall for him. To be told the truth about themselves and get the guidance unasked — that is a grace which sadhaks should accept with gladness — to weep and feel hurt is a reaction of the vital which he must get over. Psychic weeping, a weeping from the soul deep within, tears of the soul's yearning, of sorrow for the resistance of Nature, of joy or love or bhakti does not cause a fall, it can help and open up the inner soul from its veils; but this weeping has no strain or suffering in it, it is something very deep and quiet and brings a sense of purification and release. That is not so with the weeping which comes from the vital and is born of hurt or abhiman or disappointment or shakes or disturbs the nature.

16 March 1937

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What attitude should I take during my meditation with the Mother? Last time I could not properly receive the Mother's Force or become conscious of her working.

To be conscious of the Force or working in a meditation with the Mother, the consciousness must be still and passive to her. If one is accustomed to be active and make one's own formations,

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that stands in the way and must be suspended during the meditation.

I could not quite follow what the Mother said [*in the last interview*] about things in the exterior consciousness coming in disguise.

Mother only remembers to have said that there were many things in the exterior consciousness that obscured and veiled the inner being—this was in connection with what you said about the heart not opening. Perhaps she may have said that these things do not always show themselves in their own forms, so that one is not conscious of the obstacle.

17 July 1937

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I intend to sweep out the lower forces before meeting the Mother tomorrow. Failing that, I do not wish to show my face to her.

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

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The whole being feels a disturbance, a disgust, as if the sleeping lower nature has been woken up. My mind is full of bad thoughts and I feel burdened. I have become like a thing on the waves.

But why does this always happen after the Mother calls you? You must get rid of this reaction, otherwise the Mother will not feel free to call you. You must learn to use your will and not be passive to these reactions.

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If Mother's seeing you for a minute cured your vital, she would see you, but will it? does it really help you? Generally such desires in the vital are not stopped by satisfying them. All the same at the end of the morning when the others have gone, if you are there, Mother will see you for a minute.

**Impossibility of Giving Interviews to Everyone**

It is not possible for the Mother to give you the five minutes a day you ask for; her time is already too much taken. There are many others who have asked the same thing; the Mother has had to refuse them all. You are mistaken if you think that any such arrangement is necessary for your sadhana. A daily meditation of the kind would help you perhaps if you kept always the right attitude; but if you keep the right attitude, you will not need any such routine of outward means, the help the Mother is always giving you would be more than sufficient.

I think it needful at this stage of your sadhana to repeat my previous warning about not allowing any vital mixture. It is the crudity of the unregenerated vital that prevents the psychic from remaining always at the front. You have now seen clearly the two different consciousnesses, — according to what you have written in one of your letters, — the psychic and the vital. To get rid of the old vital nature is now one of the most pressing needs of your sadhana. You are trying to get rid of the vital attachments and to turn entirely to the Mother. At this juncture you must be careful not to allow the movements of the old vital nature to enter into your relations with the Mother. Take this matter of your wish for more physical nearness to her or contact with her. Take care not to allow this to gain on you or become a desire; for if you do, the vital will begin to play, to create demands and desires, to awake in you jealousy and envy of others and other undesirable movements, and that would push your psychic being into the background and spoil the whole truth of your sadhana. There are some who have suffered much trouble and difficulty in their Yoga by making this mistake, and I think it therefore better to put you on your guard.

13 July 1931

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I am so miserable and can't find my way, and what is most discouraging is that I see others receiving so much help from the Mother and being cared for by her, while I am left to myself with my wretched life to pull on somehow. For me the Mother's doors are closed. For others the freedom, enjoyment,

pleasure of her company, her constant love and help.

If you cherish this attitude and these feelings, how can you progress? they are the very opposite of the needed faith and surrender.

Who are these who have constant outward help from the Mother — you speak as if all but you had it? The Mother sees a small number of people every day because they come here for work in the rooms (X, Y, Z) or to report work to her (A, B, C, D, E). The Mother does not talk with these about Yoga, nor do they have meditations with her; they come for their work, speak about it and some general matters and go. There are some like *F* and *G* who get a meditation perhaps once a week, others come for a few minutes perhaps once a fortnight — there is no fixed period for any — or at long intervals, some see the Mother (apart from Pranam) once a year. For the constant outward help, the only way all these get it is by writing to the Mother or myself, just as you do.

If the Mother is not calling you, she has told you why; it is because each time you get upset; why should she call you only for you to be upset? She called you at your request a few days ago and now you are in this condition — worse than you have been for a long time — it has simply revived the old desire, repining, revolt. How is it that this happens if there is not desire, demand, wrong feeling mixed up with your physical approach to the Mother? or why else should there be this feeling about others?

I have been trying to make you develop the psychic attitude, bring out the psychic being, look towards the Mother not with the old vital demand, but with the soul's need, the psychic openness, confidence, so that when you approach her physically it may be with the true openness that receives the light, the strength, the joy she tries to give to everybody. That is what is demanded now of those who approach her; the old vital way is now discouraged not only for you, but for all. Develop the psychic attitude and there will be no difficulty for your approaching her or for her calling you when it is needful. You were beginning

to develop a capacity for feeling the influence. Instead of falling back to the old mood and the old way, continue to develop that. It is the only way and there is no other.

P. S. Do not allow any influences from people you mix with to upset you — I am speaking of any recent influence — e.g. from people who are dissatisfied and complaining that the Mother does not help them. It may be something of this kind has upset you without your noticing it. 31 August 1932

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May I come to see the Mother on days when there is no pranam? I feel such peace when I pray at her feet and I long to see her on non-pranam days.

Do you think the other 120 people here have not the same wish — and what is the use of a non-pranam day if Mother has to see everyone who would like to come to her that day?

30 May 1933

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Mother has a very limited time for seeing people — she has so much to do. So it is only when there is a strong necessity that she sees except for those who have work to do with her. 1933

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What you propose about seeing the Mother at will is not physically practicable and wherever in a few cases it has been allowed in the past, the results have not been helpful. What you should do is to write every two days or so a few lines until the difficulty is over. You must especially let me know about the sleep and the nervous condition. In fact you ought to have let me know at once. Although correspondence was stopped and still is till farther notice, I had said that important or necessary communications could be sent. 3 March 1935

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I feel a constant longing to ask the Mother to grant an interview to me. At times I feel utterly dissatisfied and uncertain of

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what I am doing and a little meeting with Mother could put right the whole thing.

It is not because Mother does not care for you that she is not calling you — when she is sure that things are ready she will do it. But it is not possible immediately or soon. First, she does not want to bring up old difficulties — secondly, nowadays there are many difficulties and she is tired and does not feel like talking with people. You must wait till things are clear on all sides — they are not now.

20 March 1935

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X gets 144 interviews with the Mother a year, Y and Co. get 48 or more, Z gets about 24, A and others get 365 or more! Most of the rest get 1 or 2 a year. Why not add one more interview for them? At present the Mother gives about 1200 interviews a year. If she gave 3 to each sadhak in a year, it would mean 450 a year, still leaving a grand surplus for the Xs, Ys and Zs. One more interview would keep the sadhaks in good spirits and they would feel happy for months. Now it is like the high pay of the higher officials in India. The Viceroy gets a huge amount, the clerks get hardly anything. How long will these inequalities in government remain?

It is not a government and an interview is not pay. If it comes to a question of demand and supply or of interviews as a right and privilege, no sadhak would be satisfied with 3 or with 300. There would be complaints, laments and revolts just as there are now. People would soon find some other ground for accusing the Mother of partiality and injustice (the people who get the most interviews are generally those who revolt the most, though there are exceptions). It is precisely this treating of the spiritual life as if it were a “government” or a court or a school (with places and marks and rewards and punishments) or a hostel or a mixture of all these and some other human institutions that has been the bane of this Asram. If it is to be a Government with Mother as President dealing out privileges, handshakes, pay, and what not on a principle of democratic equality or any other principle, then her only course would be to abdicate.

The number of interviews has nothing to do, by the way, with smallness or bigness of people, however the size may be reckoned. There are spiritually big people who get no interviews and spiritually small ones who get them. The same would turn out to be the fact on any principle of smallness or bigness.

The only place where a satisfactory equality of treatment is possible — satisfactory to the human mind and vital — would be I think Nirvana or the Nihil of Sunyavadins. 10 April 1935

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I feel a vacancy in my life. If the Mother starts seeing me again for a short time, I will try to carry out some big scheme for her, such as calling a lot of people and doing something with them.

All that is quite premature. Big scale work can come only when there has been a great inner change in people and things also change.

Or if these big things are for the future, I can do some sadhana, and if the Mother begins seeing me, I can do it more consciously.

The sadhana must not depend on physically seeing the Mother. It is bound to go wrong if there is any such dependence. It is not without a reason that Mother has drawn back from seeing people. 14 June 1935

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Yesterday I got into a condition of excitement and again I wished to ask the Mother to begin seeing me. There is a separation which makes me feel a sort of humiliation and a disappointment. It is not worth continuing this sort of life. Perhaps I should go away from here if it is not possible to see the Mother.

It is obviously a wrong movement. When you get excited like that and under the sway of a persistent desire, it is already

evident that it is a wrong movement — when it leads to a suggestion to go away if the desire is not conceded, then there can be no further doubt about it.

You ought to realise that the Mother knows better than you what is best for you and your sadhana. You must leave it to her to call you or not to call you. To let a desire like this seize you and insist on its satisfaction is not at all a right attitude. Especially this strong insistence of a desire to insist on the Mother physically seeing them is a dangerous thing for any sadhak and has done harm to many. It means that some vital demand has got hold of them which wants to satisfy itself and, if indulged, would remain dissatisfied and ask for more and more and revolt and make things impossible. The very fact that you talk of going home if Mother does not yield to your demand shows that it is such a demand that has awoke in you and is returning again and again — it is not a psychic aspiration, for the psychic aspiration always respects the judgment and will of the Mother. It is after long years of experience of the disastrous result of yielding to these vital demands that Mother has drawn back from them and now no longer sees many people whom she saw before. You must not expect her to go back upon her resolution so long as the vital of the sadhaks is not changed and clear of these demands and insistences. You should throw this demand away and go on quietly with your sadhana.

The first thing a Yogi should have is a constant inner peace and quiet and no excitement, no clamour of desires which he cannot control. You must arrive at that first. Moreover as I have told you, it is the inner reality of the Mother's presence and not only of her presence but of her control that must be now the aim of the sadhana. Any insistence on the outer thing is a departure from the true line and can only lead astray. In all these matters it is the Divine Will that must rule and the will of the Guru.

Respect always the will and decision of the Mother.

16 June 1935

If there is a possibility of the Mother calling me “when the time comes”, my going away would be wrong and I can wait and see.

What I said was that you should leave it entirely to the Mother to call you or not to call you.

The Mother’s will and decision I have always respected, but I saw no reasoning in the things concerning me.

I simply meant that her decision should be accepted whatever it is. Since it is her decision not to have a private interview, that will should be accepted and you should not go on insisting on her calling you. 17 June 1935

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But why does the Mother not see me? Do I lack the effort and persistence necessary? Am I not sufficiently sincere and constant? I will be glad if Sri Aurobindo answers me.

I have already answered often enough that you must not persist in these ideas — you must leave everything to the Mother.

These days I have an aspiration to be on the right path and do what is right and advance.

The right path is the path on which the Mother’s will wants you to go, no other. 9 July 1935

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Today too I am feeling that life is not worth living if the Mother will not see me. I used to be able to go to the rooms upstairs whenever I liked. Now I think that going away is the only thing to do.

No one is allowed freely inside the upstairs rooms except the few who work there; they can naturally come in within their working hours; but they do not take Mother’s time — they do their work and go away. No one else can enter the upstairs rooms except the meditation room and the small one where she receives

people. There too those only can come who are called there and only for the time assigned to them, nor can they go about freely upstairs or do what they like. Everything is according to a strict obedience and discipline.

Mother did not stop seeing you merely because she had no time — though it is true that she has no time and is outworn and overstrained by excessive work, no rest and the sadhaks' undue pressure and claims upon her. She stopped seeing you because your vital became entirely uncontrolled. She saw besides that the push to see her was associated with vital desires, impulses, suggestions, confusions and wrong movements and she decided that so long as it was so, so long as you had not freedom and complete control over your vital she could not call you. Not only with you but with others she saw that her freedom in giving interviews was having disastrous effects — for they were feeding their wrong vital movements on it and throwing these occultly upon her in such a way as to give themselves and her infinite trouble and wear her out altogether. So she had to retire more and more and limit the interviews to a minimum, ceasing to see those who had this result from the interviews and admitting only those whom she could not stop altogether, but even they were reduced to a much smaller number of visits. This is the present state of things and it will continue till there is a true freedom and vital calm and purity in the Asram atmosphere.

You must be aware yourself that the vital confusions and disturbances continue in you though in a reduced form and that you have not yet freedom and a settled control over your vital. I had hoped that you would go on increasing the inner contact until you could get the constant inner nearness or presence, for when one has that then the vital becomes quiet and there is no longer the vital pressure and clamour for seeing the Mother; the psychic being rules and is content to leave all to the Mother, claiming nothing but what she permits, asking nothing that is not freely given by her will. Unfortunately the vital claim has risen again in you and this insistent demand. That it is wrong is shown by the very fact that you put before her this alternative, either that she shall see you or you will not stay here any longer.

There are others who have said that and Mother has always refused them. For she knows by experience that to yield to their demand solves nothing, — for their demands increase and grow more exacting and vehement, as it did with X, until finally they lose their balance and the end is the same, — departure.

If you did not yield to these vital suggestions and if you were content with increasing the inner contact and increasing self-control and peace, then in time you would have the fullness of the sadhana and would find life here well worth living. The push to go comes from an adverse Force that is trying to make people depart from the Asram — but none who have gone as yet have found peace or satisfaction outside. 24 July 1935

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X gets to talk with the Mother for two hours a day — more time than we get in months! Yet when I ask for an interview with her for a few minutes, you write that Mother has taken down my name. And now she seems to have forgotten about it.

As usual when this Force seizes you, your statements against the Mother are unfounded. As regards your interview it was understood that you wanted to see her once before the 15th. Mother had fixed one day, but as you had a cold I suggested to her that you would not enjoy very much coming under such circumstances. After that her days were full, but she had not forgotten, for your name is there in her book put down for the 6th August. As regards X — X like Y is called by the Mother alone and for sadhana only once a year for a short time. They both come daily to her, not for sadhana, not for personal talk, but for work (sometimes also the explanation of a French sentence) and along with two or three others — not for 2 hours, but for one at the maximum, and that hour, even when it is an hour, is not taken up by him alone but by all those present in turn, each in turn giving his report and receiving his instructions. X might much more justly complain that he gets a word or a letter for his sadhana hardly once a year and a single word or a letter would be of much more value to him than a hundred talks about business — and that we were giving one thousand times

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more help to Z [*the correspondent*] and others than is given to him. Luckily for us he does not complain nor the others either. But each is inclined to despise what he gets and demand what he thinks is denied to him and given to another. 2 August 1935

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I wish at times to ask the Mother for some instructions for my sadhana.

Mental instructions are not of much use. The condition has to grow in peace and light and clarity till the higher consciousness can act continuously and perfectly. 12 September 1935

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Could I have an interview with the Mother? Two or three difficulties have been troubling me since the beginning of my sadhana. I want to get a solution from the Mother's lips.

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. 2 October 1935

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The Mother did not say Yes [*to giving a personal interview*]. Nothing could be worse for you than your making your condition depend on your physically seeing the Mother whenever you wanted it. It would create altogether a wrong relation. It must depend on an inner nearness to the Mother, on your always being able to receive her force so as to throw away both desire and illness. That is the true basis of the union with the Mother. Otherwise, all the help you can receive you get at Pranam and the evening meditation. For the rest, for the Mother calling you for a personal interview, you must leave that to her. Her time is already filled up and she is overburdened with work day and night, — if she has to make farther time for everybody who wants to see her whenever they want it, things would become quite impossible.

**Interviews with Outsiders**

The Mother cannot see him; she is not seeing anyone from outside now. He can be told that he must first try to know something about Yoga before anything can be given him; he must know and be in a position to decide with knowledge whether Yoga is really the thing he wants. He can read the books and come back for darshan in February.

13 December 1931

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About these people outside, you must make it a rule not to give them hopes of Yoga or seeing the Mother — it will only raise expectations that have to be disappointed. Even if the Mother were seeing people from outside, what would be the earthly use of her seeing these old ladies on the way to heaven or these young girls on the way to marriage? All that is not serious. But even apart from that, Mother does not see people and she has no intention of changing her rule. So you must never say anything without previously asking — and in most cases it is useless even to ask. As for Pranam, Mother has stopped giving permissions — there are too many people already. As owing to these cases you will be meeting many people, you must resist all temptation and remain deaf to requests for interviews, Pranam or Yoga.

2 January 1936

**Significance of Birthday Interviews**

What is the meaning of the Mother seeing us on our birthdays?

About the birthdays. There is a rhythm (one among many) in the play of the world-forces which is connected with the sun and planets. That makes the birthday a day of possible renewal when the physical being is likely more plastic. It is for this reason that Mother sees people on their birthdays.

18 May 1934

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I don't see why people in general exalt their birthdays. Of

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course, you wrote once that on birthdays the physical is more open and receptive to the Mother than on other days.

It is not a question of a physical birthday or of the body — it is taken as an occasion for opening a new year of life with a growing new birth within. That is the meaning in which the Mother takes the birthday. 7 October 1936

### **Right Use of Birthday Interviews**

Why should you decide beforehand that your birthday is spoiled? You have only to throw off all these undesirable ideas and feelings which proceed from a still imperfectly purified part of the external being and take the right attitude which you should always have when you come to the Mother. There should be no idea of what others have or have not — your relation is between the Mother and yourself and has nothing to do with others. Nothing should exist for you but yourself and the Divine — yourself receiving, her forces flowing into you.

To secure that better, do not spend the time at your disposal in speech — especially if anything of the depression remains with you, it will waste the time in discussing things which cannot help the true consciousness to predominate. Concentrate, open yourself and let the Mother bring you back to the psychic condition by what she will pour into you in meditation and silence.

16 May 1933

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Mother, you asked me to write what I would like to ask for my birthday. Really I do not know. You know best. I would only pray that I may become utterly devoted to you and Sri Aurobindo in every part of my being, completely open to you, and that my faith may become perfect.

That is all right then. Mother will give what you want.

22 January 1934

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Since I saw Mother on my birthday I feel I am living a new

life in which there is a new intimacy with her. Is it true?

If you feel so — but it can be no more than the seed of a new birth, for it has to be realised by a greater inner opening.

10 February 1934

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It seems I have learnt a lot about myself yesterday, my birthday, when Mother gave me an interview. It was not a theoretical knowledge, but a kind of realisation or experienced knowledge and maybe a Force that she gave. I no more feel so weak or helpless or a slave to my defects and imperfections. Rather there is a growing surety that I shall be able to get rid of my whole lower nature.

It is what we call growing conscious — a perception of which the base is the psychic though it may take place in the mind or vital or physical. No doubt the Force that woke it up came from the Mother.

9 September 1937

### Group Meditation with the Mother

May I ask the significance of what I very often feel in my meditation with the Mother in the morning? So long as Mother is meditating I have quite a good meditation, but as soon as Mother comes out of her meditation my own meditation becomes lighter and I can feel that she is no longer in meditation. I would like to know if it is a good sign for sadhana.

It shows at least that your contact with the Mother's consciousness is perfectly spontaneous and genuine. The Mother puts out her Force on all in the meditation and the intensity of your meditation shows that you receive it — as soon as she ceases, the dynamic pressure lightens and your meditation lightens with it. It is certainly a good sign, a good seed of the responsiveness that is necessary.

18 April 1933

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When useless thoughts interfere with my concentration, how am I to remember the Mother and lay them before her?

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Aspire at the time — they will of themselves be open to the Mother. 26 June 1933

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When I become late to see the Mother in the evening, how am I to receive her Light which I would have received in her presence?

You can receive the Light at all times — even if less concretely than in the physical presence. 5 November 1933

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Since the evening the working of the Force has begun. Seeing the Mother in the evening, my consciousness opened itself before her more widely than ever.

Very good. The Force usually works in that way with interruptions and returns growing each time stronger and fuller.

4 August 1934

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During the twilight meditation with the Mother, my consciousness rose upwards in an utter passivity. From the neck upwards, the head was not in a normal state. What was this?

It means the whole mind was liberated for a while from imprisonment in the body sense and became free in the passivity of the wider Self. 16 August 1934

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When I spoke of the inner mind of the Asram, I was only using a succinct expression for the “minds of the members of the Asram” and I was not thinking of the collective mind of the group. But the action of the Mother in the meditation is at once collective and individual. She is trying to bring down the right consciousness in the atmosphere of the Asram — for the action of the minds and vital of the sadhaks does create a general atmosphere. She has taken this meditation in the evening as a brief period in which all is concentrated in the sole force of the

descending Power. The sadhaks must feel that they are there only to concentrate, only to receive, only to be open to the Mother and nothing else matters. November 1934

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About the meditation and the seat, the Mother gives this meditation *only* for bringing down the true light and consciousness into the sadhaks. She does not want it to be turned into a formality and she does not want any personal questions to arise there. It should be solely a meditation and concentration without personal or other desires or claims or ideas rising there and interfering with her object. That is why there can be no fixing of seats or other considerations having nothing to do with the sadhana. 2 November 1934

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I did not come to the Meditation Hall for the evening meditation, but remained near X's room. At meditation time I fell into the same inwardness or sleepiness as in the Hall. Is it not possible to do so usually?

It is the pressure of the Force on the physical consciousness which produces that result of inwardness, though the translation of it into sleepiness can only be a transitory failing of the physical consciousness which is accustomed to associate inward-going with sleep. There is no reason why you should not do it usually if you find that suitable.

It seems as if at the time of meditation, the atmosphere of the Meditation Hall extends to all the Asram houses.

It is natural that it should be so as the Mother when she concentrates on the inner work is accustomed spontaneously to spread her consciousness over the whole Asram. So to anyone who is sensitive, it must be felt anywhere in the Asram, though perhaps more strongly in the nearer houses on an occasion like the evening meditation. 7 November 1934

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When I try to meditate in the Mother's presence, my concentration breaks. There is a rush of thoughts, such as "what is the Mother bringing down?" and "what is the Mother's will?" Why does this happen?

It is simply a bad habit of the mind, a wrong activity. It is not in the least useful for the mind to ask or try to determine what the Mother wills or is bringing — that only interferes. It has simply to remain quiet and concentrated and leave the Power to act.

11 November 1934

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What Mother would like you to do is to come to the Meditation and Pranam putting aside all feelings of ego, anger, quarrel with others, demand for this or that, thinking only of your sadhana and making yourself quiet to receive from her the only things that are really precious and needful.

22 September 1936

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Today during the meditation with the Mother, I felt that I could receive her help easily and naturally, without the least effort or strain. Does this mean that something in the being naturally becomes quiet by her physical presence?

It is not by the physical presence but by the Mother's concentration at the time of Meditation which brings the quiet to those who can receive it.

6 March 1937

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It is now clear that all along during meditation and pranam I have approached the Mother with a wrong consciousness. My approach was not passive, but always fully active — I pulled from above and below as intensely as I could. The result was that the centres were active, especially the eye-brow centre and the muladhara.

All that is in place in ordinary meditation, so long as there is not the complete silence of the mind and the automatic action in the silence. But the quiet mind is entirely necessary if you meditate with the Mother. Otherwise the mind goes on with its activities

on its own lines and cannot be conscious of or receptive to the Mother's movement.

18 July 1937

### The Morning Pranam

No one should look upon the Pranam either as a formal routine or an obligatory ceremony or think himself under any compulsion to come there. The object of the Pranam is not that sadhaks should offer a formal or ritual daily homage to the Mother, but that the sadhaks may receive along with the Mother's blessings whatever spiritual help or influence they are in a condition to receive or assimilate. It is important to maintain a quiet and collected atmosphere for that purpose.

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The Mother wants you to say to X that if he feels any reluctance or any other contrary feeling in making Pranam, he must remember that there is no *obligation* to come — for him or anyone else. He must feel himself perfectly free not to come, if he does not want.

27 November 1931

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The Mother gives in both ways. Through the eyes it is to the psychic, through the hand to the material.

29 September 1932

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This morning I was late for Pranam. On my way there, I met X, who told me, "Why hurry? One can have pranam everywhere." I said, "Yes, but Mother is there." He said, "Mother is everywhere." I could not answer him, but what I feel is that there is a special Power in the hall where Mother is. When I am conscious, I feel something special and different near Mother. Also by her blessing I often feel an action of Power working on my head. So I don't think there is no difference if Mother is there or not.

You are quite right in that. Otherwise the Mother would not be here in a body.

X has a developed and advanced soul and he knows things which are impossible for me to understand. I often think I have no soul, or perhaps I have a soul but it is quite immature.

You have a soul and a beautiful one. Only it was covered up and not looking out through the instruments — now it is coming to the surface and all that will change. 18 September 1933

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Does the Mother work from the overmind at the Pranam?

Not from the ordinary overmind, but from the Power above it. Naturally the overmind has to be used as a channel.

22 November 1933

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Shall we ever be able to understand the Mother's working at the Pranam? We feel only that something has been received. We do not know what she gave or how we received it or what is the inner meaning of her putting her hand on our head. We are not conscious of what she is giving us while gazing into our eyes. Are these mysteries to remain uninterpreted forever?

You have to develop the inner intuitive response first — i.e. to think and perceive less with the mind and more with the inner consciousness. Most people do everything with the mind and how can the mind know? The mind depends on the senses for its knowledge. 10 July 1936

### **Experiences during Pranam**

Today I was meditating in the Pranam Hall. As soon as the Mother took her seat, I saw in vision a range of mountains from which white light was coming out. What is the meaning? From what plane does it come?

Mental. The mountain is the symbol of the ascent from the lower to the higher. The white light is the Mother's light, the light of

the Divine Consciousness descending from the heights.

7 August 1933

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Today, looking at the Mother at the Pranam, there was a good receptivity. She stood before me a while longer than usual, and I experienced her working. The whole of my head was filled with nothing but her light. Is this true? Did she really do that?

She does so every time, only today you not only received but were consciously receptive.

8 May 1934

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After today's Pranam I experienced an unimaginable depth in the heart and a great fire bursting out of it.

That is of course the psychic depth and the psychic fire.

5 May 1936

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Today when I was making pranam, I felt that this body must be crushed to pieces and laid at the Mother's feet. I also felt an emotion in my heart. What is the meaning of this emotion?

It was some feeling of aspiration in the vital. But the form is exaggerated. The body has not to be crushed to pieces but purified and made into a body in which the Divine can dwell.

### **Right Way to Make Pranam**

If you wept this time and not on the other occasions, it was because you were more open — more ready for the psychic being to rise to the surface. The Mother has noticed in this respect a great progress in you and what you felt today was the sign of this opening.

1933

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Whatever connection I have with the Mother lasts only half a minute during the Pranam; whatever I have to give or take

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happens during that time. The whole day's sadhana depends upon those thirty seconds.

Quite a wrong idea. The Mother's contact is there all the day and the night also. If one keeps the right contact with her inwardly all day, the Pranam will bear its right fruit, for you will be in the right condition to receive. To make the whole day depend upon the Pranam, the whole inner attitude depend on the most outer aspect of the outer contact is to turn the whole thing topsy-turvy. It is the fundamental mistake made by the physical mind and vital which is the cause of the whole trouble. 16 March 1935

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My psychic knows that whatever our condition — full of inertia, attacks and difficulties — all must disappear when one gets the Mother's touch at Pranam. Why then do so many say that they return from Pranam in the same bad state in which they came?

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. 6 April 1935

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The Mother deals with each one in a different way, according to their need and their nature, not according to any fixed mental rule. It would be absurd for her to do the same thing with everybody as if all were machines which had to be touched and handled in the same way. It does not at all mean that she has more affection for one than for another or those she touches in a particular way are better sadhaks or less so. The sadhaks think in that way because they are full of ignorance and ego. Instead of thinking whether the Mother favours one more or the other less, comparing and watching what she does, they ought to be concerned at Pranam with only their own spiritual reception of her influence. Pranam is for that and not for these other things which have nothing to do with sadhana.

Jealousy and envy are things common to human nature, but

these are the very things that a sadhak ought to throw out of himself. Otherwise why is he a sadhak at all? He is supposed to be here for seeking the Divine — but in the seeking for the Divine, jealousy, envy, anger, etc. have no place. They are movements of the ego and can only create obstacles to the union with the Divine.

It is much better to remember that one is seeking for the Divine and make that the whole governing idea and aim of the life. It is that which pleases the Mother more than anything else; these jealousies and envies and competitions for her favour can only displease and distress her.

31 October 1935

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The reason of the difference in approaching the Mother is that formerly you came to her with your external being, external mind and vital and in your vital there were things it did not want the Mother to see or change or else it felt uncomfortable under the pressure of the Mother's force at pranam, because that was a pressure on it to change. But now you are approaching the Mother with your soul and that brings with it the true feeling and true relation it has always had with the Mother. Besides, your mind and vital — even the outer mind and vital — are now open and willing and glad to share in the true psychic feeling and relation.

The heaviness in the head due to the pressure is pleasant and not harmful because it is due to the higher force pressing down and bringing into the head something of the substance of the higher consciousness.

1 November 1935

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If there is an obstacle at pranam, it must be something wrong in the attitude — perhaps the old error of expecting some outward sign of love, approval or favour from the Mother. The pranam is not for that, but for receiving from her inwardly through the meditation and through the pranam itself. Nothing must be demanded — the consciousness must be surrendered and quiet to receive what she thinks best to give.

24 May 1936

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I think it is better for you not to come to the Mother just now, until you have found the true inner poise. At the present time it is far better for all not to come to her as a routine, but only when the being is open and ready to receive.

### **The Mother's Expression at Pranam**

When one does something wrong, the Mother shows us at Pranam that she does not like it. Does she do this so that we will not make the same mistake again? When one does a right action and she gives herself fully at Pranam, does it not mean that she is happy with our right action? If she is not showing her liking or disliking at Pranam, then what is she showing us by her special expression?

She wants to show you nothing; it has nothing to do with the doings or misdoings of the sadhaks. Pranam is not intended for watching the Mother's expression or what she does with this one or that one or in what way she smiles or with how much of her hand she blesses — the sadhaks' preoccupation with these things is childish and for the most part full of mistaken inferences, imaginations, often curiosity, desire for gossip, criticism etc. Such a state of mind is a hindrance, not a help to sadhana. The proper attitude is one of self-dedication and simple and straightforward receptivity to what the Mother wishes to give, an undisturbed and undisturbing openness to her working in the being.

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Many of the sadhaks are in the habit of thinking Mother is displeased, not smiling at them, angry when it is quite otherwise. This usually happens when their own consciousness is not at peace or when they are thinking or conscious of faults or wrong movements or wrong acts that they may have done. The idea that the Mother is angry is an imagination; if there is anything not as usual, it is in the sadhak himself and not in the Mother.

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What came between the Mother and myself when our eyes met at Pranam? Up till the moment our eyes met, everything was all right. Then looking into them, there was this momentary repulsion and shrinking.

I suppose the shrinking and repulsion were in yourself? for there was none and could be none in the Mother. It must be some part in yourself (physical consciousness perhaps?) that is not in the Light and may not want to be.

31 January 1932

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All fear ought to be cast out. This movement of fear belongs to a still unchanged part of the vital which answers to the old ideas, feelings and reactions. Its only effect is to make you misinterpret the Mother's attitude or the intention in her words or looks or expression. If the Mother becomes serious or has an ironic smile, that does not in the least mean that she is angry or has withdrawn her affection; on the contrary, it is with those with whom she is most inwardly intimate that she feels most free to become like that — even to give them severe chidings. They in their turn understand her and do not get upset or afraid, — they only turn to look inside themselves and see what it is on which she is putting her pressure. That pressure they regard as a privilege and a sign of her grace. Fear stands in the way of this complete intimacy and confidence and creates only misunderstanding; you must cast it out altogether.

22 May 1932

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There is no chance of the Mother giving you the “look” you fear. On your side do not imagine one when it is not there — any number of people are still doing that.

### **The Mother's Smile at Pranam**

After coming from Pranam I felt that Mother did not smile at me, and then there was a very slight feeling of resistance to her somewhere. Is this what you meant when you wrote about the hostiles throwing inertia into the physical mind?

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At the time it so happened that the Mother gave you a smile of welcome and approval, but she felt someone saying, “He will not notice that you have smiled” — it was the hostile formation. This is how they work — by this kind of obscuration to blind the mind and senses first and on the basis of a wrong observation or failure of observation build up suggestions of a depressing or disturbing character. It happens to many sadhaks at pranam time to make this kind of mistake about the Mother’s smile or expression and to worry themselves thinking she is displeased with them. This is a kind of deception against which one must be on one’s guard and such suggestions must always be rejected.

12 February 1933

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You should certainly throw away the vital demand and the disturbance which it creates in your sadhana. Mother gives her smile to all and she does not withhold it from some and give it to others. When people think otherwise, it is because some vital disturbance, depression or demand or some movement of jealousy, envy or competition distorts their vision.

27 February 1933

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Some days after Pranam I feel intensely happy and a wave of serene calm and joy passes over me. On other days, though there is calmness, there is no intensity of joy. I think it has something to do with the Mother’s smile.

Don’t start having that idea. It is quite untrue and those who indulge it raise vital reactions and imaginations in themselves and provoke much unnecessary trouble.

If her smile is hearty and beaming, there is a proportionate reaction in me. But is that the true cause of my joy or does it depend on the inner state of my psychic being, of which I know nothing?

It is in yourself that there is the variation — not of the psychic

being which is always all right, but of the rest, mind, vital or body. 4 March 1933

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Your idea about Mother's mysterious smile is your own imagination — Mother says that she smiled with the utmost kindness and took the most helpful attitude possible towards you. I had written to you already that you must not put these erroneous imaginations between yourself and the Mother; for they push the help given away from you. These imaginations and their effect on you are suggested by the same vital forces that are disturbing you so that you may not get free from the disturbance.

My help and the Mother's help are there — you have only to keep yourself open to it to recover. 27 March 1933

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Today my lower vital rose up and disturbed me because the Mother did not smile at me. For years and years I have suffered so much from unquietness at the thought that Mother is displeased with me.

These things ought to be entirely rejected. When they rise they often twist the consciousness so much as to falsify sometimes the vision itself and always the feeling. The Mother has observed constantly that the people on whom she has smiled tell her she has been glowering and severe or that she has been displeased, when there was no displeasure in her and then on the strength of that they go wrong altogether. 10 April 1933

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Your mistake is to find a "censorious touch" in the smile where there is none. When the Mother extended her forgiveness — which meant there was something to forgive, her judgment was founded on your own letters. You seem to think that the Mother in some way condemned you and was partial to the others. Her view was that all were in the wrong and each had need of forgiveness — and each asked for and had it.

How is it that your mind still returns on these things instead

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of going forward to the difficult spiritual change? The Mother had put them behind her, for a thing repented is a thing abolished. Be assured that there was no remembrance of them in her smile or her attitude towards you. 27 May 1933

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The Mother did not smile at me today at Pranam. Did she see something very untoward in me?

It is a mistake to think that the Mother's not smiling means either displeasure or disapproval of something wrong in the sadhak. It is very often merely a sign of absorption or inner concentration. On this occasion Mother was putting a question to your soul. 31 July 1933

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The physical being feels the need of the Mother's smile when it meets her look. Is it a kind of desire?

Yes. There has to be no disturbance when it does not come (knowing that its absence is not a sign of displeasure or anything of the kind) — then the Ananda of receiving it will be purer. 11 December 1933

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Yesterday when I did pranam, the Mother did not smile at me. Not seeing her smile, I spent the whole day miserably.

On that day Mother did not smile at anybody. It was not personal to you. A particular Power was acting in her which did not act in the ordinary way. 10 April 1934

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I felt at Pranam as if Mother withdrew her smile, but later I realised that she did smile — and even if she did not smile I received peace and became more inward at that time. Besides, after so many disturbances and wrongs on my part, I do not always deserve a smile. So either way I do not worry.

It is usually imagination or impression, at least that has been

seen in most cases. When the Mother does not smile, it is not from displeasure but in almost every case from some reason not connected with any action of the sadhak, but either from absorption or concentration on something that is being done. As you say, it does not matter — what is important is to receive what has to be received.

4 November 1934

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Why do I rejoice only when Mother smiles at me or gives me a special opportunity? I ought to rejoice in all situations. If after living so many years near you and her I still feel like this, I am not worthy of being here.

It is a very strange logic. Even among those who have made the most progress or been always the closest to the Mother, this or similar feelings still recur. It is not that they have not to be overcome, but to argue from their persistence that one is unfit to stay here is to make a large conclusion on a very small basis. This is again the kind of suggestion that comes in from the surrounding physical Ignorance. Things like these last so obstinately because they have become habits or recurrent feelings in the external physical being; they will disappear when the external being becomes filled with the Mother's light.

30 May 1935

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The Mother has been always specially careful in your case not to show displeasure or censure of any kind to you. To the others also she smiles always in the same way, for she knows the consequences to herself if she does not. But in spite of that, even when she smiles most kindly, they write to her that she has shown displeasure, withheld her smile, smiled in an ironical or blasting way, that they will commit suicide, go away etc. etc. The whole thing has become most intolerable and if the Pranam is to be nothing but an occasion for this kind of thing, it is better the Pranam should cease.

December 1936

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What sort of things can come under the category of “demand and desire”? What is the exact form of “demand and desire”?

There are no special sort of things — demand and desire can cover all things whatsoever — they are subjective, not objective and have no special form. Demand is when you claim something to get or possess, desire is a general term. If one expects that the Mother shall smile at him at the Pranam and feels wronged if one does not get it, that is a demand. If one wants it and grieves at not getting it, but without revolt or sense of an unjust deprivation that shows desire. If one feels joy at her smile, but remains calm in its absence knowing that all the Mother does is good, then there is no demand or desire. 13 September 1938

### Smiles and Seriousness

Sometimes the Mother looks at us smilingly, as if she were pleased; at other times she looks in quite a different way, as if seriously.

Why not? The Mother cannot be serious, absorbed, drawn into herself? Or do you think it is only displeasure against the sadhaks that can make her so? 18 June 1934

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During some dark periods such as now, I am awfully afraid to go to Pranam, lest I should have the misfortune to see the Mother’s grave face, with no smile at all.

All this about the Mother’s smile and her gravity is simply a trick of the vital. Very often I notice people talk of the Mother’s being grave, stern, displeased, angry at Pranam when there has been nothing of the kind — they have attributed to her something created by their own vital imagination. Apart from that, the Mother’s smiling or not smiling has nothing to do with the sadhak’s merits or demerits, fitness or unfitness — it is not deliberately done as a reward or a punishment. The Mother smiles on all without regard to these things. When she does not smile, it is because she is either in trance, or absorbed, or concentrated

on something within the sadhak that needs her attention — something that has to be done for him or brought down or looked at. It does not mean that there is anything bad or wrong in him. I have told this a hundred times to any number of sadhaks — but in many the vital does not want to accept that because it would lose its main source of grievance, revolt, abhiman, desire to go away or give up the Yoga, things which are very precious to it. The very fact that it has these results and leads to nothing but these darknesses ought to be enough to show you that this imagination about Mother's not smiling as a sign of absence of her grace or love is a device and suggestion of the Adversary. You have to drive away these things and give some chance for the psychic with its deeper and truer love and surrender to come forward and take up the Adhar as its kingdom. 28 July 1934

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So many sadhaks are not able to understand the Mother's seriousness at Pranam. They find it difficult not to feel that they have displeased her in some way or other. Could you not clarify the cause of the seriousness?

The whole foundation of the difficulty is erroneous. It is the wrong idea that if 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 complaints that it is not so, but nobody will give up this 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.

19 April 1935

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About Mother's seriousness at Pranam, you wrote: "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 I never felt any hostile attack before going to Pranam; rather the attack comes afterwards when my vital fails to endure her seriousness.

It does not matter whether you feel any 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 Asram and the sadhaks personally or the body of the Mother. If you are not touched that is a matter for which you ought to be grateful to the Mother instead of your vital getting upset because she is doing her work.

20 April 1935

### **Wrong Ideas about the Mother's Showing Displeasure**

Why did the Mother have such a look of seriousness when I went to her? I have given up everything to take shelter in her, but sometimes I feel that she is displeased with me; then I wonder for whom I am living.

So long as you do not get rid of this silly illusion about the Mother's "seriousness", this kind of thing can always recur. I have told everyone the truth about it, that it is their own minds which wrongly think the Mother is serious and displeased with them. It is under the pressure of a Force of Falsehood that wants them to get upset and to destroy their peace and set them against the Mother that these things come. Yet you all go on still listening to the Force of Falsehood. It is only when you reject the falsehood that you will be free from these troubles.

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I have the idea that the Mother is completely displeased with me. Have I done something wrong or written something that has displeased her?

The idea is absolutely without foundation. It is the constant illusion that the sadhaks are getting that the Mother is displeased with them, that they have done something wrong or said or written something wrong and therefore she is severe or distant, that her expression or her action shows it etc. Very often they think this even when she smiles on them most kindly. It is a purely subjective feeling generated by some difficulty in themselves. The

Mother is not displeased with people because they have difficulties; it is only a reason for giving more of her help and support. All these ideas you speak of are suggestions generated by the adverse pressure on you. You can rely always on the Mother's Grace and you may be perfectly sure that we shall not throw you off — our support will be always with you. 4 July 1933

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Today at Pranam the Mother was not as usual with me. I got the idea of her displeasure and it disturbed me for a time.

There was certainly no such idea in Mother's mind. People have that idea because it is an old and rooted one in their minds and it is true that at one time it had some meaning when Mother was dealing with the vital difficulties of the sadhaks. But now it is different. At the present stage of descent into the physical the Mother is meeting all with a large equanimity, tolerating all the mistakes of the sadhaks and only bringing an inner pressure, supporting all with her force as much as they will allow her. This has been so for a considerable time past — but the physical mind of the sadhaks does not find it easy to accept the change and they seek for expressions and interpretations that are not there. This is farther complicated by the fact that now the Mother has little time to rest or sleep — and when it is like that she goes easily into trance at Pranam and when in trance she may in her body forget to smile or give the blessing etc. It is why I have had to warn people that they must not misinterpret these things.

19 November 1933

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Yesterday and this morning after Pranam the idea came that the Mother was displeased with me, she was treating me coldly and that she was throwing me off. I tried to reject it, but it came back again and again. Of course, there cannot be any truth in it, but it kept repeating itself in feelings, not so much in the thoughts.

Certainly, there is not and cannot be any truth in such suggestions. Neither displeasure nor coldness are possible and

throwing off is too absurd even to be considered. It is the attempt of the forces to set in vibration certain feelings habitual to the human vital — and it is a phenomenon that is constantly seen in the sadhana that when all substantial or even plausible reason is taken away from these vibrations, they are thrown upon the vital without any apparent cause or justifying reason by mere force of habitual response to some covert or subconscious stimulus. The one thing to do is to detach oneself at once or as soon as possible and see it for what it is and throw it off with decision.

26 December 1933

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This morning, as I watched the Mother come down the stairs before meditation, I thought that her face looked very displeased. Why? What have I done wrong? Can this be my imagination? Can one's eyes tell such lies?

Certainly they can and the mind can distort still farther. There are any number of people who have written to the Mother that she did not smile and was fierce and severe when she had been most kind and smiling to them, knowing that they were in trouble. There have been hundreds of cases in which people have heard the opposite of what she said and refused to believe otherwise until or unless others who had been present told them they were mistaken. Note that they did not believe the Mother's denial, but at once believed other sadhaks when they confirmed the Mother. We have singular disciples! As for the mind twisting and misinterpreting the Mother's looks, speech, action, that is so ordinary and everyday that it hardly needs mention, so if you are going to trust your mind and senses so absolutely, you will go on mistaking the Mother to the end of the chapter. It is only the psychic being that can know and understand her.

11 September 1935

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It is a great pity you allowed the thought that the Mother was severe with you to come in and throw you down. These thoughts are never true and whenever a sadhak indulges them, he is always

invaded by the old movements. The Mother's love and kindness have always been the same and will always remain the same to you, so you should never accept this idea that she is displeased or severe. But whatever the mistakes or the difficulties, our help will be with you and the Mother's force will work to bring you out and get you back the psychic openness and peace which you had for many days this time and which is bound to return and become permanent after a while. 19 November 1935

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I do not at all understand why you should think that the Mother was displeased with you for any reason whatever. She was just as she is always with you. Even if you had made any mistake, the Mother now is disposed to overlook mistakes and leave it to the pressure of the Light and the psychic being of the sadhak to set things right. But why on earth should she be displeased because you wanted to stop the French lessons with X or for any such trivial reason! Whether you continue or suspend your lessons is a detail which has to be settled in accordance with the condition of your mind and the needs of your sadhana and it can be settled either way. It is surprising that you should think Mother could show displeasure over so slight a matter. You must get over a nervousness of this kind and not disturb your good condition by imaginations — for it is an imagination, since it had no reality behind it. Have a more perfect confidence and do not let your mind create difficulties where there are none.

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Understand once for all that Mother is not using the Pranam to show her pleasure and displeasure; it is not meant for that purpose. The only circumstance under which Mother's attitude at Pranam is likely to be influenced by the actions of the sadhak is when there is some great betrayal or a violent breach of the main rules of spiritual life such as an act of sexual intercourse or when the sadhak has become pointedly hostile to the Mother and the Yoga. But then it is not a special show of displeasure at

Pranam, but a withdrawal of the gift of grace which is quite a different matter.

### Wrong Ideas about the Mother's Smile and Touch

Sometimes when Mother smiles, people take it as an approval of their wrong activities. A sort of vanity comes in and says, "Oh, Mother is smiling. Don't worry; go on as you like." Or else there is a competition: "Oh, see how long Mother has put her hand on me." But if these constructions are wrong, why have they gained such currency? For on them people judge and criticise others.

It is a great mistake. We are persistently correcting it, but a legend has been formed and people cling to it. 5 July 1933

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I do not think your reasoning that you were in the physical consciousness and therefore the observation of the physical fact [*of the Mother's touch*] is likely to be correct is very sound. The physical consciousness is full of impressions and that they are not entirely reliable has begun to be more and more recognised — it is the reason why the statements of different people about the same physical fact differ widely. Especially when there is a depression or a pressure of adverse forces the impression given to the senses is often distorted or modified in the sense of the depression or of the suggestion made — of that we have had innumerable instances.

But apart from that it is a mistake to measure the power of the blessing by these details. I have known instances in which the Mother omitted to put her hand at all on the head of a sadhak and yet the force was felt double of what he or she usually received. That was because the Mother was very concentrated and putting a full force out. Even so a finger on the head with a strong power put out may mean much more than the full hand on the head with less in the touch. 21 August 1933

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If the Mother's putting her hand or giving her smile at Pranam is all a mental construction, why do I get so terribly upset? I have to find some way to get out of it when it comes.

The obsession about the smile and touch has to be overcome and rejected because it has become an instrument of the contrary Forces to upset the sadhaks and hamper their progress. I have seen any number of cases in which the sadhak is going on well or even having high experiences and change of consciousness and suddenly this imagination comes across and all is confusion, revolt, sorrow, despair and the inner work is interrupted and endangered. In most cases this attack brings with it a sensory delusion so that even if the Mother smiles more than usual or gives the blessing with all her force, she is told, "You did not smile, you did not touch" or "you hardly touched". There have been any number of instances of that also — the Mother telling me, "I saw X disturbed or else a suggestion coming towards him and I gave him my kindest smile and blessing", and yet afterwards we get a letter affirming just the contrary, "You did not smile etc." And you are all ready to give the Mother the lie, because you felt, you saw and your senses cannot be deceived! As if a mind disturbed does not twist the sense observation also! as if it were not a common fact of psychology that one constantly gets an impression according to his mood or thought! Even if the smile or touch were less, it should not be the cause of such upheavals, if there is not an intention in it and there is no intention at all as we have constantly warned all of you. Of course the cause is that the sadhaks apply the movements of a vital human love to the Mother and the ordinary vital human love is full of contrary movements of distrust, misunderstanding, jealousy, anger, despair. But in Yoga this is most undesirable — for here trust in the Mother, faith in her divine Love is of great importance; anything that denies or disturbs it opens the door to obstacles and wrong reactions. It is not that there should be no love in the vital, but it must purify itself of these reactions and fix itself on the psychic being's trust and confident self-giving. Then there can be the full progress.

30 June 1935

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Our ideas about the Mother's hand or smile at Pranam are not constant. If Mother puts the hand all right, then one finds her smile less. If both the hand and smile are all right, one finds he has been given a smaller lotus than others. If nothing else is found, then one remembers that in 1932 Mother did not treat me well. It must be the wolf in the lower vital at work.

Yes, it is the insatiable demand of the vital and when the vital is up reason gets no chance. It was the experience of this insatiable demand that made the Mother draw back and retire from the free outward self-giving she had begun. The more she gave, the more was demanded and the more dissatisfied people became and each was jealous of the others — life was becoming impossible and sadhana was certainly not profiting! 30 June 1935

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Today after the Pranam, even though the Mother did not smile or put her hand as usual, my consciousness remained high. The ego determines its revolt according to her smile and touch, but today it remained quiescent. I don't know how it happened.

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 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. 11 November 1935

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All this idea about the Mother's looks and her hand in the blessing which is current in the Asram is perfectly irrational, false, even imbecile. I have a hundred times written to people that the whole thing is wrong and rests on a false suggestion of the adverse forces made in order to create a disturbance. The Mother does not refrain from smiling or vary her smile or her

manner of blessing in order to show displeasure or because of anything the sadhak has done. She does not, as certain people annoyingly believe, dose out her smiles or blessings in such a way as to assign a number of marks for each sadhak according to his good behaviour or bad behaviour. These variations are *not* intended to assign a competitive place to each sadhak, as to schoolboys in a class. All these ideas are absolutely absurd, trivial and unspiritual. The Asram is not a schoolboys' class nor is the Yoga a competitive examination. All this is the creation of the narrow physical mind and vital ego and desire. If the sadhaks want to get a true basis and make true progress, they must get these ideas out of their minds altogether. Yet they cling obstinately to it in spite of all I can write, so dear is this falsehood to their mind. You must get rid of it altogether. At the Pranam the Mother puts her force to help the sadhak — what he ought to do is to receive quietly and simply, not to spoil the occasion by these foolish ideas and by watching who gets more of her hand or smile and who gets less. All that must go. 8 December 1936

### **The Mother's Hand at Pranam**

If the Mother does not put her hand on my head or keep it there for long, does it mean that I was not in a fit condition to receive well?

No, it means only that these days there are nearly 140 people and Mother has to do it quickly — otherwise Pranam would not end. 22 November 1932

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I was not going to send this letter, thinking it will make Mother angry and that she will irritate me still more at Pranam by putting her hand only just a little, as yesterday. Anyway, it is now becoming impossible to live.

Why should you think that Mother will be angry? We have ourselves told you to write everything frankly and conceal nothing — so there is not the least likelihood that she will resent what you write. Moreover she knows perfectly well the difficulties of

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the sadhana and of human nature and, if there is goodwill and a sincere aspiration such as you have, any stumblings or falterings of the moment will not make any difference in her attitude to the sadhak. The Mother thinks you must have had a wrong impression about her putting her hand just a little only — for she was just the same with you inwardly as always and there had been no reason why there should be any change. 17 April 1933

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If the Mother does not put her hand on the head in Pranam, it does not mean that she is displeased — it may have quite other causes. People have this idea but they are quite mistaken. Some time ago the Mother failed to put her hand on the head of a sadhika at Pranam for two days. People mocked at her and looked down at her. As a matter of fact she was having remarkable realisations and getting more power from the Mother at Pranam than on ordinary days. The whole idea is an error.

2 August 1933

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I could not understand the Mother's intention in not blessing me with her hand when I made pranam.

There was no intention. It has happened with others but always when Mother was in trance or absorbed within. It does not in the least depend on the condition of the sadhak and has no meaning against him. 26 September 1933

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It seems someone has said that I take too long in doing pranam and Mother is a little annoyed. Is this true? In my ignorance I am unable to grasp her hints.

It is true that you take too long in the Pranam — Mother gave you several hints but you did not seem to understand. If it were not for the overlong time taken by the Pranam with so many people, Mother would not mind — but it is becoming impossible because people take so long in coming to make their pranam. It is better if you take only a short time. The power of the blessing

does not depend on the length of the pranam made.

22 October 1933

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It is entirely untrue that Mother was pushing you away today. There may be days when she is absorbed and therefore physically inattentive to what her hand is doing. But today she was specially attentive to you and at the Pranam she was putting force on you for peace, tranquillity and the removal of the difficulty. If she at all acted by the palm or anything else, it was for that she was acting. About this there can be no mistake, for she was specially conscious of her action and purpose today. What must have happened was that something must have felt the pressure and intervened and persuaded your physical mind by suggestion that it was *you* she was pushing away, not the difficulty. This is a very clear instance of how easy it is for the sadhaks to make a wrong inference and think that the Mother is doing the very opposite of what she is doing. Very often when she has concentrated most to help them by pressing out their difficulties, they have written to her, "You were very severe and displeased with me this morning." The only way to avoid these wrong reactions is to have full psychic confidence in the Mother, believing that all she does is for their good and out of the Divine Mother's care for them and not against them. Then nothing of this kind will happen. Those who do that, can get the full help of her concentration even if in her absorption she does not touch the head or smile. That is why I have constantly told the sadhaks not to put their own interpretations on the Mother's appearance or actions at the Pranam — because these interpretations may always be wrong and make an opening for an unfounded depression and an attack.

23 January 1934

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X complained to me that the Mother did not put her hand on her head at Pranam today.

Too much demand in people's minds so that the Mother seldom feels free to do what is best. Pranam and the rest have their

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importance, but they ought not to feel upset or frustrated by the smallest change. Each ought to learn to have a sufficient inner life and inner connection to fall back on that whenever the outer is changed or interrupted.

14 June 1934

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What to write of my miserable condition? Today, when I expected the Mother to hold me up a little more, I got the reverse. But perhaps it is necessary to make a man suffer sometimes.

Mother put her hand just as usual. Not only so, but as she saw your condition needed special help, she tried to give it. But when you are in this condition, it is unfortunate that you are so much occupied with the feeling of misery as to feel nothing else, nothing that does not minister to or increase the misery. Support you always have; there is absolutely no reason why we should withhold it. If anyone is in serious trouble in this Asram, that falls on us and most on the Mother — so it is absurd to suppose that we should take pleasure in anyone suffering. Suffering, illness, vital storms (lusts, revolts, angers) are so many contradictions of what we are striving for and therefore obstacles to our work. To end them as soon as possible is the only will we can have, not to keep them in existence.

If you could only acquire the power to detach yourself somewhere in you when these storms come, not to be swept away by the push or the thoughts that rise! Then there would be something that could feel the support and be able to react against these forces.

28 June 1935

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It was not because of any fault of yours that the Mother gave only a short blessing; she has to do that for all who come at the beginning because they need to go quickly to their work. If you want a longer blessing, you must come afterwards. But, when you have to come early, you can get as much out of the Mother's short blessing, if you are quiet and open.

**Feeling the Mother's Touch at Pranam**

Is it possible to receive the Mother's influence at a distance, for instance at the time of Pranam? Sometimes when I did not come for the morning meditation I felt the atmosphere of the meditation hall wherever I was.

It is possible to receive, but not in the same way. There is an element, a touch on the physical consciousness that is wanting.

30 May 1933

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Today I saw with open eyes diamond white light descending on the sides of the Mother's ears; while doing pranam I felt a strange kind of touch and with it something entered inside me. When I returned home, I was still absorbed in pure bliss. What was it that descended into me?

There is always a touch coming from the Mother at pranam, one has to be conscious and open only to receive it.

14 November 1933

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During the morning Pranam, when X went for darshan and the Mother pressed her hand on his head, at the same time I felt her hand on my head as a concrete touch. How does this happen?

It shows that the subtle physical is growing conscious and felt the touch and blessings of the Mother which is always there.

20 March 1935

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Someone ignorant might ask how one can realise the value of pranam in the half-a-minute Mother has permitted to many. But one ought to know that inner things never depend on the time.

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.

18 April 1935

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The Mother's inner or subtle touch, which I have sometimes felt, simply had not the same effect as her physical touch during the Pranam. The inner touch came and disappeared within a few seconds, leaving practically no effect, whilst the Pranam touch left its impress for a long time even when there was depression and resistance.

It is because you have lived in your outer and not in your inner being that it is like that. But unless you open to the inner touch, the inner being cannot develop. I mean by the inner being the inner mind, the inner vital, the inner physical, the inner psychic.

3 February 1937

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Could you explain what you mean by the inner touch?

The inner touch is the Mother's influence felt in the inner being.

When I was having experiences and realisations, why did I not feel the inner touch? It is said that without the inner touch, one cannot have such experiences, which are the fruit of the inner being's development.

You did not feel it because the inner being was not awake to it — it felt only the results — and these results were not experiences in the inner being itself but of the Self above. 6 February 1937

### **Flowers at Pranam**

What does the Mother mean by giving us flowers at the Pranam?

Simply to put the power indicated upon you if you are willing to receive it. It is a progress suggested and offered.

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I felt hurt when the Mother stopped giving me flowers, but now I feel that I have not yet learned the first lesson of Yoga — to surrender to the Mother and accept that whatever she does for me is done for the best. Also, have I not myself told

her several times not to give me flowers. Once I got very disturbed when people asked me why Mother gave me such poor flowers. But now I have got on the right track again. You will change me completely so that all of me belongs to you and the Mother.

As regards what you say retrospectively about the giving of flowers, there were there two mistakes,

(1) The one you have yourself seen; you should accept what the Mother sees to be best and most helpful, not judging by your own standard, as it is she alone who has the right knowledge about those things.

(2) Never base yourself or your idea of the Mother and her actions on what others say — as when they told you you had wrong flowers. How can they judge or know? Their utterances may be the result of very wrong judgments and their statements may be misstatements.

Now that you have seen the right thing, go by the way I have indicated to you, the way of confidence and true self-giving.

May 1932

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The Mother was so kind as to give me a message in the form of six flowers. Their significances are: Devotion, Faith, Mental Sincerity, Resolution, Divine Help and Peace in the Vital. But I did not understand the exact meaning of the message. Will you kindly explain it?

The Divine Help was put inside the flower of faith — when that is done, the two flowers form a single idea = faith in Divine Help.

The meaning was simply that these are the conditions for the realisation in the Yoga — devotion, faith in Divine help, resolution, mental sincerity, peace in the vital — if these are there, the realisation will come.

10 February 1933

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What is the significance of the Mother's giving us flowers at Pranam?

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It is meant to help the realisation of the thing the flower stands for. 28 April 1933

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When giving the Bhakti flower, it is the power of Bhakti, the possibility of it that Mother offers to you — if you can open yourself and receive it. 13 June 1933

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When the Mother gives us flowers, are we to aspire for the things they stand for or does she give these things with the flowers?

There is no fixed rule — sometimes it is the one, sometimes the other. But even when the thing is given, it is given in power — it has to be realised by the sadhak in consciousness and for that aspiration is necessary. 17 November 1933

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Today the Mother gave me a “Vital purity” flower, but my vital does not like this flower because it lowers the vital in the opinion of people. “Other people get flowers with good significances, I get only this kind of flower” — unable to repel this suggestion, my vital got roused and I suffered.

“Vital purity” is also a flower of good significance expressing a very high thing. When the Mother gives a flower like that, she gives the Force along with it. But you must receive the force, not think about people’s opinion of you or your prestige with them which is a thing not worth a thought. 22 November 1933

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Today the Mother gave me the flower Progress. I felt she was telling me that I am just sitting and I ought to move forward. What should I understand by it?

When the Mother gives a flower, she gives the power of the thing it means — if the sadhak is ready or willing to receive it, he can do so. 17 March 1934

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X prophesies that I will get a “Divine Love” flower today; she wants half my share! I said I never get the nice white flowers she does. In any case we do not get what our mind thinks we should get.

Obviously not—the mind chooses according to likings or fancies or else to some mental idea of what should be; the Mother chooses by intuitive observation or else an inspiration of what is needed. 9 July 1934

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At Pranam I observed that Mother was giving smaller lotuses to outside sadhaks and big, full lotuses to those she loves more. To my fate came a medium lotus and from that time all was finished. I could neither work nor sit steadily.

Why on earth do you get these fits of comparison and measurement? They are quite foreign to Mother’s thoughts or intention. She did not choose at all in giving to the sadhaks,— all were mixed together, whatever came to her hand she gave. 5 April 1935

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You say there was nothing intended in the giving of particular lotuses, but I find it hard to believe. First, Mother cannot be unconscious of what she is doing. Second, it would not create so much disturbance as to make me give up work and lose all strength, if there were not something behind it.

All these ideas are formations in your own mind and suggestions from a wrong force. It is the usual trick of certain forces to represent the Mother as a sort of malignant and insincere tyrant taking a pleasure in disturbing and torturing people and lying to them at every step. I wonder that a clear mind like yours should get so clouded as not to see the trick or fail to perceive that if she is like that she cannot be the Mother. But the singularity is that such ideas seem to spring up in almost everybody as soon as they get a little disturbed and they never seem to see the sheer illogicality of the thing. This has been a disease, it is true, that has sprung up and stuck in the Asram mind since almost the

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beginning and if it is somewhat diminished in generality and force, is still there. When it disappears altogether, it will be a great day for the collective sadhana. 5 April 1935

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Are flowers mere symbols and nothing more? Can the flower symbolising silence, for example, help in the realisation of silence?

It is when Mother puts her force into the flower that it becomes more than a symbol. It then can become very effective, if there is receptivity in the one who receives. 19 July 1937

### **Avoiding Pranam**

Is the idea of not coming to Pranam usually a hostile suggestion?

It is a hostile suggestion almost always.

How can the idea of not coming to Pranam be accepted, as some have done?

Various motives are played upon — pride, the desire not to be like others, not to be dependent on the Mother, the wish to protect some wrong movement from the Mother's control, the idea of doing the sadhana in one's own way free from the pressure of the Truth etc. 30 May 1933

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I felt a disinclination to come to Pranam, a dryness and lack of interest in anything, an absence of love for Mother. What is the use of going to Pranam in such a dry manner or simply for protection or peace or any such selfish object?

That is a suggestion which should be entirely rejected. It is the usual attack trying to act on the physical consciousness through dryness and depression. 24 February 1934

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I have often seen that X would be quite cheerful just before coming for Pranam, but when he came in front of Mother he looked sorrowful and displeased. What was the reason?

X is doing like many others — they are cheerful outside, but sorrowful or displeased or suffering when they come to the Mother or write to her. There is a sort of idea (which was long current in the Asram) and there is still a feeling in the vital that the more you do that with the Mother the more you will get out of her. Of course it is absurdly untrue — the truth is the opposite; the more one is cheerfully open to her and lives in the light and gladness, the more one is likely to receive.

### **Pranam and Non-Pranam Days**

What are these stupid waves moving about the atmosphere? People say: “Non-pranam day means a day of rest for the sadhana.”

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.

1 April 1935

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False suggestions have been telling me that I have no love for the Mother. But on every non-pranam day the sadhana refuses to move forward. How can this happen unless not only the inner being, but even the mind and the physical have a good deal of love for her? Only my love for the Mother is not outwardly expressed because it wants to take a psychic form, not a vital one. But as long as the outer mind and vital are not psychised, it is not possible to have a psychic expression in the outer being all the time, but only for a few limited moments. Is this correct?

Yes, but the vital’s test is very foolish. If the sadhana goes on whether you see the Mother or not, that would rather show that the psychic connection is permanently there and active always and does not depend on the physical contact. The vital seems to

think the sadhana ought to cease if you do not see the Mother, but that would only mean that the love and devotion need the stimulus of physical contact; the greatest test of love and devotion is on the contrary when it burns as strongly in long absence as in the presence. If your sadhana went on as well on non-pranam as on pranam days it would not prove that love and devotion are not there, but that they are so strong as to be self-existent in all circumstances. 8 June 1936

### **Fixed Places at Pranam**

Are the places in the pranam hall fixed for each individual person? Today I was meditating there when suddenly X came and told me to move, saying it was his place. There was an empty place at my side, so I told him to sit there, but he refused and told me I was sitting in his fixed place. Then I moved over, but Y came and told me to move, for it was his fixed place. To avoid any disturbance I quickly left the place, but I must confess that I was annoyed and it disturbed my meditation. In fact X comes only once in a blue moon to the morning meditation, yet he wants his place to be reserved for ever.

Mother has not fixed places for anyone but the rule of the “fixed place” does obtain in the morning Pranam. It is Nolini who sees after these things. So you had better find a place in the sun not claimed or pegged out yet by any imperial Power and inform Nolini that you now claim that country. 23 July 1936

### **The Change from Pranam to Meditation**

The present arrangement about the morning Meditation is for so long as the Mother has need of rest. It is not intended as a permanent arrangement. Only, if the sadhaks really want the Pranam to continue as before, they should make a better use of it. Many spend the time looking at what the Mother is doing, whom she smiles on, whom she pats or how she blesses people and gossip about it afterwards — most take it as a routine. All that is a wrong spirit and it puts a great strain on the Mother

who has to fight all the time against the wrong forces this wrong attitude brings into the atmosphere.

30 January 1937

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There is a conspiracy among the gods to take away Mother into retirement: no Pranam henceforth. Sir, they have taken you away already and now if Mother withdraws, well, we can do the same one by one.

Well, if people withdraw into themselves, they might find the Mother there!

1 February 1937

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Did your remark “people withdraw into themselves” carry a suggestion that Mother’s personal touch is not necessary or essential?

It is not essential — the inner touch is the essential thing. But it can be of immense help if properly received. For certain things it is essential but these certain things nobody yet is ready for.

Some people believe that the inner touch is not essential; whatever is necessary can be had through meditation or otherwise.

Whatever is necessary for the inner being, yes.

As a matter of fact, plenty of people are glad because now they can do whatever they please.

But there was never any necessity for such people coming to the Pranam! It is not obligatory.

I know from my own experience that we have abused the Pranam. To tell you frankly, when the morning meditation started I was glad, and I was not quite certain it was not better than Pranam, for I thought, “Now I am free from those worries about Mother’s looks.” Even then I believe that there is something great in the physical touch of the Mother, and one can’t afford to lose it under any circumstance; of course one must have the right attitude.

That is it. The Pranam (like the soup in the evening before) has been very badly misused. What is the Pranam for? That people might receive in the most direct and integral way — a way that includes the physical consciousness and makes it a channel — what the Mother could give them and they were ready for. Instead people sit as if at a court reception noting what the Mother does (and generally misobserving), making inferences, gossiping afterwards as to her attitude to this or that person, who is the more favoured, who is less favoured — as if the Mother were doling out her favour or disfavour or appreciations or disapprovals there, just as courtiers in a court might do. What an utterly unspiritual attitude. How can the Mother's work be truly done in such an atmosphere? How can there be the right reception? Naturally it reacts on the sadhak, creates any amount of misconception, wrong feelings etc. — creates an open door for the suggestions of the Adversary who delights in falsehood and administers plenty of it to the minds of the sadhaks. This apart from the fact that many throw all sorts of undesirable things on the Mother through the Pranam. The whole thing tends to become a routine, even where there are not these reactions. Some of course profit, those who can keep something of the right attitude. If there were the right attitude in all, well by this time things would have gone very far towards the spiritual goal.

What is the right attitude for real love and devotion? Is it to be psychically depressed because Mother is not coming for pranam any more or is it to try to get her within?

Psychic depression (a queer phrase — you mean vital, I suppose) can help no one. To try to receive within is always the true thing, whether through meditation or pranam. 2 February 1937

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Even though I feel Mother during the morning meditation, it is not the same thing as the Pranam was. I feel as though a fundamental support has been taken away — something one could hold on to is not there. I was thinking how nice it would be if the Mother gave Pranam in the evening, so that after the

struggle of the day we could turn a little more inward and have her soothing touch.

The difficulty is that apart from the slight incident to the eye that has happened, Mother badly needs a rest from the storm she has undergone physically so long and I don't think it would be wise to disregard the need any longer — for the storm has been there a long time. I hope that after a period of rest, things can be renewed but at present meditation is the only way, for there is no strain on her.

3 February 1937

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In regard to the proposed change which would vary Pranam with Meditation — not stop pranam altogether. It had nothing to do with the temporary rest taken by the Mother — that was absolutely indispensable. I had often asked her to take some rest before but she had refused because it might disturb the sadhaks too much — what happened made the break physically indispensable. The sadhaks ought to concede that much to her after she has laboured night and day for so many years without giving herself any real rest even at night. You yourself wrote asking her to take the rest she needed. Even so she did not fail to begin going down morning and evening and renewing interviews as soon as it was physically possible.

10 February 1937

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X feels the stopping of pranam so profoundly that he is depressed. But to make one's sadhana or life depend on the Mother's touch is to have a vital sadhana and a vital life, transient and superficial.

It is only if one can feel the inward touch of the Mother without the necessity of the physical contact that the true value of the latter can be really active. Otherwise there is a danger of its becoming like a mere artificial stimulant or a pulling of vital force from her for one's own benefit.

2 March 1937

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Some people seem to think that to prepare themselves for the inner touch of the Mother, they have to go through the preliminary stage of having her physical touch at Pranam. So the question is: Is it possible for all, at the very beginning, to develop the inner touch without the physical touch?

If they are so dependent on the physical touch that they cannot feel anything when it is not there, this means that they have not used it at all for developing the inner connection; if they had, the inner connection after so many years would already be there. The inner connection can only be developed by an inner concentration and aspiration, not by a mere outward pranam every day. What most people do is simply to pull vital force from the Mother and live on it — but that is not the object of the Pranam.

4 March 1937

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Pulling is a psychological act — people are always pulling vital force from each other though they do not do it consciously, i.e. with a purpose in the mind — it is instinctive in the vital to draw force from wherever it can. All contact is in fact a receiving and giving of vital forces in a small or great degree. You have yourself said that after meeting such and such person you felt empty and exhausted — that means the person drew your vital force out of you. That is what people do at pranam, instead of being quiet and receptive, they pull vitally. It can be stopped by cutting off connection, but if the Mother did that at pranam, then the pranam would be useless.

5 March 1937

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For many people the present morning meditation with the Mother has had a good result. They are able to receive better than when there was only pranam. But in my case the withdrawal of pranam has meant a reduction of psychological pressure by 84 percent.

Different people react differently to the change. Pranam had become to many a routine, to many a mere occasion of pulling the Mother's vital forces away from her so as to supply themselves

with vital provender for the day, to many a mere occasion for gossip as to how the Mother had behaved with this one or that one (all founded on their own “observation”, imagination and inference); the attitude to it had become twisted. If there had been the right attitude in all and the right use of the contact, it would have been a different matter. 25 March 1937

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Mother has told you what to reply to X about other points. You may add this from me, that all this about Mother’s smile and displeasure is simply the wrong play of the vital in her. It is because so many of the sadhaks were indulging in this wrong play of the vital about Mother’s smile and her pleasure and displeasure and all kinds of revolts and jealousies and anger against the Mother and canvassing despondency and talk of going away etc. that the Pranam had to be stopped. Nothing can be worse for the sadhana than to give play to ignorant vital movements like these. She must throw these things away from her if she wants to make any progress in sadhana. 22 April 1937

### Outsiders at Pranam

The permission for Pranam and meditation cannot be given. In between the Darshans it will now be no longer allowed to people from outside or only in exceptional cases. 14 December 1935

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Why on earth can’t people wait for outsiders to ask for Pranam instead of goading them to come to it? It makes the Pranam cheap and makes people think we are yearning for them to come and make Pranam, which is a damned mistake and not conducive to the dignity of the spiritual life. 25 September 1938

### Making Pranam at a Distance

I am trying to sit in concentration [*in Bombay*], but I am unable to do anything except offering pranams to the Mother.

Am I proceeding correctly?

Write to him that what he is doing is quite right. While making the Pranam he should aspire to be open to the Mother's influence and her workings in him and to become conscious of her workings.

29 August 1930

### Making Pranam to Others

Why is there this imagination? X is as human as she can be and not in the least superhuman. Nobody is to be bowed down to except myself and the Mother. Be on your guard against allowing these or other imaginations to take hold of you — they come easily when the mind is exalted and should be looked at carefully, not accepted without discernment.

22 November 1932

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It [*the wish to make pranam to others*] is a wrong suggestion from somewhere. It is very necessary not to take the attitude of Pranam to others or to give even in thought a place at all approaching or similar to the Mother's.

27 July 1934

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In a dream it was Pranam time. There was a boyish looking person to whom all had to do pranam by the Mother's order. Someone made pranam to him and I noted that the boyish person spoke some words in anger. I hesitated, but since Mother had told us to do it, I had to do pranam and so did all the others. Why these wrong pranams and Mother's order?

It was evidently a vital formation, as Mother's order could not possibly be for the pranam to be to another, since such a thing is forbidden and would be disastrous.

It is the kind of formation X was persistently making that all must approach and realise the Truth through him and he even hoped that one day we would realise the fact that the supramental Truth had descended into him and into him alone and would order all to approach it and us only through him! You

probably saw in your dream something like that moving about and the dream gave it form. Several people had this delusion before, but I think with X it went out of the Asram. Still some remnants may be floating still. 9 September 1934

### Pranam in the Reception Hall

It seems X has often criticised Y for sitting and doing pranam and meditation in the Reception Hall near the photographs. I do not understand this propaganda of X — does the Mother want him to do that?

It is X's own idea. The only thing Mother insisted on is that the Reception Hall is primarily meant for visitors and at the time when visitors come sadhaks should not occupy the place or do meditation or pranam there. There has never been any restriction on meditation or pranam before our photographs as such — external worship was never forbidden. It is only a question of the place being kept mainly for its original purpose. Z had at one time almost occupied the place keeping some kind of mattress or something there and meditating for long periods — that was objected to certainly. Idolatry comes in only when the image pushes out the Person — there were one or two who said that for them that (the photograph there) was the Mother (more even than the living Person). There was a growing atmosphere of excess about all this and the Mother had to recall people to a sense of measure. That is all. But there is no prohibition of it on principle. 15 March 1935

### The Soup Ceremony

I saw in dream: The Mother is giving me soup. I am taking the soup from the Mother's hand and bowing down at her feet. What is the reason for this dream? What is the spiritual meaning of the soup which the Mother used to give us?

The soup was instituted in order to establish a means by which the sadhak might receive something from the Mother by an interchange in the material consciousness. Owing to the past

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association probably you see like that when your material consciousness in dream receives something from the Mother.

27 July 1933

### The Value of Darshan

The Mother is within but the darshan of her helps to realise the Divine on the physical plane also.

11 May 1933

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I would like to know if it is harmful to talk while waiting for the Mother to come out? I sometimes cannot help talking, laughing and joking.

If you attach any value to the darshan, it is better to be *recueilli*. If her coming is only one incident of the day's routine like taking dinner, then of course it does not matter.

24 July 1933

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Is there any difference between *recueilli* and concentrated?

*Recueilli* means drawn back, quiet and collected in oneself.

25 July 1933

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The best way for Darshan is to keep oneself very collected and quiet and open to receive whatever the Mother gives.

12 February 1937

### Public Darshan Days

Mother, Lord, on the 24th I shall take my food only after having your darshan. Mother, Lord, destroy all my wrong thoughts and feelings.

That is quite wrong. Fasting will not in the least remove any bad things — it is by receiving the Mother's Light and Force in you that they will go. You must eat tomorrow.

23 November 1933

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I wonder if it is pleasant on Darshan days for the Mother to be touched by 300 people with various things in their vitals and physicals. Perhaps above the Overmind one feels all as the Divine, so the touch and all else is taken delight in as a play of the Divine behind all. Yet her body must be feeling a little uneasy at these touches.

Not uneasy; but it is not easy to absorb and deal with all that when the number is so many and so much is foreign matter.

1 September 1934

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X is hopeful that the Mother will see Y before they leave Pondicherry. If bringing her for Darshan is not possible, could Mother see her at some other time?

Mother cannot see her. The most we can concede is that she may be brought for Darshan in the way proposed, but she must simply take the blessing and pass, there must be no lingering. It is a mistake to bring sick people or the insane to the Darshan for cure — the Darshan is not meant for that. If anything is to be done or can be done for them, it can be done at a distance. The Force that acts at the time of Darshan is of another kind and one deranged or feeble in mind cannot receive or cannot assimilate it — it may produce a contrary effect owing to this incapacity if received at all. If the Force is withheld, then Darshan is useless, if received by such people it is unsafe. It is similar reasons which dictate the rule forbidding children of tender years to be brought to the Darshan.

13 August 1937

### **The First Blessing**

No — we don't put our picture inside anybody when we give the first blessing. But if you go on looking inside, you will one day find the Mother there.

# Aspects of the Mother's Life in the Ashram

## The Mother's Music

It is not by knowledge of music that the understanding [*of the Mother's music*] comes; nor is it by effort of the mind—it is by becoming inwardly silent, opening within and getting the spontaneous feeling of what is in the music. 1932

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I feel within me a tendency for music, but I understand nothing of harmony, tune and rhythm. Yet sometimes when I hear the Mother's music, I am spellbound and lose all sense of time.

It is not necessary to have technical knowledge in order to feel what is behind the music. Mother of course does not play for the sake of a technical musical effect, but to bring down something from the higher planes and that anyone can receive who is open.

16 September 1933

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When I entered the Mother's room, she had just finished playing for a long time—that is why I did not expect her to play for me.

The Mother has played music from her childhood upwards—so it is no trouble to her to sing or play several times.

16 September 1933

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Why does my mind become so full of joy listening to the Mother's music? Today while listening to her play, my mind, my heart, my whole consciousness became full of peace and joy and then went high up somewhere.

What else is the Mother's music except the bringing down of these things? She does not play or sing merely for the music's

sake, but to call down the Divine Consciousness and its Powers.

16 September 1933

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Yesterday when the Mother was playing her music, I was much struck by the descent of forces in me. I clearly experienced these three elements: aspiration, surrender and the receiving of blessings. First, her soul as the immanent Divine aspired to the transcendent Divine; it was a call for her transcendent Self to come down and take possession of the downtrodden natures of her children. Then the surrender: in her zeal for union with her highest Divine Self, she almost loses herself. Then from the highest, her Voice comes down for the benefit of her children. She receives the blessings from above and showers them upon all her children. I do not know how far I am right.

I think it is fairly correct. At any rate the first and second parts are quite correct. I do not remember the third in this form but it was a firm assurance of the realisation. 27 September 1933

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Is it true that when the Mother plays on the organ she calls down the Gods of the higher planes to help us?

Not consciously.

9 February 1934

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You wrote in reply to my letter of yesterday: "Not consciously." Does it mean that the Gods are attracted to the Mother's music and so come down to hear it?

They may be.

10 February 1934

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When the Mother plays the organ, something new enters into my consciousness. Does she really bring down something while playing?

If she did not bring something, why should she play at all?

19 April 1934

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Yesterday I heard the Mother playing Indian music and a few days ago she was corresponding with X about Indian music.

The Mother's music has often been recognised by Y as Indian music of this or that raga. The Mother plays whatever comes through her — she does not usually play any previously composed music whether European or Indian — the latter in fact she has never learned.

11 September 1934

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Some people think that in the Overmind and Supermind there will be no need of prayer or aspiration. They must have forgotten that even our Mother has aspired constantly, day and night, or that when she plays her music we feel that she is praying.

Yes. All that is very true. It is a prayer or an invocation that Mother makes in the music.

1 June 1935

### **The Mother's Attitude towards Music and Other Arts**

Why should you think the Mother does not approve of expression, — provided it is the right expression of the right thing, — or suppose that silence and true expression are contradictory? The truest expression comes out of an absolute inner silence. The spiritual silence is not a mere emptiness; nor is it indispensable to abstain from all activity in order to find it.

26 April 1931

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For the moment I am answering only to your question about the music. Let me say at once that all of you seem to have too great an aptitude for making drastic conclusions on the strength of very minor facts. It is always perilous to take two or three small facts, put them together and build upon them a big inference. It

becomes still more dangerous when you emphasise minor facts and set aside or belittle the meaning of the main ones. In this case the main facts are (1) that the Mother has loved music all her life and found it a key to spiritual experience, (2) that she has given all encouragement to your music in special and to the music of others also. She has also made clear the relation of Art and Beauty with Yoga. It is therefore rather extraordinary that anyone should think she only tolerates music here and considers it inconsistent with Yoga. It is perfectly true that Music or Art are not either the first or the only thing in life for her, — any more than Poetry or Literature are with me, — the Divine, the divine consciousness, the discovery of the conditions for a divine life are and must be our one concern, with Art, Poetry or Music as parts or means only of the divine life or expression of the Divine Truth and the Divine Beauty. That does not mean that they are only “tolerated”, but that they are put in their right place.

29 October 1932

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At the music one or two words of X's song practically made me weep with rapture, and some of Y's soft and deep turns of phrase almost led to tears. Afterwards it was silence. Is it the Mahalakshmi aspect of the Mother that is working these days?

On the music days it is always the Mahalakshmi aspect that is prominent.

25 December 1933

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What can be stranger than this idea of yours that Mother likes only European music and does not like or appreciate Indian music — that she only pretends to do it or that she tolerates it so as not to discourage people! Remember that it is the Mother who has always praised and supported your music and put her force behind you so that your music might develop into spiritual perfection and beauty. In your poetry it was I that supported you most, in detail; the Mother could only do it with a general force, because she could not read the original (though she found them

in translations very beautiful), but that in music it has been just the other way round. You surely are not going to say that all that was unfelt? And the development of X? That too was Indian music, not European. And then when I write to you in praise of your music, do you think it is only my opinion that I am transmitting? Most often it is her words that I use to express our common feeling.

26 December 1933

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There have been instances where people have taken up music with your approval, and they have worked at it only to find out later that it was not their line. What a waste of time for nothing! This is the thought that curbs my enthusiasm for writing poetry. Otherwise I quite understand that one has to suffer the “pangs of delivery”. What do you say?

Approval or permission? People get it into their heads that they would like to do some music, because it is the fashion or because they like it so much, and the Mother may tolerate it or say, “All right, try.” That does not mean they are predestined or doomed to be musicians — or poets — or painters according to the case. Perhaps one of them who try may bloom, others drop off. X starts painting and shows only a fanciful dash at first, after a time he brings out work, remarkable work. Y does clever facile things; one day he begins to deepen and a possible painter in the making outlines. Others, — well, they don't. But they can try — they will learn something about painting at least.

Labour at your sestets if the spirit pushes you. The Angel of Poetry may be delivered out of the labour, even if with a forceps.

24 May 1935

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You have spoken of your singing. You know well that we approve of it and I have constantly stressed its necessity for you as well as that of your poetry. But the Mother absolutely forbade X's singing. To music for some again she is indifferent or discourages it, for others she approves as for Y, Z and others. For some time she encouraged the concerts, afterwards she stopped them.

You drew from the prohibition to X and the stopping of the concerts that Mother did not like music or did not like Indian music or considered music bad for sadhana and all sorts of strange mental reasons like that. Mother prohibited X because while music was good for you, it was spiritually poison to X — the moment he began to think of it and of audiences, all the vulgarity and unspirituality in his nature rose to the surface. You can see what he is doing with it now! So again with the concerts — though in a different way — she stopped them because she had seen that wrong forces were coming into their atmosphere which had nothing to do with the music in itself; her motives were not mental. It was for similar reasons that she drew back from big public displays like Udayshankar's. On the other hand she favoured and herself planned the exhibition of paintings at the Town Hall. She was not eager for you to have your big audiences for your singing because she found the atmosphere full of mixed forces and found too you had afterwards usually a depression; but she has always approved of your music in itself done privately or before a small audience. If you consider then, you will see that here there is no mental rule, but in each case the guidance is determined by spiritual reasons which are of a flexible character and look only at what in each case are the spiritual conditions, benefits, possibilities. There is no other consideration, no rule. Music, painting, poetry and many other activities which are of the mind and vital can be used as part of spiritual development or of the work and for a spiritual purpose — “it depends on the spirit in which they are done”.

24 October 1936

### Golconde<sup>1</sup>

The institution of visitors' cards was not made for love of discipline or rule-making, but out of practical necessity. People from the town were coming in pretending to be visitors and taking their meals in the dining room and unpermitted visitors were

<sup>1</sup> *A large Ashram residence and guesthouse built in the late 1930s. — Ed.*

passing themselves in for the Darshan; it was not possible for the dining room workers or the gatekeepers to know all the visitors or who were or were not genuine. I don't see myself why anybody should object or resent this necessary precaution. The alternative would be to let everybody who wanted enter for the Darshan and to let anybody who wanted to take his meal in the dining room. That would soon make things impossible.

As for X's handbag that is part of the special rules for Golconde. These rules, which do not obtain for the rest of the Asram houses, are read out to everybody who is to stay in Golconde and if he does not want he can be given accommodation elsewhere. X seemed to be very happy about his stay here; if he was not really so and felt badly about these rules, why on earth did he refuse to stay in your place?

I may mention that he told Y that there were two things he specially admired in the Asram, first the fact that everybody here rich or poor or of whatever caste was on the same level, and secondly the discipline of the Asram. He said, according to Y, that the absence of discipline was the great bane in India, neither individuals nor groups had any discipline. Then why did he weep merely because he was not allowed to put his handbag in a place not intended for it? I do not agree myself with him in the idea that there is perfect discipline in the Asram; on the contrary, there is a great lack of it, much indiscipline, quarrelling and self-assertion. What there is, is organisation and order which the Mother has been able to establish and maintain in spite of all that. That organisation and order is necessary for all collective work; it has been an object of admiration and surprise for all from outside who have observed the Asram; it is the reason why the Asram has been able to survive and outlive the malignant attacks of the Catholic priests and of many people in Pondicherry who would otherwise have got it dissolved long ago. The Mother knew very well what she was doing and what was necessary for the work she had to do.

Discipline itself is not something especially Western; in Oriental countries like Japan, China and India it was at one time all-regulating and supported by severe sanctions in a way that

Westerners would not tolerate. Socially whatever objections we may make to it, it is a fact that it preserved Hindu religion and Hindu society through the ages and through all vicissitudes. In the political field there was on the contrary indiscipline, individualism and strife; that is one reason why India collapsed and entered into servitude. Organisation and order were attempted but failed to endure. Even in the spiritual life India has had not only the free wandering ascetic, a law to himself, but has felt impelled to create orders of Sannyasins with their rules and governing bodies and there have also been monastic institutions with a strict discipline. Since no work can be done successfully without these things — even the individual worker, the artist for instance, has to go through a severe discipline in order to become efficient — why should the Mother be held to blame if she insists on discipline in the exceedingly difficult work she has had put in her charge?

I don't see on what ground you expect order and organisation to be carried on without rules and without discipline. You seem to say that people should be allowed complete freedom with only such discipline as they choose to impose upon themselves; that might do if the only thing to be done were for each individual to get some inner realisation and life did not matter or if there were no collective life or work or none that had any importance. But this is not the case here. We have undertaken a work which includes life and action and the physical world. In what I am trying to do, the spiritual realisation is the first necessity, but it cannot be complete without an outer realisation also in life, in man, in this world. Spiritual consciousness within but also spiritual life without. The Asram as it is now is not that ideal, for that all its members would have to live in a spiritual consciousness and not in the ordinary egoistic mind and mainly rajasic vital nature. But all the same, the Asram is a first form which our effort has taken, a field in which the preparatory work has to be done. The Mother has to maintain it and for that all this order and organisation has to be there and it cannot be done without rules and discipline. Discipline is even necessary for the overcoming of the ego and the mental preferences and

the rajasic vital nature, as a help to it at any rate. If these were overcome outward rules etc. would be less necessary; spontaneous agreement, unity, harmony and spontaneous right action might take its place. But while the present state of things exists, with the abandonment or leaving out of discipline except such as people might choose or not choose to impose upon themselves, the result would be failure and disaster. One has only to think what would have been the result if there had been no rules and no discipline prohibiting sex-indulgence; even with them things have not been so very good. On that principle the work also would have gone to pot, there would have been nothing but strife, assertion by each worker of his own idea and self-will and constant clashes; even as it is, that has abounded and it is only the Mother's authority, the frame of work she has given and her skill in getting incompatibles to act together that has kept things going.

I do not find that Mother is a rigid disciplinarian. On the contrary, I have seen with what a constant leniency, tolerant patience and kindness she has met the huge mass of indiscipline, disobedience, self-assertion, revolt that has surrounded her, even abuse to her very face and violent letters overwhelming her with the worst kind of vituperation. A rigid disciplinarian would not have treated these things like that.

I do not know what ill-treatment visitors have received, apart from the insistence on rules of which you complain, but it cannot be a general complaint, otherwise the number of visitors would not be constantly increasing nor would so many people want to come back again or even come every time or so many want to stay on if the Mother allowed them. After all they do not come here on the basis of a social occasion but for Darshan of those whom they regard to be spiritually great or in the case of constant visitors for a share in the life of the Ashram and for spiritual advantage and for both of these motives one would expect them to submit willingly to the conditions imposed and not to mind a little inconvenience.

As regards Golconde and its rules — they are not imposed elsewhere — there is a reason for them and they are not imposed

for nothing. In Golconde Mother has worked out her own idea through Raymond, Sammer and others. First, Mother believes in beauty as a part of spirituality and divine living; secondly, she believes that physical things have the Divine Consciousness underlying them as much as living things; and thirdly, that they have an individuality of their own and ought to be properly treated, used in the right way, not misused or improperly handled or hurt or neglected so that they perish soon or lose their full beauty or value; she feels the consciousness in them and is so much in sympathy with them that what in other hands may be spoilt or wasted in a short time lasts with her for years or decades. It is on this basis that she planned Golconde. First, she wanted a high architectural beauty, and in this she succeeded — architects and people with architectural knowledge have admired it with enthusiasm as a remarkable achievement; one spoke of it as the finest building of its kind he had seen, with no equal in all Europe or America; and a French architect, pupil of a great master, said it executed superbly the idea which his master had been seeking for but failed to realise; but also she wanted all the objects in it, the rooms, the fittings, the furniture to be individually artistic and to form a harmonious whole. This too was done with great care. Moreover, each thing was arranged to have its own use, for each thing there was a place, and there should be no mixing up, or confused and wrong use. But all this had to be kept up and carried out in practice; for it was easy for people living there to create a complete confusion and misuse and to bring everything to disorder and ruination in a short time. That was why the rules were made and for no other purpose. The Mother hoped that if the right people were accommodated there or others trained to a less rough and ready living than is common, her idea could be preserved and the wasting of all the labour and expense avoided.

Unfortunately the crisis of accommodation came and we were forced to house people in Golconde who could not be accommodated elsewhere and a careful choice could not be made. So, often there was damage and misuse and the Mother had to spend sometimes 200/300 Rupees after Darshan to repair

things and restore what had been realised. Z has taken the responsibility of the house and of keeping things right as much as possible. That was why she interfered in the handbag affair — it was as much a tragedy for the table as for the doctor, for it got scratched and spoiled by the handbag — and tried to keep both the bag and shaving utensils in the places that had been assigned for them. If I had been in the doctor's place, I would have been grateful to her for her care and solicitude instead of being upset by what ought to have been for him trifles although, because of her responsibility, they had for her their importance. Anyhow, this is the rationale for the rules and they do not seem to me to be meaningless regulation and discipline.

Finally, about financial arrangements. It has been an arduous and trying work for the Mother and myself to keep up this Asram, with its ever-increasing numbers, to make both ends meet and at times to prevent deficit budgets and their results, especially in this war time, when the expenses have climbed to a dizzy and fantastic height. Only one accustomed to these things or who had similar responsibilities can understand what we have gone through. Carrying on anything of this magnitude without any settled income could not have been done if there had not been the working of a Divine Force. Works of charity are not part of our work, there are other people who can see to that. We have to spend all on the work we have taken in hand and what we get is nothing compared to what is needed. We cannot undertake things that would bring in money in the ordinary ways. We have to use whatever means are possible. There is no general rule that spiritual men must do works of charity or they should receive and care for whatever visitors come or house and feed them. If we do it, it is because it has become part of our work. The Mother charges visitors for accommodation and food because she has expenses to meet and cannot make money out of air; she charges in fact less than her expense. It is quite natural that she should not like people to take advantage of her and allow those who try to take meals in the dining room under false pretences; even if they are a few at first, yet if this were allowed, a few would soon become a legion. As for people being

allowed to come in freely for Darshan without permission, which would soon convert me into a thing for show and an object of curiosity, often critical or hostile curiosity, it is I who would be the first to cry “stop”.

I have tried to explain our standpoint and have gone to some length to do it. Whether it is agreed with or not, at any rate it is a standpoint and I think a rational one. I am writing only on the surface and I do not speak of what is behind or from the Yogic standpoint, the standpoint of the Yogic consciousness from which we act; that would be more difficult to express. This is merely for intellectual satisfaction, and there there is always room for dispute.

25 February 1945

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As for Golconde, it is in that house of all the 80 or more houses in the Asram that she has been trying to carry out her idea of physical things, their harmony and order and proper treatment, she has not been imposing it elsewhere except in the matter of cleanliness and hygiene, which are surely not objectionable. I may say that you are mistaken in thinking that everybody who stays in Golconde is in a state of misery or revolt. On the contrary, there are many who have asked to be put and are put there at their own request every time they come. And they are not Europeans. Mother thoroughly appreciated and praised the old Indian way of living, its simplicity, harmony and order when she saw it exemplified by X and his brother in the Asram, but that is not the way of living most prevalent nowadays which is a mixture. Chairs, tables, electric fans etc. are European introductions, but I don't suppose those who have got accustomed to them would like to give them up or return to the true simplicity of Indian life. That however is by the way. But I fail to see why you should treat this external trifle as of so stupendous an importance. Mother should be free to carry out her idea in this corner of her kingdom; all that is to be seen is that those who violently dislike it should not stay in Golconde.

25 October 1945

### The French Book *L'Ether Vivant*

Many of the questions asked in your letter about the condition after death are dealt with in the French book *L'Ether Vivant*. This book was written by Paul Richard, but all the substance was taken by him from the Mother, as he himself had no knowledge about these things. You can send the book to the Mother and she will mark the passages. You should also read what is said in the *Conversations* about these things. 18 November 1931

### Meeting the Dead

Is there any indication the Mother has received to tell her that my brother's soul really wanted at the end to come to her Light and the Master's?

Mother cannot say particularly because so many people come to her in the night for the passage to the other side whom she has not known in the body. Your brother may very well have been one of them and in view of X's account, there is little doubt that he must have been. December 1933

\*

When Mother said that it was not good to try to meet the dead, she was speaking from a spiritual standpoint which is not usually known or regarded by the spiritists. 25 August 1936

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It is not for everything that the souls of the departed come direct to the Mother, but this is a special action of hers and usually she sees the persons whom she has to help. But she has seen only X's mental being and it was still interested in earthly things; his vital being she has not seen and it is that that usually comes for help. Some however come at a later stage of the passage and not at first. 8 December 1936

### Speaking to People about Past Lives

The Mother only speaks to people about their past births when she sees definitely some scene or memory of their past in concentration; but this happens rarely nowadays. 30 June 1933

\*

Mother does not usually look into past lives; only when things come of themselves from the past she looks. 24 July 1934

### Sending Ethereal Beings to the Sadhaks

X said that ever since he wrote the sonnet “Hieroglyphics” as a joke, sonnets no longer come to him; this, you said, is because sonnets have a being of their own which is shocked by any crudity, jesting or misuse. My mind then caught the idea that there are beings, probably of the intuitive plane, who have very subtle and refined vibrations. At times they enter human beings and then something of their peace, refinement and purity manifests in men. But if there is anger, passion, desire, vanity or unrefinement, they recede and live in their own region. These beings are ethereal, peaceful, pure, loving, shy, like beautiful children. One should not injure their sense of harmony, purity, refinement and beauty by allowing any lower vital crudities. Mother sends one of these beings to each of us according to his possibility.

There is much truth in what you write — there are beings of that kind and your description is good. But it is not to *each* one that Mother sends them — only to some when there is an opening.

28 January 1934

### An Occult or Yogic Faculty

X has reported Mother’s observation correctly but he does not seem to have understood it. The Mother never meant that by merely willing one could know at once what was in someone else or that all one’s impressions about him would be spontaneously and infallibly correct. What she meant was that there

is a faculty or power (an occult or Yogic faculty) by which one can get the right perceptions and impressions and if one has the will to do so, one can develop it. Not at once, not by an easy method—tra la la and there you are: it may take years and one has to be careful and scrupulous about it. For these are intuitive perceptions and intuition is a thing that can easily be imitated by many other movements of consciousness that are much more fallible. Your impressions may be mental or vital and a mental or vital impression may have something to justify it or may not—but even in the first case there is no certainty at all that it will be correct; even if there is that something, it may be incorrectly caught or caught with much mixture of error, twisted into falsehood, put in the wrong way etc. etc. And there may be no justification at all; it may be a mere wrong formation of your own mind or vital or else somebody else's wrong impression conveyed to you and accepted by you as your own. Your impression may be the result of a want of affinity between you and the other person, so that if he impresses you as null and neutral, it is because you cannot feel what is in him, it does not come home to you—or, again, if you feel that he is in a wrong condition, it may be only because his vital vibrations rub yours the wrong way. There are lots of things like that which one must have the power to distinguish very carefully and exactly; until one knows one's own consciousness and its operations well, one cannot know the operations of the consciousness of others. But it is possible to develop a certain direct sight or a certain direct feeling or contact by which one can know, but only after much time and much careful, scrupulous and vigilant observation and self-training. Till then one can't go about saying that this is an advanced sadhak or that one is not advanced and that other is no good at all. Even if one knows, it is not necessary always to air one's knowledge.

9 February 1935

### **The Mother Takes upon Herself Difficulties and Illnesses**

Why did the Mother fall ill last time, she who is beyond the reach of death and disease? Why did she take medicine like

her blind children, she who is the cause of all medicines? Why did she suffer innocently like her frail children? Was it all a show to mask her infiniteness? Kindly write something to stop these questions in my mind.

It is much easier for the sadhak by faith in the Mother to get free from illness than for the Mother to keep free — because the Mother by the very nature of her work had to identify herself with the sadhaks, to support all their difficulties, to receive into herself all the poison in their nature, to take up besides all the difficulties of the universal earth-Nature, including the possibility of death and disease in order to fight them out. If she had not done that, not a single sadhak would have been able to practise this Yoga. The Divine has to put on humanity in order that the human being may rise to the Divine. This is a simple truth, but nobody in the Asram seems able to understand that the Divine can do that and yet remain different from them — can still remain the Divine. 8 May 1933

\*

People believe that their difficulties and illnesses are taken away by the Mother and so she sometimes suffers or, as X puts it, “Mother has to pay.” Is this suffering due to the identity of consciousness that the Mother calls into play and thus enters into the depths of obscure Matter? But at that rate there would be too great an onrush of these things on her from many sadhaks. An idea comes to me of taking upon myself some of these difficulties and illnesses so that I can also suffer with her pleasantly?

Pleasantly? It would be anything but pleasant either for you or for us.

But perhaps all these ideas are only conjectures of people.

It is rather a crude statement of a fact. The Mother in order to do her work had to take all the sadhaks inside her personal being and consciousness; thus personally (not merely impersonally) taken inside, all the disturbances and difficulties in them including illness could throw themselves upon her in a way that

could not have happened if she had not renounced the self-protection of separateness. Not only illnesses of others could translate themselves into attacks on her body — these she could generally throw off as soon as she knew from what quarter and why it came — but their inner difficulties, revolts, outbursts of anger and hatred against her could have the same and a worse effect. That was the only danger for her (because inner difficulties are easily surmountable), but matter and the body are the weak point or crucial point of our Yoga, since this province has never been conquered by the spiritual Power, the old Yogas having either left it alone or used on it only a detailed mental and vital force, not the general spiritual force. It was the reason why after a serious illness caused by a terribly bad state of the Asram atmosphere, I had to insist on her partial retirement so as to minimise the most concrete part of the pressure upon her. Naturally the full conquest of the physical would revolutionise matters, but as yet it is the struggle.

31 March 1934

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Is it inevitable that in the process of conversion and transformation all these resistances, disturbances, revolts should come? Could they be eliminated to some extent from the very beginning of one's sadhana so that there would be less of these things for the Mother to take into herself?

The nature of the terrestrial consciousness and of humanity being what it is, these things were to some extent inevitable. It is only a very few who escape with the slighter adverse movements only. But after a time these things should disappear. It does so disappear in individuals — but there seems to be a great difficulty in getting it to disappear from the atmosphere of the Asram — somebody or other always takes it up and from him it tries to spread to others. It is of course because there is behind it one of the principles of life according to the Ignorance — a deeply rooted tendency of vital Nature. But it is the very aim of sadhana to overcome that and substitute a truer and diviner vital Force.

1 April 1934

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You have written to me that standing is not good for Mother, and yet I see the Mother standing in concentration on the staircase for at least fifteen minutes every night. Remembering what you told me, I feel so anxious. I feel she has only to sit down on a seat or a chair. Can it not be done, please?

When Mother stands on the stairs in full concentration it is quite a different thing from standing talking with people. In the former condition nothing can touch her. In the second she has to identify herself with the general physical consciousness and open herself to its forces, so the conditions are not the same. Nowadays there is an improvement in the physical, but still limits must be kept.

5 November 1934

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There are people who tend to take away one's vital strength. What should one do? Should one not talk to others or merely exchange smiles with them or walk gravely past them? Should one try to help others at all?

The danger of helping others is the danger of taking upon oneself their difficulties. If one can keep oneself separate and help, this does not occur. But the tendency in helping is to take the person partially or completely into one's larger self. That is what the Mother has had to do with the sadhaks and the reason why she has sometimes to suffer — for one cannot always be on guard against any backwash when one is absorbed or in action. There is also the difficulty that the persons helped get the habit of drawing and pulling on your forces instead of leaving it to you to give just what you can and ought to give. And many other smaller possibilities one who helps others has to face.

29 January 1935

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Somebody told me that when the Mother tries to do something with X, if his vital does not agree, he revolts against her with such a force that it sometimes brings illness to her body.

There are many who did that in the past. I don't know that he

does it now. But all bad thoughts upon the Mother or throwing of impurities on her may affect her body as she has taken the sadhaks into her consciousness, nor can she send these things back to them as it might hurt them. 17 March 1936

\*

Do people really throw their impurities on the Mother or does she draw their impurities into herself in order to purify them?

There is not the slightest necessity for the Mother drawing impurities into herself — any more than for the sadhak inviting impurity to come into himself. Impurity has to be thrown away, not drawn in. 18 March 1936

\*

I don't know whether the Mother was joking or was serious when she wrote to me: "But why should I have any desires either? You want me to be burdened with desires about you, so that you be free from desires? That might be good for you — not for me." I suppose this was a joke. Certainly we all wish to unload our desires on the Mother so that she may reject them or transform them.

The idea of unburdening desires, imperfections, impurities, illnesses on the Mother so that she may bear the results instead of the sadhaks is a curious one. I suppose it is a continuation of the Christian idea of Christ suffering on the cross for the sake of humanity. But it has nothing to do with the Yoga of transformation. 1 November 1936

\*

Do our grumblings and imputations against the Mother hurt her in some way? Does this have any undesirable effect on her body?

I cannot say that it does not have an effect — sometimes it may not have, if she is on her guard, at other times it has. It is not the imputations that do it, but the force behind which throws the darkness in you and takes the form of a vital upsetting in you

but passes on to her as an attack on the body since other things in her are unattackable. That is why these moods should never be formed against her. 12 January 1937

\*

What you saw is correct, but if the attitude of the sadhak is the true psychic attitude, then the Mother has not to suffer; she can act on them without anything falling on her. 22 January 1937

\*

Mother has stopped the Pranam because something happened with her eyes. Sometimes we notice that she catches a cold. How do these things happen since she is the incarnated Divine?

It is due to attacks. As the material is not yet conquered, the Mother's body has to bear the attacks which come daily and to which the sadhaks freely open the doors. If she cut off her consciousness altogether from that of the sadhaks or put them outside her consciousness, these things would not happen.

8 February 1937

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I could not help writing in order to know why the Mother's left cheek was swollen. I was shocked to see it at the Sunday meditation. Is it due to the impurities of the sadhaks thrown on her, which she gladly receives for our relief? Or is it due to some other reason?

It is due to the impurities of the sadhaks thrown on the Mother.

How calmly she bears the agonies of her children. Is there no end to it? Will it disappear after the full transformation of the physical?

There seems to be no remedy possible before the physical change. If the Mother puts an inner wall between her and the sadhaks, it would not happen, but then they would be unable to receive anything from her. If all were more careful to come to her with

their deepest or highest consciousness, then there would be less chance of these things happening. 3 May 1937

### **The Mother and Medicines**

I know that we inflict a lot of undesirable things on the Mother and that sometimes she does not reject them, but takes them upon herself. But why should she not reject her cold and accept a medicine to do it? I am therefore enclosing a new phial, an olfactory; Mother should take half-a-dozen inhalations in each nostril four times a day. That is all that is necessary.

Mother does not use medicines so it is no use sending them to her. But there are people who send to her suggestions such as “Oh you are very ill, you won't be able to sit through the Pranam” and some of these are thrown with force and she has to work them out of the system, as happened today at Pranam. If you will give these people a medicine which will stop this habit of theirs, it will be very useful. 5 September 1936

\*

I am afraid Mother still has a strong photophobia. X said there is ptosis also . . .

What is ptosis?

which may remain if neglected.

Why do people make such prognostications? Suggestions of the kind ought never to be made, mentally even — they might act like suggestions and do more harm than any good medicines could do.

X doesn't understand, and neither do I, why Mother doesn't take kindly to medicines and doctors when it could be cured in a short time, he says. Well, what could I say! Shall we stop medical reports or do you see them? Frankly, I don't know how much our allopathic medicines can help.

Then why don't you understand? If medicines can't help, what's the use of putting foreign matter in the eye merely because it is a medicine? Medicines have a quite different action on the Mother's body than they would have on yours or X's or anybody else's and the reaction is not usually favourable. Her physical consciousness is not the same as that of ordinary people — though even in ordinary people it is not so identical in all cases as science would have us believe.

1 February 1937

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I am surprised to hear that even "prognostications" are very harmful. So far we have taken these things as simple superstitions.

Prognostications of that kind should not be lightly thought or spoken — especially in the case of the Mother — in other cases, even if there is a possibility or probability, they should be kept confidential from the person affected, unless it is necessary to inform. This is because of the large part played by state of consciousness and suggestion in illness.

What is ptosis? Ptosis means drooping of the upper eyelid by a paralysis temporary or otherwise.

But, confound it, there is nothing of the kind. The drooping of the eyelid was quite voluntary.

2 February 1937

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Whatever little doctors have found by experience to be effective, you absolutely disallow. For instance, they recommend Calomel for diarrhoea; you say it is not to be given . . .

It is no use discussing these matters — the Mother's views are too far removed from the traditional nostrums to be understood by a medical mind, except those that have got out of the traditional groove or those who after long experience have seen things and can become devastatingly frank about the limitations of their own "science".

Milk of Magnesia is usually harmless; but it can also be harmful, as it was in this case.

Ideas differ. Both the Mother and X were horrified at the idea of a child of 4 months being given a purgative. The leading children's doctor in France told the Mother no child under 12 months should be given a purgative, as it is likely to do great harm and may be dangerous. But here, we understand, it is the practice to dose children freely with purgatives from their day of birth almost. Perhaps that and overadministration of medicines is one cause of excessive infant mortality. 4 April 1937

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Once Mother asked me to try this method of diagnosis: instead of analysing the various possibilities and probabilities and then diagnosing by elimination, to just keep quiet and go at it. So also in the case of choosing medicines. Just wait for the true intuition of the thing to come.

Well, so that's how the Mother's statements are understood! A free permit for anything and everything calling itself an intuition to go crashing into the field of action! Go at it, indeed! Poor it!

What the Mother says in the matter is what she said to Dr. X with his entire agreement — viz. reading from symptoms by the doctors is usually a mere balancing between possibilities (of course except in clear and simple cases) and the conclusion is a guess. It may be a right guess and then it will be all right, or it may be a wrong guess and then all will be wrong unless Nature is too strong for the doctor and overcomes the consequences of his error — or at the least the treatment will be ineffective. On the contrary if one develops the diagnostic flair, one can see at once what is the real thing among the possibilities and see what is to be done. That is what the most successful doctors have, — they have this flashlight which shows them the true point. X agreed and said the cause of the guessing was that there were whole sets of symptoms which could belong to any one of several diseases and to decide is a most delicate and subtle business, no amount of book knowledge or reasoning will ensure a right decision. A

special insight is needed that looks through the symptoms and not merely at them. This last sentence, by the way, is my own, not X's. About development of intuition afterwards — no time tonight. 6 April 1937

\*

I am afraid X has obstinate constipation. Treatment? Well, I am damned, for except enema castor oil is the medicine for children in our “science”.

All “science” does not recommend castor oil for children — I think it is a nineteenth century fad which has prolonged itself. The Mother's “children's doctor” told her it should not be done — also in her own case when a child the doctors peremptorily stopped it on the ground that it spoiled the stomach and liver. I suppose you will say doctors disagree? They do! When Y's child reached Madras, the first doctor said “Stop mother's milk for three days”, the second said “Mother's milk to be taken at once, at once!” So, sir. Anyhow for X Mother proposes diet first — small bananas Z will give, very good for constipation — papaya if available in the garden. Also as he is pimply, cocoanut water on an empty stomach. Afterwards we can see if medicine is necessary. 9 April 1937

### The Mother and Eye Treatment

I believe the Mother is using glasses for reading. Would she like to try my treatment [*palming, etc.*]?

The Mother has seen that these methods are perfectly effective, but she cannot follow a treatment because she has no time. Her sight is variable: when she can rest and concentrate a little and do what is necessary, she can read without glasses. 8 July 1934

### Giving Money to the Mother

You will find with this a letter from the Mother giving you her point of view with regard to the request for a written statement

from herself about approaching people for money. You must make X understand that this is not done and cannot be done. If he feels moved to do this as work for the Mother, the knowledge that it is needed should be enough. It is not a question of a public appeal for funds, but of getting friends and sympathisers to help. You will see from the Mother's letter the spirit in which it should be done.

circa 29 April 1938

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The Mother has never objected to people who "cannot pay" residing or visiting the Ashram without paying; she expects payment only from visitors who can pay. She did object strongly to the action of some rich visitors (on one occasion) who came here, spent money lavishly on purchases etc. and went off without giving anything to the Ashram or even the smallest offering to the Mother, that is all.

21 October 1943

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My book is going into a second edition. The publisher promises to send me what he owes me (to be offered to the Mother, of course). So far he hasn't sent me a pice. I wonder how much he will send in the end? Do you think I am getting too commercial?

If you give the money to the Mother, that can't be commercial; commerce implies personal profit, and here your profit is only spiritual.

2 April 1944

### **The Mother's Accounts**

X showed me the play of numbers in his account book today. The total was Rs. 7 As. 7 Ps. 7. Today is also the 7th day of the 7th month of the year and after I decided to write to you about this I saw that the number on the door of the house where I was working was also 7. Elsewhere one does not come across such a play of numbers. I think it occurs here because the numbers (perhaps the occult beings of numbers) feel at ease in our atmosphere — as do the sparrows in the main building! — and they play with the numbers if one plays upon them and

loves them. In government departments and other places they feel the atmosphere mechanical, heavy and rigorous and so they do not find any joy in such play.

I suppose your explanation is correct — at least from the occult point of view. The Mother is always having these numerical harmonies in her accounts. 7 July 1936

### The Mother's Attire

Why does the Mother wear rich and beautiful clothes?

Beauty is as much an expression of the Divine as Knowledge, Power or Ananda. Does anyone ask why does the Mother want to manifest the divine consciousness by knowledge or by power and not by ignorance and weakness?<sup>2</sup> It would not be a more absurd or meaningless question than this one put by the vital against wearing artistic and beautiful dress. 27 February 1933

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Does it make any difference to the Mother's consciousness whether she puts on the best saris or the old ones, whether she lives in a palace or in a forest? What do these outer things add to the inner reality?

Outer things are the expression of something in the inner reality. A fine sari or a palace are expressions of the principle of beauty in things and that is their main value. The Divine Consciousness is not bound by these things and has no attachment, but it is also not bound to abstain from them if beauty in things is part of its intended action. The Mother, when the Asram was still unformed, was wearing patched cotton saris; when she took up the work, it was necessary to change her habits, so she did so.

22 October 1935

<sup>2</sup> *The Mother also replied to this question. She wrote: "Is it your idea that the Divine should be represented on earth by poverty and ugliness?" — Ed.*

### The Mother's Photograph

When I get sleepy during meditation, I often just sit in a quietly concentrated wakefulness and look at the Mother's photo or your photo. Can I get the same amount of benefit simply by looking at Mother's photo or yours with all the concentration I can command?

Yes, very many do.

Sometimes in that state I pray; sometimes the inside is void — no thoughts or words at all, so I simply gaze. Am I pursuing the right line?

Yes.

10 March 1933

### The Mother's Naming of Cats

The Mother gave names for cats because they understand and answer; she has never given any for birds and does not wish to do it. Now even for cats she is not giving names. 28 April 1932

### The Mother's Symbol

In the chakra which is printed on the book *The Mother*, what colours are appropriate for the central dot and for the "four powers"? I am thinking of preparing a powder design with a little addition at the circumference.

Centre and 4 powers white. The 12 all of different colours, in three groups, (1) top group red passing through orange towards yellow, (2) next group yellow passing through green towards blue, (3) blue passing through violet towards red. If white is not convenient, the centre may be gold (powder). 20 March 1934

\*

In the chakra for the central circle you have asked me to use either white or gold — suppose I use gold at the centre, then should I use white at the strap around it? In that case the straps

around the two bigger circles will have gold and the central strap alone will have white.

The central circle need not have a strap — simply a gold disc.

11 April 1934

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I have frequently been thinking of the Mother's symbol (chakra) and its significance. I have understood it as follows:

Central circle — Transcendental power.

Four inner petals — Four powers working from the Supermind to Overmind.

Twelve outer petals — Division of four into twelve powers from Overmind to Intuition and mind.

Is my conception at all tenable?

Essentially (in general principle) the 12 powers are the vibrations that are necessary for the complete manifestation. These are the 12 seen from the beginning above the Mother's head. Thus there are really 12 rays from the sun, not 7, 12 planets etc.

As to the exact interpretation of the detail of the powers, I see nothing against the arrangement you have made. It can stand very well.

15 April 1934

### **The Mother's Flag**

About the blue flag. I presume you mean the flag with the white lotus. If so, it is the Mother's flag, for the white lotus is her symbol as the red lotus is mine. The blue of the flag is meant to be the colour of Krishna and so represents the spiritual or Divine Consciousness which it is her work to establish so that it may reign upon earth. This is the meaning of the flag being used as the Ashram flag, that our work is to bring down this consciousness and make it the leader of the world's life.

14 March 1949

## Section Five

### On Three Works of the Mother



# On *Prières et Méditations* *de la Mère*

## General Comments on the Mother's *Prières*<sup>1</sup>

There are some prayers of the Mother written before she came here in 1914 in which there are ideas of transformation and manifestation. Did she have these ideas long before she came here?

The Mother had been spiritually conscious from her youth, even from her childhood, upward and she had done sadhana and developed this knowledge very long before she came to India.

23 December 1933

\*

In some of the Mother's prayers which are addressed to "*divin Maître*" I find the words: "*avec notre divine Mère*". How can the Mother and "*divin Maître*" have a "*divine Mère*"? It is as if the Mother was not the "*divine Mère*" and there was some other Mother, and the "*divin Maître*" was not the Transcendent and had also a "*divine Mère*"! Or is it that all these are addressed to something impersonal?

The Prayers are mostly written in an identification with the earth-consciousness. It is the Mother in the lower nature addressing the Mother in the higher nature, the Mother herself carrying on the sadhana of the earth-consciousness for the transformation praying to herself above from whom the forces of transformation come. This continues till the identification of the earth-consciousness and the higher consciousness is effected. The word "*notre*" is general, I believe, referring to all born into the earth-consciousness — it does not mean "the Mother of

<sup>1</sup> First published in 1932 as *Prières et Méditations de la Mère*, this book is now published as *Prières et Méditations* (Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1990). The page numbers given after phrases quoted from the prayers in this subsection refer to the 1990 edition. Translations of the French words are given in the Note on the Texts. — Ed.

the ‘*Divin Maître*’ and myself”. It is the Divine who is always referred to as *Divin Maître* and *Seigneur*. There is the Mother who is carrying on the sadhana and the Divine Mother, both being one but in different poises, and both turn to the *Seigneur* or Divine Master. This kind of prayer from the Divine to the Divine you will find also in the Ramayan and the Mahabharat.

21 August 1936

\*

Mother, I have started reading your prayers in the French original with X. May I get one copy for myself?

The rule is that Mother never gives a copy unless she gets a letter in French written by the person without help asking for it. He must know enough French to do that. 14 September 1936

### Comments on Specific *Prières*

In her prayer of 17 May 1914, the Mother says, “*Telles furent les deux phrases que j’écrivis hier par une sorte de nécessité absolue. La première, comme si la puissance de la prière ne serait complète que si elle était tracée sur le papier.*” [p. 158]

Is it true that a prayer is less powerful when it is kept within oneself and not expressed in speech or writing? Is its expression necessary to make it completely powerful?

It was not meant as a general rule — it was only a necessity felt with regard to that particular prayer and that experience. It all depends on the person, the condition, the need of the moment or of that stage or phase of the consciousness. These things in spiritual experience are always plastic and variable. In some conditions or in one phase or at one moment expression may be needed to bring out the effectuating force of the prayer or the stability of the experience; in another condition or phase or at another moment it may be the opposite, expression would rather disperse the force or break the stability. 21 June 1936

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Nothing seems more important to me than that “*Ta splendeur*

*veut rayonner*” [p. 192], as the Mother says in her prayer of 16 June 1914. Ideas of sadhana or of perfection for oneself or of being an instrument seem flat and insipid. After all, the individual does not really exist when considered from the standpoint of the vast universal movement of consciousness.

It is correct. Perfection for oneself is not the true ideal; sadhana and instrumentation are only useful as a means for the “*rayonnement*”.

22 April 1936

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The passage in the *Prières* that came up tonight is this: “*et le raisonnement est une faculté humaine, c’est-à-dire individuelle*” [p. 201]. I am not able to see what it points to.

When the divine consciousness is veiled, one has to fall back on the reason, but the human reason is an individual action quite unreliable. That is the sense.

18 June 1932

\*

The Mother says in her prayer of 31 July 1914 that spiritual experience is willed (“*elle est consciente, voulue*” [p. 231]) by the Divine. Am I then to suppose that the dearth or abundance of experiences in any given case is willed by the Divine?

To say so has no value unless you realise all things as coming from the Divine. One who has realised as the Mother had realised in the midst of terrible sufferings and difficulties that even these came from the Divine and were preparing her for her work can make spiritual use of such an attitude. For others it may lead to wrong conclusions.

10 May 1934

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The Mother, in her prayer of 4 August 1914, says: “*Les hommes, poussés par le conflit des forces, accomplissent un sublime sacrifice*” [p. 235]. Apparently she refers to the great war; but as a result of that war, has any “*pure lumière*” filled the hearts of men or the “*Force Divine*” spread on earth as she says later in the same prayer; has anything beneficial come

out of that chaos? Since the nations are once more preparing for war and are in a state of constant conflict, there seems to be no indication of any change in the inner condition of men. People want war. Even people in a country like India seem to secretly wish for another great war. Hardly anyone seems to require Peace, Light or Love.

There has been a change for the worse—the descent of the vital world into the human. On the other hand except in the “possessed” nations there is a greater longing for peace and feeling that such things ought not to happen. India did not get any real touch of the war. However what the Mother was thinking of was an opening to the spiritual truth. That has at least tried to come. There is a widespread dissatisfaction with the old material civilisation, a seeking for some deeper light and truth—only unfortunately it is being taken advantage of by the old religions and only a very small minority is consciously searching for the new Light.

9 June 1936

\*

You say that after the great war there was “the descent of the vital world into the human”. But did not the vital world already descend on earth—in Matter—even before human beings came? What other vital world remained yet to descend into the human? And how is it that it decided to come down just at present—to prevent the higher Light from coming down or finding room in the human world?

When there is a pressure on the vital world due to the preparing Descent from above, that world usually precipitates something of itself into the human. The vital world is very large and far exceeds the human in extent. But usually it dominates by influence not by descent. Of course the effort of this part of the vital world is always to maintain humanity under its sway and prevent the higher Light.

9 June 1936

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If, as you say, there has been a “change for the worse” due to the descent of the vital world, would it not make the

supramental descent in the earth-consciousness impossible or postpone its coming to some distant future instead of here and now? Moreover, the “possessed” nations are endowed with all the possible material power, making it difficult for any movement of peace to be successful. Except for their egoistic plans, nothing will be allowed to succeed.

The vital descent cannot prevent the supramental — still less can the possessed nations do it by their material power, since the supramental descent is primarily a spiritual fact which will bear its necessary outward consequences. What previous vital descents have done is to falsify the Light that came down as in the history of Christianity where it took possession of the teaching and distorted it and deprived it of any widespread fulfilment. But the supermind is by definition a Light that cannot be distorted if it acts in its own right and by its own presence. It is only when it holds itself back and allows inferior Powers of consciousness to use a diminished and already deflected Truth that the knowledge can be seized by the vital Forces and made to serve their own purpose.

12 June 1936

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In her prayer of 16 August 1914, the Mother refers to “*chacun des grands êtres Asouriques qui ont résolu d’être Tes serviteurs*” [p. 244]. How is it that the Asuras have determined to be the servants of the Divine? Is it exploitation or a “*coup de diplomatie*”?

It was in reference to Asuras who had taken birth in human bodies — a thing they usually avoid if they can, for they prefer to possess human beings without taking birth — with the claim that they wanted to regenerate themselves by serving the Divine and doing his work. It did not succeed very well.

15 June 1936

\*

Who are the “*grands êtres Asouriques*” mentioned by the Mother who had taken birth in human bodies claiming to serve the Divine? Since they are “*grands*” they must have been well-known persons. I can see only one — Rasputin. Hitler,

Stalin and Co. do not claim to serve the Divine.

Mother was not speaking of these but of others met by herself. But “*grands*” here does not mean great in the worldly sense, that is incarnating in famous people, but powerful in the vital world. 20 June 1936

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In her prayer of 8 October 1914, the Mother says: “*La joie contenue dans l’activité est compensée et équilibrée par la joie plus grande peut-être encore contenue dans le retrait de toute activité*” [p. 286]. This state of “greater joy” (“*la joie plus grande*”), Mother explains, is that of Sachchidananda. Does this not suggest that there is a joy in non-activity superseding that of activity? If such be the case, one would naturally aspire for this greater joy, since an ever greater joy is the aim of our sadhana. Is it not so?

Do you think the Mother has a rigid mind like you people and was laying down a hard and fast rule for all time and all people and all conditions? It refers to a certain stage when the consciousness is sometimes in activity and when not in activity is withdrawn in itself. Afterwards comes a stage when the Sachchidananda condition is there in work also. There is a still farther stage when both are as it were one, but that is the supramental. The two states are the silent Brahman and the active Brahman and they can alternate (1st stage), coexist (2d stage), fuse (3d stage). If you reach even the first stage then you can think of applying Mother’s dictum, but why misapply it now?

My question is this: can this state of greater joy, Sachchidananda, be realised while one is actually doing work?

Certainly it is realisable in work. Good Lord! how could the integral Yoga exist if it were not? 22 December 1934

\*

In her prayer of 3 November 1914, the Mother says that “*dans tous les coins du monde une de Tes divines pierres est posée par la puissance de la pensée consciente et formatrice*”

[p. 296]. Is this not similar to the fact that when Rama came he had with him some Devas and other higher beings to assist him in his work on the earth? I believe there are various such “divine stones” (“*divines pierres*”) now in various countries who will be gradually called to assist in the work of manifestation. Perhaps just now they are not awakened and called.

It is very probable. But at present it is only in France that anyone is awake, with some movement towards it in America. People from other parts have sometimes come and gone, but they were evidently not the stones chosen. 5 September 1936

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The Mother’s prayer of 12 December 1914 begins: “*Il faut à chaque instant savoir tout perdre pour tout gagner*” [p. 311]. The Isha Upanishad says: “*tena tyaktena bhunñjīthāḥ*”. To gain all by losing all comes to the same thing as to enjoy by renouncing. Both ideas seem to have the same source in the depths.

Yes, certainly. It is essentially the same truth put in different ways. It might be put in a negative form — “if we cling to things as they are in their imperfection in the Ignorance, we cannot have them in their truth and perfection in the Divine Light, Harmony and Ananda.” 16 August 1935

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[In her prayer of 20 December 1916, the Mother wrote out a long “communication” she received in her evening meditation from Çakya-Mouni (pp. 366–67). A disciple asked who this was.]

Çakya-Mouni is a name of Buddha — “the sage of the Çakyas” — the clan to which Buddha belonged by birth and of which his father was the “king”.

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Last night I was reading the Mother’s prayer of 21 December 1916 and I was struck by this: “*Il [mon être] sait que cet état*

*d'amour actif doit être constant et impersonnel, c'est-à-dire tout à fait indépendant des circonstances et des personnes, puisqu'il ne peut et ne doit être concentré sur aucune en particulier*" [p. 369]. This gave me a sort of key to the ever-stormy trouble in my own nature. I always expect some sort of return when I do anything for anybody. That should go. I should neither have a clinging for such returns nor any attachment to human contacts, however soothing. Without a repudiation of the human way of approach, I can never establish any harmony within which is "independent of circumstances or persons". The difficulty, of course, is that Divine Love appears to me too impersonal and cold, that is, lacking in warmth though not a cold harmony. But perhaps Divine Love is not like that.

Love cannot be cold — for there is no such thing as cold love, but the love of which the Mother speaks in that passage is something very pure, fixed and constant; it does not leap like fire and sink for want of fuel, but is steady and all-embracing and self-existent like the light of the sun. There is also a divine love that is personal, but it is not like the ordinary personal human love dependent on any return from the person — it is personal but not egoistic, — it goes from the real being in the one to the real being in the other. But to find that, liberation from the ordinary human way of approach is necessary. 21 November 1936

\*

X has given me a book, *Eveillez-vous*, in which there are some ideas similar to our own. For example, there are some lines about "someone coming down", put in a Theosophical way. And there is the idea that when the Awakening comes, there will be strong resistance from those who are opposed to evolution; in other words the idea of hostile beings is there. Also the sentence, "*La Paix régnera sur terre*" — has the author not copied these words from the Mother's prayers?

Not necessarily, as the phrase can easily come to one who has read the Bible and the English are very biblical. The idea of the hostile beings also is not new, in fact it is as old as the Veda. The expectation of the Advent is also pretty widespread, as according

to the old prophecies it must be when the Advent is due.

16 September 1935

### Hearing the Mother Read Her *Prières*

Today as I sat on the staircase hearing the Mother read from *Prières et Méditations*, I felt a thrilling sensation, as if all the parts of my being — body, mental, vital and psychic — were aspiring. How did this thrilling sensation come?

When an intense Power is put out, it will naturally give a thrill to those who receive it.

### Reading the Mother's *Prières*

While reading Mother's *Prières* I feel as if I am not reading the words or thoughts but contacting something quiet, pleasant and formless behind them.

Yes, it is so. The words are only a vehicle. When the consciousness opens one feels all that is behind the words.

11 March 1933

# On *Conversations with the Mother*

## Comments on Specific *Conversations*<sup>1</sup>

The Mother asks: “What do you want the Yoga for? To get power?” [p. 1] Does “power” here mean the power to communicate one’s own experience to others?

Power is a general term — it is not confined to a power to communicate. The most usual form of power is control over things, persons, events, forces.

“What is required is concentration — concentration upon the Divine with a view to an integral and absolute consecration to its Will and Purpose” [p. 1]. Is the Divine’s Will different from its Purpose?

The two words have not the same meaning. Purpose means the intention, the object in view towards which the Divine is working. Will is a wider term than that.

“Concentrate in the heart” [p. 1]. What is concentration? What is meditation?

Concentration here means gathering of the consciousness into one centre and fixing it on one object or on one idea or in one condition. Meditation is a general term which can include many kinds of inner activity.

1 January 1937

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In *Conversations* the Mother says: “A fire is burning there, in

<sup>1</sup> *These conversations of 1929 were first published in 1931 as Conversations with the Mother. They now form the first part of Questions and Answers 1929–1931 (Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 2003), volume 3 of the Collected Works of the Mother. The page numbers given after quoted passages in this subsection refer to the 2003 edition. — Ed.*

the deep quietude of the heart” [p. 1]. Is this the psychic fire or the psychic being?

A fire is not a being — it is the psychic fire, an intense condition of aspiration.

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“A fire is burning there. . . . It is the divinity in you — your true being. Hear its voice, follow its dictates” [p. 1]. I have never seen this fire in me. Yet I feel I know the divinity in me. I feel I hear its voice and I try my utmost to follow its dictates. Should I doubt my feeling?

No, what you feel is probably the intimation from the psychic being through the mind. To be directly conscious of the psychic fire, one must have the subtle vision and subtle sense active or else the direct action of the psychic acting as a manifest power in the consciousness.

“We have all met in previous lives” [p. 3]. Who precisely are “we”? Do both of you remember me? Did I often serve you for this work in the past?

It is a general principle announced which covers all who are called to the work. At the time the Mother was seeing the past (or part of it) of those to whom she spoke and that is why she said this. At present we are too much occupied with the crucial work in the physical consciousness to go into these things. Moreover we find that it encouraged a sort of vital romanticism in the sadhaks which made them attach more importance to these things than to the hard work of sadhana, so we have stopped speaking of past lives and personalities. 2 January 1937

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In *Conversations* the Mother says: “We have all met in previous lives. . . . We are of one family and have worked through ages for the victory of the Divine” [p. 3]. Is this true of all people who come and stay here? But there have been many who came and went away.

Those who went away were also of these and still are of that circle. Temporary checks do not make any difference to the essential truth of the soul's seeking.

In what way have we “worked through ages for the victory of the Divine”? How much has been achieved till now?

By the victory is meant the final emergence of the embodied consciousness on earth from the bondage of the Ignorance. That had to be prepared through the ages by a spiritual evolution. Naturally the work up till now has been a preparation of which the long spiritual effort and experience of the past has been the outcome. It has reached a point at which the decisive effort has become possible.

18 June 1933

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“There are two paths of Yoga, one of *tapasyā* (discipline) and the other of surrender” [*p.* 4]. Once you interpreted a vision I had as Agni, the fire of purification and tapasya, producing the Sun of Truth. What path do I follow? What place has tapasya in the path of surrender? Can one do absolutely without tapasya in the path of surrender?

There is a tapasya that takes place automatically as the result of surrender and there is a discipline that one carries out by one's own unaided effort—it is the latter that is meant in the “two paths of Yoga”. But Agni as the fire of tapasya can burn in either case.

4 January 1937

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The Mother, in her *Conversations*, says that “the first effect of Yoga . . . is to take away the mental control” [*p.* 5] so that the ideas and desires which were so long checked become surprisingly prominent and create difficulties. Would you not call these forces the consequence of yogic pressure?

They were not prominent because they were getting some satisfaction or at least the vital generally was getting indulged in one way or another. When they are no longer indulged then they

become obstreperous. But they are not new forces created by the Yoga — they were there all the time.

What is meant by the mental control being removed, is that the mental simply kept them in check but could not remove them. So in Yoga the mental has to be replaced by the psychic or spiritual self-control which could do what the mental cannot. Only many sadhaks do not make this exchange in time and withdraw the mental control merely. 12 May 1933

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“The strength of such impulses as those of sex lies usually in the fact that people take too much notice of them” [p. 5]. What are the other impulses referred to?

It refers to strong vital impulses.

“The whole world is full of the poison. You take it in with every breath. If you exchange a few words with an undesirable man or even if such a man merely passes by you, you may catch the contagion from him” [p. 6]. How long is a sadhak subject to this fear of catching contagion? I feel I won’t catch such a contagion now. Is my feeling trustworthy?

I don’t know that it is. One has to go very far on the path before one is so secure as that. 4 January 1937

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In *Conversations* the Mother says that if the central being has surrendered, then the chief difficulty is gone [p. 7]. What is this central being? Is it the psychic?

The central being is the Purusha. If it is surrendered, then all the other beings can be offered to the Divine and the psychic being brought in front. 18 April 1933

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In *Conversations* the Mother says: “One who dances and jumps and screams has the feeling that he is somehow very unusual in his excitement; and his vital nature takes great

pleasure in that” [p. 11]. Does she mean that one should be usual instead of unusual in one’s excitement during spiritual experience?

The Mother did not mean that one must be usual in one’s excitement at all — she meant that the man is not only excited but also wants to be unusual (extraordinary) in his excitement. The excitement itself is bad and the desire to seem extraordinary is worse. 7 June 1933

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“But to those who possess the necessary basis and foundation we say, on the contrary, ‘Aspire and draw’” [p. 11]. Does this capacity to aspire and draw indicate a great advance already made towards perfection?

No. It is a comparatively elementary stage. 5 January 1937

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In the chapter on dream in the *Conversations*, I came across the following passage: “In sleep you fell into the grip of these subconscious<sup>2</sup> regions and they opened and swallowed all that you had laboriously built up in your conscious hours” [p. 15]. If these regions swallow all one has achieved during the day, is it not necessary to be conscious at night as well as in the day?

At night, when one sinks into the subconscious after being in a good state of consciousness, we find that state gone and we have to labour to get it back again. On the other hand, if the sleep is of the better kind, one may wake up in a good condition. Of course, it is better to be conscious in sleep, if one can.

25 June 1933

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“Spiritual experience means the contact with the Divine in oneself (or without, which comes to the same thing in that domain)” [p. 17]. What is meant by the Divine “without”?

<sup>2</sup> In the text of *Conversations*, the word used is “unconscious”, not “subconscious”. —Ed.

Does it mean the cosmic Divine or the transcendental Divine or both?

It means the Divine seen outside in things, beings, events etc. etc.

Was Jeanne d’Arc’s nature transformed even a little because of her relation with the two archangels, the two beings of the Overmind? [*pp.* 17–18]

I don’t see how the question of transformation comes in. Jeanne d’Arc was not practising Yoga or seeking transformation.

5 January 1937

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“You have no longer anything that you can call your own; you feel everything as coming from the Divine, and you have to offer it back to its source. When you can realise that, then even the smallest thing to which you do not usually pay much attention or care, ceases to be trivial and insignificant; it becomes full of meaning and it opens up a vast horizon beyond” [*p.* 23]. Is this as elementary a stage as the stage of “aspire and draw”?<sup>3</sup>

Not so elementary.

“But if we want the Divine to reign here we must give all we have and are and do here to the Divine” [*p.* 25]. If one does this completely, has he anything more to do?

No. But it is not easy to do it completely.

How can we recognise someone who gives all he has and is and does to the Divine?

You can’t, unless you have the inner vision.

14 January 1937

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<sup>3</sup> See the letter of 5 January 1937 on page 614. — Ed.

What does Mother mean by this sentence in *Conversations*:  
 “When you eat, you must feel that it is the Divine who is  
 eating through you” [p. 23]?

It means an offering of the food not to the ego or desire but to  
 the Divine, who is behind all action. 11 January 1935

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In Chapter 7 of *Conversations*, there is a paragraph which I  
 quote below: “The condition to be aimed at, the real achieve-  
 ment of Yoga, the final perfection and attainment, for which  
 all else is only a preparation, is a consciousness in which it  
 is impossible to do anything without the Divine; for then if  
 you are without the Divine, the very source of your action  
 disappears; knowledge, power, all are gone. But so long as  
 you feel that the powers you use are your own, you will not  
 miss the Divine support” [p. 26]. I am unable to follow the  
 last line. Will my lord explain it to me?

It means that in the full spiritual consciousness the sense of sep-  
 arate existence and my and mine disappear. All depends on the  
 Divine and exists only by the Divine. The ordinary consciousness  
 does not feel or miss this Divine support because it takes as its  
 own the knowledge and power that are given to it; it is quite  
 satisfied with that and is not aware of the Divine Existence  
 behind it, or the Divine Force and Knowledge. 19 April 1937

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“For there is nothing in the world which has not its ultimate  
 truth and support in the Divine” [p. 27]. To know this perfectly  
 by experience is to have a very great attainment, perhaps the  
 final attainment, I think. Am I right?

Yes.

“Obviously, what has happened had to happen; it would not  
 have been, if it had not been intended” [p. 28]. Then what is  
 the place of repentance in man’s life? Has it any place in the  
 life of a sadhak?

The place of repentance is in its effect for the future—if it induces the nature to turn from the state of things that brought about the happening. For the sadhak however it is not repentance but recognition of a wrong movement and the necessity of its not recurring that is needed.

“ . . . you are tied to the chain of Karma, and there, in that chain, whatever happens is rigorously the consequence of what has been done before” [p. 30]. Does “before” mean all the past lives, beginning from the very first up to this one?

That is taking things in the mass. In a metaphysical sense whatever happens is the consequence of all that has gone before up to the moment of the action. Practically, particular consequences have particular antecedents in the past and it is these that are said to determine it.

From where are these quotations? In the exact intention of a sentence much sometimes depends on the context.

19 January 1937

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“The intellect that believes too much in its own importance and wants satisfaction for its own sake, is an obstacle to the higher realisation.

But this is true not in any special sense or for the intellect alone, but generally and of other faculties as well. For example, people do not regard an all-engrossing satisfaction of the vital desires or the animal appetites as a virtue; the moral sense is accepted as a mentor to tell one the bounds that one may not transgress. It is only in his intellectual activities that man thinks he can do without any such mentor or censor!” [p. 33]

The subject is too large for any special instances to be usefully given, as an instance can only illustrate one side or field of a very various action. The point is that people take no trouble to see whether their intellect is giving them right thoughts, right conclusions, right views on things and persons, right indications about their conduct or course of action. They have their idea and accept it as truth or follow it simply because it is *their* idea.

Even when they recognise that they have made mistakes of the mind, they do not consider it of any importance nor do they try to be more careful mentally than before. In the vital field people know that they must not follow their desires or impulses without check or control, they know that they ought to have a conscience or a moral sense which discriminates what they can or should do and what they cannot or should not do; in the field of intellect no such care is taken. Men are supposed to follow their intellect, to have and assert their own ideas right or wrong without any control; the intellect, it is said, is man's highest instrument and he must think and act according to its ideas. But this is not true; the intellect needs an inner light to guide, check and control it quite as much as the vital. There is something above the intellect which one has to discover and the intellect should be only an intermediary for the action of that source of true Knowledge.

23 March 1937

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“Many people would tell you wonderful tales of how the world was built and how it will proceed in the future, how and where you were born in the past and what you will be hereafter, the lives you have lived and the lives you will still live. All this has nothing to do with spiritual life” [*p. 40*]. Is what such people say complete humbug? Is there a process other than the spiritual by which one can know all these things?

Often it is, but even if it is correct, it has nothing spiritual in it. Many mediums, clairvoyants or people with a special faculty, tell you these things. That faculty is no more spiritual than the capacity to build a bridge or to cook a nice dish or to solve a mathematical problem. There are intellectual capacities, there are occult capacities, — that is all.

20 January 1937

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“They [*human beings who are like vampires*] are not human; there is only a human form or appearance. . . . Their method is to try first to cast their influence upon a man; then they enter

slowly into his atmosphere and in the end may get complete possession of him, driving out entirely the real human soul and personality” [p. 42]. My younger brother has married a girl who, the Mother has said, is vampirelike to some extent. Is he then under all these risks? What precautions should he take? Shall I warn him?

First of all what is meant is not that the vampire or vital being even in possession of a human body tries to possess yet another human being. All that is the description of how a disembodied (vampire) vital being takes possession of a human body without being born into it in the ordinary way — for that is their desire, to possess a human body but not by the way of birth. Once thus humanised, the danger they are for others is that they feed on the vitality of those who are in contact with them — that is all.

Secondly in this case, Mother only said vampirelike to some extent. That does not mean that she is one of these beings, but has to some extent the habit of feeding on the vitality of others. There is no need to say anything to your brother — it would only disturb him and not help in the least. 27 January 1937

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In *Conversations* the Mother speaks of the power of thought: “Let us say, for instance, that you have a keen desire for a certain person to come and that, along with this vital impulse of desire, a strong imagination accompanies the mental form you have made. . . . And if there is a sufficient power of will in your thought-form, if it is a well-built formation, it will arrive at its own realisation” [pp. 50–51]. In the example given, suppose one has no strong desire that a person should come, but still thoughts or imaginations loosely form in the mind. Would that loose formation go and induce that person to come?

It might; especially if that person were himself desirous of coming, it could give the decisive push. But in most cases desire or will behind the thought-force would be necessary.

26 August 1936

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In *Conversations* the Mother says about the hostile forces: “If you have overlooked in your own being even a single detail, they will come and put their touch upon that neglected spot and make it so painfully evident that you will be forced to change” [p. 66]. When sadhaks overlook even a single detail on the path of transformation, is it not possible that the Divine will make them conscious of it rather than becoming conscious through a painful wound by the hostile forces?

If they are sufficiently open to the Divine it can be done — but most sadhaks have too much egoism and lack of faith and obscurity and self-will and vital desires, — it is that that shuts them to the Mother and calls in the action of the hostile forces.

Those who cannot reject their lower nature fully are made to suffer at the hands of the hostile forces and get wounded by them. What is the best means for them to go forward?

Faith in the Mother and complete surrender.

“This illusion of action is one of the greatest illusions of human nature. It hurts progress because it brings on you the necessity of rushing always into some excited movement” [p. 67]. What is meant by “illusion of action”?

Illusion means that they think their action is all-important and its egoistic objects are the truth that must be followed.

17 June 1933

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In *Conversations* the Mother says about the nervous envelope: “Depression and discouragement have a very adverse effect; they cut out holes in it, as it were, in its very stuff, render it weak and unresisting and open to hostile attacks an easy passage” [p. 89]. In one sense this means that a man with goodwill should not discourage anyone from his wrong ideas, impulses or movements. There is also the way of keeping silent when dealing with such a person — but even that sometimes hurts him more than a point-blank discouragement.

The knowledge about the bad effect of depression is meant for the sadhak to learn to avoid these things. He cannot expect people to flatter his failures or mistakes or indulge his foibles merely because he has the silly habit of indulging in depression and hurting his nervous envelope if that is done. To keep himself free from depression is his business, not that of others. For instance some people have the habit of getting into depression if the Mother does not comply with their desires — it does not follow that the Mother must comply with their desires in order to keep them jolly — they must learn to get rid of this habit of mind. So with people's want of encouragement or praise for all they do. One can be silent or non-intervening, but if even that depresses them, it is their own fault and nobody else's.

Would the bad effects of depression and discouragement indicated by the Mother happen in ordinary life also?

Of course, it is the same in ordinary life — depression is always hurtful. But in sadhana it is more serious because it becomes a strong obstacle to the smooth and rapid progress towards the goal.

18 July 1936

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In *Conversations* the Mother writes: "Surrender will not diminish, but increase; it will not lessen or weaken or destroy your personality, it will fortify and aggrandise it" [p. 114]. Is this meant in an external sense or in an internal sense only?

It is meant in the inner sense only — no outer greatness is meant. All submission is regarded by the ego as lowering and lessening itself, but really submission to the Divine increases and greatens the being, that is what is meant.

25 August 1937

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It seems difficult to understand when the Mother says that spiritual sacrifice is joyful [p. 114].

She was speaking of the true spiritual sacrifice of self-giving, not the bringing of an unwilling heart to the altar.

17 October 1935

**A Translation of *Conversations***

About the Gujarati translation of the *Conversations* the Mother had told you she did not want it published or sent outside. In the original or in translation, the book is not one meant to be given or shown to everybody. If X wants to make copies for himself and Y he can do so; but, as it comes from the Asram, it might be taken for an authoritative issue from the Asram. It should be understood that it is *your* translation, only made for your personal use; we have not seen it and cannot therefore guarantee its correctness.

29 March 1932

**Reading the Mother's *Conversations* and *Prières***

I have a friend in Dacca to whom I want to send the Mother's *Conversations* and her *Prières*. This lady knows French, though she knows nothing about the Yoga or about you. If you think I may send the books — after seeing her photo — I shall send them.

The Prayers ought not to be given to anyone who is not practising Yoga. The “*Conversations*” are for those who are interested in Yoga.

8 December 1933

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When I read the Mother's *Conversations* or her *Prières*, I often feel as if I come in contact with her consciousness. If one read these two books constantly and thought about them alone, could one not make one's consciousness more and more intense till it becomes like Mother's? Of course, it might be only the mental that would be intensified and elevated, but perhaps by that intensity the vital and other parts of the being could pass beyond their usual condition.

It is possible to intensely identify oneself with the Mother's consciousness through what you read — in that case the result you speak of could come. It could also have an effect on the vital up to a certain point.

21 August 1935

# On *Entretiens avec la Mère*

## Comments on Specific *Entretiens*<sup>1</sup>

In *Entretiens* the Mother says: “*Même ceux qui ont la volonté de s’enfuir [du monde], quand ils arrivent de l’autre côté, peuvent trouver que la fuite ne sert pas à grand-chose après tout*” [p. 28]. What does “*arrivent de l’autre côté*” mean? Does it mean “when they come into *this* world” or “when they go into the world of silence which they realised”?

No — “*arrivent de l’autre côté*” simply means “when they die”. What Mother intended was that when they actually arrive at their Nirvana they find it is not the ultimate solution or largest realisation of the Supreme and they must eventually come back and have their share of the world action to reach that largest realisation.

2 May 1935

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The Mother says in *Entretiens*: “*En fait, la mort a été attachée à toute vie sur terre*” [p. 41]. The words “*En fait*” and “*attachée*” tend to give the impression that after all death is inevitable. But the preceding sentence (“*Si cette croyance pouvait être rejetée, d’abord de la mentalité consciente, . . . la mort ne serait plus inévitable*”) brings in an ambiguity because it does not make death so inevitable; it introduces a condition, an “if” by which death could be avoided. But the categoricity of the sentence with “*En fait*” rather decreases one’s expectation of a material immortality. Moreover, the “if” in the other sentence is too formidable to be satisfied.

There is no ambiguity that I can see. “*En fait*” and “*attachée*” do not convey any sense of inevitability. “*En fait*” means simply

<sup>1</sup> *Entretiens avec la Mère* is the Mother’s translation of her conversations of 1929, which were spoken in English. This translation is now published as the first part of *Entretiens 1929–1931* (Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1994). The page numbers given after the quoted passages in this subsection refer to the 1994 edition. — Ed.

that in fact, actually, as things are at present all life (on earth) has death attached to it as its end; but it does not in the least convey the idea that it can never be otherwise or that this is the unalterable law of all existence. It is at present a fact for certain reasons which are stated, — due to certain mental and physical circumstances — if these are changed, death is not inevitable any longer. Obviously the alteration can only come “if” certain conditions are satisfied — all progress and change by evolution depends upon an “if” which gets satisfied. If the animal mind had not been pushed to develop speech and reason, mental man would never have come into existence, — but the “if”, a stupendous and formidable one, was satisfied. So with the ifs that condition a farther progress.

31 July 1936

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There are some lines in *Entretiens* which I do not find in the English *Conversations*. For example, in the conversation about hostile forces, the Mother speaks about some “*êtres pervers et hostiles de plus grande envergure et d’une plus haute origine que tous ceux dont j’ai parlé jusqu’à présent*” [p. 69]. These new hostiles are not of the lower cosmic plane. If they are of a “*plus haute origine*”, they must belong to the higher worlds. Does this mean that the hostiles exist in the higher worlds up to the Supramental?

I believe the Mother was referring to the mental Asuras as opposed to the vital hostiles. There are no hostiles above the mind and cannot be, for it is with the mind that the opposition begins.

When the *Conversations* were translated, Mother made certain corrections so as to express the thought better than in the original report.

19 October 1935

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In *Entretiens* the Mother speaks of “*la marche interne de l’univers*” [p. 100]. Is there really an internal progress in the universe? Except in a few individuals there is hardly any change or progress in countries. It seems to me that, internally and externally, the universe is moving in a circle and always

crosses the same points on the circle, but essentially the quality of the points is the same.

“*Univers*” in French usually means not the whole universe but the “world” — the earth. There must be a progress in the earth-consciousness, otherwise there could have been no evolution. The evolution of mankind may go by circles or spirals, but there is all the same an opening of more and more complete possibilities till the possibility of the evolution of a higher race becomes valid.

1 September 1936



## Part Three

# Translations of Prayers of the Mother



# Prayers and Meditations

There is a Power that no ruler can command; there is a Happiness that no earthly success can bring; there is a Light that no wisdom can possess; there is a Knowledge that no philosophy and no science can master; there is a Bliss of which no satisfaction of desire can give the enjoyment; there is a thirst for Love that no human relation can appease; there is a Peace that one finds nowhere here, not even in death.

It is the Power, the Happiness, the Light, the Knowledge, the Bliss, the Love, the Peace that flow from the Divine Grace.

Sri Aurobindo's translation  
of the Mother's prayer of December 28, 1928

# Prayers and Meditations<sup>1</sup>

November 28, 1913<sup>2</sup>

Mother Divine, grant that today may bring to us a completer consecration to Thy Will, a more integral gift of ourselves to Thy work, a more total forgetfulness of self, a greater illumination, a purer love. Grant that in a communion growing ever deeper, more constant and entire, we may be united always more and more closely to Thee and become Thy servitors worthy of Thee. Remove from us all egoism, root out all petty vanity, greed and obscurity. May we be all ablaze with Thy divine Love; make us Thy torches in the world.

February 15, 1914

O Thou, sole Reality, Light of our light and Life of our life, Love supreme, Saviour of the world, grant that more and more I may be perfectly awakened to the awareness of Thy constant presence. Let all my acts conform to Thy law; let there be no difference between my will and Thine. Extricate me from the illusory consciousness of my mind, from its world of fantasies; let me identify my consciousness with the Absolute Consciousness, for that art Thou.

Give me constancy in the will to attain the end, give me firmness and energy and the courage which shakes off all torpor and lassitude.

Give me the peace of perfect disinterestedness, the peace that makes Thy presence felt and Thy intervention effective, the peace that is ever victorious over all bad will and every obscurity.

<sup>1</sup> *Of the more than three hundred prayers in Prières et Méditations de la Mère, Sri Aurobindo translated twenty-four fully or in part. These twenty-four translations are presented in this section.*

<sup>2</sup> *The Mother titled this prayer: "A morning prayer". — Ed.*

Grant, I implore Thee, that all in my being may be identified with Thee. May I be nothing else any more than a flame of love utterly awakened to a supreme realisation of Thee.

**August 27, 1914**

To be the divine love, love powerful, infinite, unfathomable, in every activity, in all the worlds of being — it is for this I cry to Thee, O Lord. Let me be consumed by this love divine, love powerful, infinite, unfathomable, in every activity, in all the worlds of being! Transmute me into that burning brazier so that all the atmosphere of earth may be purified with its flame.

O, to be Thy Love infinitely. . . .

**August 31, 1914**

In this formidable disorder and terrible destruction can be seen a great working, a necessary toil preparing the earth for a new sowing which will rise in marvellous spikes of grain and give to the world the shining harvest of a new race. . . . The vision is clear and precise, the plan of Thy divine law so plainly traced that peace has come back and installed itself in the hearts of the workers. There are no more doubts and hesitations, no longer any anguish or impatience. There is only the grand straight line of the work eternally accomplishing itself in spite of all, against all, despite all contrary appearances and illusory detours. These physical personalities, moments unseizable in the infinite Becoming, know that they will have made humanity take one farther step, infallibly and without care for the inevitable results, whatever be the apparent momentary consequences: they unite themselves with Thee, O Master eternal, they unite themselves with Thee, O Mother universal, and in this double identity with That which is beyond and That which is all the manifestation they taste the infinite joy of the perfect certitude.

Peace, peace in all the world. . . .

War is an appearance,

Turmoil is an illusion,

Peace is there, immutable peace.

Mother, sweet Mother who I am, Thou art at once the destroyer and the builder.

The whole universe lives in Thy breast with all its life innumerable and Thou livest in Thy immensity in the least of its atoms.

And the aspiration of Thy infinitude turns towards That which is not manifested, to cry to it for a manifestation ever more complete and more perfect.

All is, in one time, in a triple and clairvoyant total consciousness, the Individual, the Universal, the Infinite.

### September 1, 1914

O Mother Divine, with what fervour, what ardent love I came to Thee in Thy deepest consciousness, in Thy high status of sublime love and perfect felicity, and I nestled so close into Thy arms and loved Thee with so intense a love that I became altogether Thyself. Then in the silence of our mute ecstasy a voice from yet profounder depths arose and the voice said, "Turn towards those who have need of thy love." All the grades of consciousness appeared, all the successive worlds. Some were splendid and luminous, well ordered and clear; there knowledge was resplendent, expression was harmonious and vast, will was potent and invincible. Then the worlds darkened in a multiplicity more and more chaotic, the Energy became violent and the material world obscure and sorrowful. And when in our infinite love we perceived in its entirety the hideous suffering of the world of misery and ignorance, when we saw our children locked in a sombre struggle, flung upon each other by energies that had deviated from their true aim, we willed ardently that the light of Divine Love should be made manifest, a transfiguring force at the centre of these distracted elements. Then, that the will might be yet more powerful and effective, we turned towards Thee, O unthinkable Supreme, and we implored Thy aid. And from the unsounded depths of the Unknown a reply came sublime and formidable and we knew that the earth was saved.

**September 25, 1914**

A new light shall break upon the earth,  
A new world shall be born,  
And the things that were promised shall be fulfilled.

**September 28, 1914**

My pen is mute to chant Thy presence, O Lord; yet art Thou like a king who has taken entire possession of his kingdom. Thou art there, organising, putting all in place, developing and increasing every province. Thou awakenest those that were asleep. Thou makest active those that were sinking towards inertia; Thou art building a harmony out of the whole. A day will come when the harmony shall be achieved and all the country shall be by its very life the bearer of Thy word and Thy manifestation.

But meanwhile my pen is mute to chant Thy praises.

**September 30, 1914**

O Thou, Sublime Love, to whom I gave never any other name, but who art so wholly the very substance of my being, Thou whom I feel vibrant and alive in the least of my atoms even as in the infinite universe and beyond, Thou who breathest in every breath, movest in the heart of all activities, art radiant through all that is of good will and hidden behind all sufferings, Thou for whom I cherish a cult without limit which grows ever more intense, permit that I may with more and more reason feel that I am Thyself wholly.

And Thou, O Lord, who art all this made one and much more, O sovereign Master, extreme limit of our thought, who standest for us at the threshold of the Unknown, make rise from that Unthinkable some new splendour, some possibility of a loftier and more integral realisation, that Thy work may be accomplished and the universe take one step farther towards the sublime Identity, the supreme Manifestation.

And now my pen falls mute and I adore Thee in silence.

**October 5, 1914**

In the calm silence of Thy contemplation, O Divine Master, Nature is fortified and tempered anew. All principle of individuality is overpassed, she is plunged in Thy infinity that allows oneness to be realised in all domains without confusion, without disorder. The combined harmony of that which persists, that which progresses and that which eternally is, is little by little accomplished in an always more complex, more extended and more lofty equilibrium. And this interchange of the three modes of life allows the plenitude of the manifestation.

Many seek Thee at this hour in anguish and incertitude. May I be their mediator with Thee that Thy Light may illumine them, that Thy Peace may appease. My being is now only a point of support for Thy action and a centre for Thy consciousness. Where now are the limits, whither have fled the obstacles? Thou art the sovereign Lord of Thy kingdom.

**October 7, 1914**

Oh, let Light be poured on all the earth and Peace inhabit every heart. . . . Almost all know only the material life heavy, inert, conservative, obscure; their vital forces are so tied to this physical form of existence that, even when left to themselves and outside the body, they are still solely occupied with these material contingencies that are yet so harassing and painful. . . . Those in whom the mental life is awakened are restless, tormented, agitated, arbitrary, despotic. Caught altogether in the whirl of the renewals and transformations of which they dream, they are ready to destroy everything without knowledge of any foundation on which to construct and with their light made only of blinding flashes they increase yet more the confusion rather than help it to cease.

In all there lacks the unchanging peace of Thy sovereign contemplation and the calm vision of Thy immutable Eternity.

And with the infinite gratitude of the individual being to whom Thou hast accorded this surpassing grace, I implore Thee,

O Lord, that under cover of the present turmoil, in the very heart of this extreme confusion the miracle may be accomplished and Thy Law of supreme serenity and pure unchanging Light become visible to the perception of all and govern the earth in a humanity at last awakened to Thy divine consciousness.

O sweet Master, Thou hast heard my prayer, Thou wilt reply to my call.

**October 14, 1914**

Mother Divine, Thou art with us; every day Thou givest me the assurance, and closely united in an identity which grows more and more total, more and more constant, we turn to the Lord of the universe and to That which is beyond in a great aspiration towards the new Light. All the earth is in our arms like a sick child who must be cured and for whom one has a special affection because of his very weakness. Cradled on the immensity of the eternal becomings, ourselves those becomings, we contemplate hushed and glad the eternity of the immobile Silence where all is realised in the perfect Consciousness and immutable Existence, miraculous gate of all the unknown that is beyond.

Then is the veil torn, the inexpressible Glory uncovered and, suffused with the ineffable Splendour, we turn back towards the world to bring it the glad tidings.

Lord, Thou hast given me the happiness infinite. What being, what circumstances can have the power to take it away from me?

October 25, 1914

My aspiration to Thee, O Lord, has taken the form of a beautiful rose, harmonious, full in bloom, rich in fragrance. I stretch it out to Thee with both arms in a gesture of offering and I ask of Thee: "If my understanding is limited, widen it; if my knowledge is obscure, enlighten it; if my heart is empty of ardour, set it aflame; if my love is insignificant, make it intense; if my feelings are ignorant and egoistic, give them the full consciousness in the Truth." And the "I" which demands this of Thee, O Lord, is not a little personality lost amidst thousands of others; it is the whole earth that aspires to Thee in a movement full of fervour.

In the perfect silence of my contemplation all widens to infinity, and in the perfect peace of that silence Thou appearest in the resplendent glory of Thy Light.

November 8, 1914

For the plenitude of Thy Light we invoke Thee, O Lord! Awaken in us the power to express Thee.

All is mute in the being as in a desert crypt; but in the heart of the shadow, in the bosom of the silence burns the lamp that can never be extinguished, the fire of an ardent aspiration to know Thee and totally to live Thee.

The nights follow the days, new dawns unweariedly succeed to past dawns, but always there mounts the scented flame that no stormwind can force to vacillate. Higher it climbs and higher and one day attains the vault still closed, the last obstacle opposing our union. And so pure, so erect, so proud is the flame that suddenly the obstacle is dissolved.

Then Thou appearest in all Thy splendour, in the dazzling force of Thy infinite glory; at Thy contact the flame changes into a column of light that chases the shadows away for ever.

And the Word leaps forth, a supreme revelation!

**February 15, 1915**

O Lord of Truth, thrice have I implored Thy manifestation invoking Thee with deep fervour.

Then, as always, the whole being made its total submission. At that moment the consciousness perceived the individual being mental, vital and physical, covered all over with dust and this being lay prostrate before Thee, its forehead touching the earth, dust in the dust, and it cried to Thee, "O Lord, this being made of dust prostrates itself before Thee praying to be consumed with the fire of the Truth that it may henceforth manifest only Thee." Then Thou saidst to it, "Arise, thou art pure of all that is dust." And suddenly, in a stroke, all the dust sank from it like a cloak that falls on the earth, and the being appeared erect, always as substantial but resplendent with a dazzling light.

**March 3, 1915**

Solitude, a harsh intense solitude, and always this strong impression of having been flung down headlong into a hell of darkness! Never at any moment of my life, in any circumstances have I felt myself living in surroundings so entirely opposite to all that I am conscious of as true, so contrary to all that is the essence of my life. Sometimes when the impression and the contrast grow very intense, I cannot prevent my total submission from taking on a hue of melancholy, and the calm and mute converse with the Master within is transformed for a moment into an invocation that almost supplicates, "O Lord, what have I done that Thou hast thrown me thus into the sombre Night?" But immediately the aspiration rises, still more ardent, "Spare this being all weakness; suffer it to be the docile and clear-eyed instrument of Thy work, whatever that work may be."

**March 7, 1915**

I am exiled from every spiritual happiness, and of all ordeals this, O Lord, is surely the most painful that Thou canst impose: but most of all the withdrawal of Thy Will which seems to be a sign of total disapprobation. Strong is the growing sense of rejection and it needs all the ardour of an untiring faith to keep the external consciousness thus abandoned to itself from being invaded by an irremediable sorrow. . . .

But it refuses to despair, it refuses to believe that the misfortune is irreparable; it waits with humility in an obscure and hidden effort and struggle for the breath of Thy perfect joy to penetrate it again. And perhaps each of its modest and secret victories is a true help brought to the earth. . . .

If it were possible to come definitively out of this external consciousness, to take refuge in the divine consciousness! But that Thou hast forbidden and still and always Thou forbidst it. No flight out of the world! The burden of its darkness and ugliness must be borne to the end even if all divine succour seems to be withdrawn. I must remain in the bosom of the Night and walk on without compass, without beacon-light, without inner guide. . . .

I will not even implore Thy mercy; for what Thou wilt for me, I too will. All my energy is in tension solely to advance, always to advance, step after step, despite the depth of the darkness, despite the obstacles of the way, and whatever comes, O Lord, it is with a fervent and unchanging love that Thy decision will be welcomed. Even if Thou findest the instrument unfit to serve Thee, the instrument belongs to itself no more, it is Thine; Thou canst destroy or magnify it, it exists not in itself, it wills nothing, it can do nothing without Thee.

**March 8, 1915**

For the most part the condition is one of calm and profound indifference; the being feels neither desire nor repulsion, neither enthusiasm nor depression, neither joy nor sorrow. It regards life as a spectacle in which it takes only a very small part; it perceives its actions and reactions, conflicts and forces as things that at once belong to its own existence which overflows the small personality on every side and yet to that personality are altogether foreign and remote.

But from time to time a great Breath passes, a great Breath of sorrow, of anguished isolation, of spiritual destitution, — one might almost say, the despairing appeal of Earth abandoned by the Divine. It is a pang as silent as it is cruel, a sorrow submissive, without revolt, without any desire to avoid or pass out of it and full of an infinite sweetness in which suffering and felicity are closely wedded, something infinitely vast, great and deep, too great, too deep perhaps to be understood by men — something that holds in it the seed of Tomorrow.

**December 26, 1916**

Always the word Thou makest me hear in the silence is sweet and encouraging, O Lord. But I see not in what this instrument is worthy of the grace Thou accordedst to it or how it will have the capacity to realise what Thou attendest from it. All in it appears so small, weak and ordinary, so lacking in intensity and force and amplitude in comparison with what it should be to undertake this overwhelming role. But I know that what the mind thinks is of little importance. The mind itself knows it and, passive, it awaits the working out of Thy decree.

Thou bidst me strive without cease, and I could wish to have the indomitable ardour that prevails over every difficulty. But Thou hast put in my heart a peace so smiling that I fear I no longer know even how to strive. Things develop in me, faculties and activities, as flowers bloom, spontaneously and without effort, in a joy to be and a joy to grow, a joy to manifest Thee,

whatever the mode of Thy manifestation. If struggle there is, it is so gentle and easy that it can hardly be given the name. But how small is this heart to contain so great a love! and how weak this vital and physical being to carry the power to distribute it! Thus Thou hast placed me on the threshold of the marvellous Way, but will my feet have the strength to advance upon it? . . . But Thou repliest to me that my movement is to soar and it would be an error to wish to walk. . . . O Lord, how infinite is Thy compassion! Once more Thou hast taken me in Thy omnipotent arms and cradled me on Thy unfathomable heart, and Thy heart said to me, "Torment not thyself at all, be confident like a child: art thou not myself crystallised for my work?"

**December 27, 1916**

O my beloved Lord, my heart is bowed before Thee, my arms are stretched towards Thee imploring Thee to set all this being on fire with Thy sublime love that it may radiate from there on the world. My heart is wide open in my breast; my heart is open and turned towards Thee, it is open and empty that Thou mayst fill it with Thy divine Love; it is empty of all but Thee and Thy presence fills it through and through and yet leaves it empty, for it can contain also all the infinite variety of the manifested world. . . .

O Lord, my arms are outstretched in supplication towards Thee, my heart is wide open before Thee, that Thou mayst make of it a reservoir of Thy infinite love.

"Love me in all things, everywhere and in all beings" was Thy reply. I prostrate myself before Thee and ask of Thee to give me that power.

**December 29, 1916**

O my sweet Lord, teach me to be the instrument of Thy Love.

March 31, 1917

Each time that a heart leaps at the touch of Thy divine Breath, a little more beauty seems to be born upon the earth, the air is embalmed with a sweet perfume and all becomes more friendly.

How great is Thy power, O Lord of all existences, that an atom of Thy joy is sufficient to efface so much darkness, so many sorrows and a single ray of Thy glory can light up thus the dullest pebble, illumine the blackest consciousness!

Thou hast heaped Thy favours upon me, Thou hast unveiled to me many secrets, Thou hast made me taste many unexpected and un hoped-for joys, but no grace of Thine can be equal to this Thou grantest to me when a heart leaps at the touch of Thy divine Breath.

At these blessed hours all earth sings a hymn of gladness, the grasses shudder with pleasure, the air is vibrant with light, the trees lift towards heaven their most ardent prayer, the chant of the birds becomes a canticle, the waves of the sea billow with love, the smile of children tells of the infinite and the souls of men appear in their eyes.

Tell me, wilt Thou grant me the marvellous power to give birth to this dawn in expectant hearts, to awaken the consciousness of men to Thy sublime presence and in this bare and sorrowful world awaken a little of Thy true Paradise? What happiness, what riches, what terrestrial powers can equal this wonderful gift?

O Lord, never have I implored Thee in vain, for that which speaks to Thee is Thyself in me.

Drop by drop Thou allowest to fall in a fertilising rain the living and redeeming flame of Thy almighty love. When these drops of eternal light descend softly on our world of obscure ignorance, one would say a rain upon earth of golden stars one by one from a sombre firmament.

All kneels in mute devotion before this ever-renewed miracle.

**April 28, 1917**

“Lo! here are flowers and benedictions! here is the smile of divine Love! It is without preferences and without repulsions. It streams out towards all in a generous flow and never takes back its marvellous gifts.”

Her arms outstretched in a gesture of ecstasy, the eternal Mother pours upon the world the unceasing dew of her purest love.

**July 12, 1918**

Suddenly, before Thee, all my pride fell. I understood how futile it was in Thy Presence to wish to surmount oneself, and I wept, wept abundantly and without constraint the sweetest tears of my life. Tears sweet and beneficent, tears that opened my heart without constraint before Thee and melted in one miraculous moment all the remaining obstacles that could separate me from Thee!

And now, although I weep no longer, I feel so near, so near to Thee that my whole being quivers with joy.

Let me stammer out my homage:

I have cried too with the joy of a child, “O supreme and only Confidant, Thou who knowest beforehand all we can say to Thee because Thou art its source!

“O supreme and only Friend, Thou who acceptest, Thou who lovest, Thou who understandest us just as we are, because it is Thyself who hast so made us!

“O supreme and only Guide, Thou who never gainsayest our highest will because it is Thou Thyself who willest in it!

“It would be folly to seek elsewhere than in Thee for one who will listen, understand, love and guide, since always Thou art there ready to our call and never wilt Thou fail us.

“Thou hast made me know the supreme, the sublime joy of a perfect confidence, an absolute security, a surrender total and without reserve or colouring, free from effort and constraint.

“Joyous like a child I have smiled and wept at once before Thee, O my well-Beloved!”

**December 28, 1928**

There is a Power that no ruler can command; there is a Happiness that no earthly success can bring; there is a Light that no wisdom can possess; there is a Knowledge that no philosophy and no science can master; there is a Bliss of which no satisfaction of desire can give the enjoyment; there is a thirst for Love that no human relation can appease; there is a Peace that one finds nowhere here, not even in death.

It is the Power, the Happiness, the Light, the Knowledge, the Bliss, the Love, the Peace that flow from the Divine Grace.

# Radha's Prayer



## Radha's Prayer<sup>1</sup>

O Thou whom at first sight I knew for the Lord of my being and my God, receive my offering.

Thine are all my thoughts, all my emotions, all the sentiments of my heart, all my sensations, all the movements of my life, each cell of my body, each drop of my blood. I am absolutely and altogether Thine, Thine without reserve. What Thou wilt of me, that I shall be. Whether Thou choosest for me life or death, happiness or sorrow, pleasure or suffering, all that comes to me from Thee will be welcome. Each one of Thy gifts will be always for me a gift divine bringing with it the supreme Felicity.

13 January 1932

<sup>1</sup> *The Mother originally wrote this prayer in English and then translated it into French the following day. Later Sri Aurobindo translated the French version into English; this is the translation presented above. The Mother's original prayer in English is given in the Note on the Texts. — Ed.*



## Note on the Texts



## Note on the Texts

THE MOTHER WITH LETTERS ON THE MOTHER consists of two separate but related works: *The Mother*, a collection of short prose pieces on the Mother, and *Letters on the Mother*, a selection of letters by Sri Aurobindo in which he referred to the Mother in her transcendent, universal and individual aspects. In addition, the volume contains Sri Aurobindo's translations of selections from the Mother's *Prayers and Meditations* as well as his translation of "Radha's Prayer". *The Mother*, the *Letters* and the translations are published in three separate parts.

### PART ONE: THE MOTHER

*The Mother* was first published as a booklet in 1928. It consists of six chapters, all of which were written in 1927. Each chapter has a separate history.

**Chapter 1.** Sri Aurobindo wrote this essay as a message for distribution on 21 February 1927, the birthday of the Mother. Three months earlier, after an important spiritual experience of 24 November 1926, Sri Aurobindo had withdrawn from outward contacts and placed the Mother in charge of the disciples who had gathered around him. He told them at that time to turn entirely to her for spiritual and practical guidance. This message therefore had a special significance in its immediate historical context. In 1928 it was published as the first chapter of *The Mother*.

**Chapter 2.** Sri Aurobindo wrote this piece after he had finished replying to a series of questions asked by Motilal Mehta, a disciple living in Gujarat, in a letter dated 30 May 1927. Motilal's questions and Sri Aurobindo's replies are published on page 107 of *Letters on Himself and the Ashram*, volume 35 of THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO. One of Motilal's questions referred to the message that is published as Chapter 1 of *The Mother*. Another question asked for "the

signs of the coming of the Divine Grace”. Sri Aurobindo concluded his reply to this question as follows: “Calling on God to do everything and save one all the trouble and struggle is a self-deception and does not lead to freedom and perfection.” He then expanded on this theme in a continuation of the letter, which a year later was published as the second chapter of *The Mother*.

**Chapter 3.** Sri Aurobindo wrote this piece as a letter to Punamchand Shah, a disciple living in Gujarat, on 1 August 1927. In 1928 it was published as the third chapter of *The Mother*.

**Chapter 4.** Sri Aurobindo wrote this undated piece as a letter to Punamchand Shah. At the time Punamchand was involved in the collection of money for Sri Aurobindo’s work. (See *Autobiographical Notes and Other Writings of Historical Interest*, volume 36 of THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO, pp. 428–38.) In 1928 the letter was published as the fourth chapter of *The Mother*.

**Chapter 5.** Sri Aurobindo wrote this piece as a letter to Punamchand Shah on 19 August 1927. In 1928 it was published as the fifth chapter of *The Mother*.

**Chapter 6.** Sri Aurobindo wrote this essay dealing with the four aspects of the Mother and related topics in the autumn of 1927 with the idea of publishing it in the booklet that eventually became *The Mother*. Referring to the essay in a letter to Punamchand Shah dated 3 October 1927, he wrote: “The ‘Four Aspects’ is half written and will be finished in a few days. It has been decided to publish these four writings with the February message in Calcutta.”<sup>1</sup> The essay was published as the sixth chapter of *The Mother* in 1928.

Once Sri Aurobindo had finished work on the “Four Aspects” essay, he gave his attention to the planned booklet. Work on the project was underway on 21 November, when he wrote in a letter that the publication of the booklet had been entrusted to Rameshwar De of the Arya Sahitya Bhawan, Calcutta. The publishers completed their work during the early part of 1928. Copies of the booklet reached the Ashram in Pondicherry in April of that year. The book has been reprinted many times since 1928. The text in the present volume has been checked against Sri Aurobindo’s manuscripts and early editions.

<sup>1</sup> *Autobiographical Notes and Other Writings of Historical Interest*, p. 429.

In the present text there are three verbal corrections which differ from previous editions; all three follow the manuscript readings. The corrections are: (1) page 11, line 30: money *corrected to* money-force; (2) page 13, line 28: breathing or *corrected to* breathing and; (3) page 25, line 17: alteration *corrected to* alternation.

Sri Aurobindo accorded *The Mother* a special place among his works. In 1937 he wrote to a disciple who had sent him the draft of a review of the book: “I think it [*the review*] will give the reader the impression that *The Mother* is a philosophical or practical exposition of Yoga — while its atmosphere is really not that at all.” To a disciple who asked if he should continue the practice of reciting *The Mother* “silently with an aspiration to know what it contains”, Sri Aurobindo replied, “Yes, if you find that it helps you.”<sup>2</sup>

#### PART TWO: LETTERS ON THE MOTHER

Sri Aurobindo wrote the letters included in this part between 1927 and 1950. They have been selected by the editors from the much larger body of letters that Sri Aurobindo wrote to disciples during those years. Significant letters from this corpus appear in seven volumes of THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO: *Letters on Poetry and Art* (volume 27), *Letters on Yoga* (volumes 28–31), *Letters on Himself and the Ashram* (volume 35), and the present volume. Letters of Sri Aurobindo written before 1927 to his family, friends, associates and early disciples are included in *Autobiographical Notes and Other Writings of Historical Interest* (volume 36). The titles of these works specify the nature of the letters included in each, but there is some overlap. There are, for example, many letters mentioning the Mother in *Letters on Yoga* and *Letters on Himself and the Ashram*. Those selected for inclusion in the present volume have the Mother as their central focus. The questions and comments of the correspondent, which are printed along with many of the letters, bring out the historical circumstances in which they were written.

Many of the letters in the present volume appeared earlier in *Letters of Sri Aurobindo on the Mother* (1951), *Sri Aurobindo on*

<sup>2</sup> *Letters on Himself and the Ashram*, p. 102.

*Himself and on the Mother* (1953), and *The Mother with Letters on the Mother and Translations of Prayers and Meditations*, volume 25 of the Sri Aurobindo Birth Centenary Library (1972).

### The Writing of the Letters

Sri Aurobindo wrote most of the letters included in this volume to members of his Ashram, the rest to correspondents living outside it. Ashram members wrote to him in notebooks or on loose sheets of paper that were sent to him in an internal “post” once or twice a day. Letters from outside that Sri Aurobindo’s secretary thought he might like to see were sent at the same time. Correspondents wrote in English if they were able to. A good number, however, wrote in Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi or French, all of which Sri Aurobindo read fluently, or in other languages that were translated into English for him. Most letters were addressed to the Mother, even though most correspondents assumed that Sri Aurobindo would reply to them.

Sri Aurobindo generally replied on the sheets of paper (bound or loose) on which the correspondents wrote their comments and questions, writing below them or in the margin or between the lines. Sometimes, however, he wrote his answer on a separate, small sheet of paper from a “bloc-note” pad. In some cases he had his secretary prepare a typed copy of his letter, which he revised before it was sent. In other cases, particularly when the correspondent was living outside the Ashram, he addressed his reply not to the correspondent but to his secretary, who quoted, paraphrased or translated Sri Aurobindo’s reply and signed the letter himself.

While going through Sri Aurobindo’s replies, the reader should keep in mind that each one was written to a specific person at a specific time, in specific circumstances and for a specific purpose. Each subject taken up was one that arose in regard to the correspondent’s inner or outer needs, or in answer to the correspondent’s questions. Sri Aurobindo varied the style and tone of his replies in accordance with his relationship with the correspondent (or, in the case of people writing from outside, the lack of it).

Although the letters were written to specific recipients, they contain much of general interest. This justifies their inclusion in a volume

destined for the general public. But it is important for the reader to bear in mind some remarks that Sri Aurobindo made during the 1930s about the proper use of his letters:

It is not a fact that all I write is meant equally for everybody. That assumes that everybody is alike and there is no difference between sadhak and sadhak. If it were so everybody would advance alike and have the same experiences and take the same time to progress by the same steps and stages. It is not so at all.<sup>3</sup>

I should like to say, in passing, that it is not always safe to apply practically to oneself what has been written for another. Each sadhak is a case by himself and one cannot always or often take a mental rule and apply it rigidly to all who are practising the Yoga.<sup>4</sup>

The tendency to take what I lay down for one and apply it without discrimination to another is responsible for much misunderstanding. A general statement too, true in itself, cannot be applied to everyone alike or applied now and immediately without consideration of condition or circumstance or person or time.<sup>5</sup>

Sri Aurobindo wrote the great majority of these letters between 1931 and 1937. He sometimes dated his answers, but most of the dates given at the end of the letters are those of the letters or notebook entries to which he was replying.

### The Typing and Revision of the Letters

Most of the shorter letters in this volume, and many of the longer ones, were not typed or revised during Sri Aurobindo's lifetime and are reproduced here directly from his handwritten manuscripts. But a good number of the letters were, as mentioned above, typed for Sri Aurobindo and revised by him. Other letters were typed by the recipients for their

<sup>3</sup> *Letters on Himself and the Ashram*, p. 475.

<sup>4</sup> *Letters on Himself and the Ashram*, p. 473.

<sup>5</sup> *The Mother with Letters on the Mother*, p. 349.

own personal use or for circulation within the Ashram. Circulation was at first restricted to members of the Ashram and others whom Sri Aurobindo had accepted as disciples. When letters were circulated, personal references were removed. Persons mentioned by Sri Aurobindo were indicated by initials, or by the letters X, Y, etc. Copies of these typed letters were kept by Sri Aurobindo's secretary and sometimes presented to him for revision. Sometimes the typed copies contained typing errors or textual alterations. Recipients of letters, when they typed them up, sometimes omitted passages that seemed to them to be of no general interest. In a few cases, recipients added words or phrases that they believed made Sri Aurobindo's intentions clearer. Some of these alterations remained even after Sri Aurobindo revised the copies.

Sri Aurobindo's revision amounted sometimes to a complete rewriting of the letter, sometimes to making minor changes here and there. He generally removed personal references if this had not already been done by the typist. When necessary, he also rewrote the openings or other parts of the answers in order to free them from dependence on the correspondent's question.

### The Publication of the Letters

During the early 1950s, the principal editor of Sri Aurobindo's letters conceived and organised two volumes containing Sri Aurobindo's letters on the Mother and on himself. The first of these, *Letters of Sri Aurobindo on the Mother*, was published in 1951. The second, *Sri Aurobindo on Himself and on the Mother*, was published two years later. The editor arranged the contents of the latter volume in three parts: (1) Sri Aurobindo on Himself: Notes and Letters on His Life; (2) Sri Aurobindo on Himself and on the Mother; and (3) Sri Aurobindo on the Mother. Part 3 was an expansion of the text of *Letters of Sri Aurobindo on the Mother* (1951).

In 1972, the material making up *Sri Aurobindo on Himself and on the Mother* was incorporated in two different volumes: *On Himself: Compiled from Notes and Letters* (volume 26 of the Sri Aurobindo Birth Centenary Library) and *The Mother with Letters on the Mother and Translations of Prayers and Meditations* (volume 25 of the Centenary Library).

In THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO, the material in Part One of *On Himself* is incorporated in two volumes: *Letters on Himself and the Ashram* (volume 35) and *Autobiographical Notes* (volume 36), and is discussed in the Note on the Texts in those volumes. The material in Part Two of *On Himself*, headed “Sri Aurobindo on Himself and on the Mother”, is incorporated in Part Two of the present volume, primarily in Section Two, “The Mother, Sri Aurobindo and the Integral Yoga”. The present volume contains many letters on the Mother that did not appear in the Centenary Library edition of *The Mother with Letters on the Mother* and *On Himself*.

The editor of *Letters of Sri Aurobindo on the Mother* (1951) and *Sri Aurobindo on Himself and on the Mother* (1953) included edited versions of the correspondents’ questions if he thought they would help the reader to understand Sri Aurobindo’s replies. He also placed headings before individual letters or groups of letters and supplied the dates if they were known. The editors of the present volume have continued these practices, adding many headings and edited questions, and supplying dates for all letters that were dated or for which there was reliable dating information.

### **The Selection, Arrangement and Editing of the Letters in the Present Volume**

The corpus of Sri Aurobindo’s correspondence between 1927 and 1950 consists of tens of thousands of replies that he wrote to hundreds of correspondents. Most of the replies, however, were written to a few dozen disciples, almost all of them resident members of his Ashram. A smaller number of disciples, no more than a dozen, received more than half of the entire body of published letters. In compiling the volumes of Sri Aurobindo’s correspondence published in THE COMPLETE WORKS, the editors have gone through all known manuscripts, typed copies or photographic copies of manuscripts, and printed texts. From these sources they have selected the letters that seemed suitable for publication. This selection includes most letters consisting of more than a few words that deal with topics of general interest. Electronic texts of the selected letters were then produced and checked against all handwritten, typed and printed versions.

The selection and arrangement of the material in this volume is the work of the editors. The underlying structure of Part Two of *The Mother with Letters on the Mother* (1972) has been preserved, but the letters have been rearranged under new section and group headings. In a note of February 1936, Sri Aurobindo wrote that the placing of letters in group categories was possible in the case of “letters about sadhana”, which could “very easily fall under different heads”.

Part Two, “Letters on the Mother” consists of almost 1400 separate items, an “item” being defined as what is published between one heading or asterisk and another heading or asterisk. Many items correspond exactly to individual letters; other items, however, consist of portions of single letters, or two or more letters or portions of letters that were joined together by earlier editors or typists and revised in that form by Sri Aurobindo. In the present volume portions of letters that had been separated by previous editors have sometimes been reunited. In some cases, however, the separation has been considered justifiable and been retained.

In some cases the text of a given letter has been published in more than one volume of THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO. Some of this doubling of letters occurs between *Letters on Yoga* and *The Mother with Letters on the Mother*. Sometimes Sri Aurobindo’s revised version of a letter has been placed in *Letters on Yoga*, while the original handwritten version, along with the recipient’s question, has been put in *The Mother with Letters on the Mother*.

As in previous collections of Sri Aurobindo’s letters, names of members of the Sri Aurobindo Ashram and of disciples living outside the Ashram have been replaced by the letters X, Y, Z, etc. In any given letter, X stands for the first name replaced, Y for the second, Z for the third, A for the fourth, and so on. An X in a given letter has no necessary relation to an X in another letter.

Following a practice begun in *Letters of Sri Aurobindo on the Mother* (1951) and *Sri Aurobindo on Himself and on the Mother* (1953), the editors of the present volume have included the questions to which Sri Aurobindo replied, or the portions of the correspondents’ letters on which he commented, whenever these are available and helpful for understanding his replies or comments. As a rule, only as much of a correspondent’s letter has been given as is needed to understand

the response. In some cases the questions have been lightly revised for the sake of clarity. Mistakes of grammar, spelling and punctuation due to the correspondent's imperfect grasp of English have been corrected. Questions written in languages other than English have been translated. When the question is not available, only Sri Aurobindo's reply is printed.

Readers should note that Sri Aurobindo almost always spelled the word "Asram" without an "h" though some of his correspondents occasionally wrote "Ashram". By the late 1940s, when "Ashram" had become the standard spelling in the Ashram's publications, Sri Aurobindo was no longer writing letters himself but dictated them to a disciple, who tended to write "Ashram". This spelling therefore occurs in letters of the final period, as well as in headings and other editorial matter throughout the book.

#### French Original of a Letter in Section Four

In the letter of 27 February 1933 on page 596, the question and the Mother's reply to it in the footnote were originally written in French:

*Pourquoi la Mère s'habille-t-elle avec des vêtements riches et beaux?*

The Mother: *Avez-vous donc pour conception que le Divin doit être représenté sur terre par la pauvreté et la laideur?*

#### English Translations of French Words in "On Prières et Méditations de la Mère" in Section Five

Page	French Original — English Translation
601	<i>divin Maître</i> — divine Master
601	<i>avec notre divine Mère</i> — with our divine Mother
602	<i>Seigneur</i> — Lord
602	<i>Telles furent les deux phrases que j'écrivis hier par une sorte de nécessité absolue. La première, comme si la puissance de la prière ne serait complète que si elle était tracée sur le papier</i> — These were two sentences I wrote yesterday

by a kind of absolute necessity. The first, as though the power of the prayer would not be complete unless it were traced on paper.

- 602 *Ta splendeur veut rayonner* — Thy splendour wants to radiate  
 603 *et le raisonnement est une faculté humaine, c'est-à-dire individuelle* — but reasoning is a human faculty, that is, it is individual  
 603 *elle est consciente, voulue* — it is conscious, willed  
 603 *Les hommes, poussés par le conflit des forces, accomplissent un sublime sacrifice* — Men, driven by the conflict of forces, are performing a sublime sacrifice  
 603 *pure lumière* — pure light  
 603 *Force Divine* — divine Force  
 605 *chacun des grands êtres Asouriques qui ont résolu d'être Tes serviteurs* — each one of the great Asuric beings who have resolved to be Thy servitors  
 605 *coup de diplomatie* — diplomatic coup  
 606 *La joie contenue dans l'activité est compensée et équilibrée par la joie plus grande peut-être encore contenue dans le retrait de toute activité* — The joy that is contained in activity is compensated and balanced by the perhaps still greater joy contained in withdrawal from all activity  
 606 *dans tous les coins du monde une de Tes divines pierres est posée par la puissance de la pensée consciente et formatrice* — in every corner of the world one of Thy divine stones is laid by the power of conscious and formative thought  
 607 *Il faut à chaque instant savoir tout perdre pour tout gagner* — We must know at each moment how to lose everything that we may gain everything  
 607 *Il [mon être] sait que cet état d'amour actif doit être constant et impersonnel, c'est-à-dire tout à fait indépendant des circonstances et des personnes, puisqu'il ne peut et ne doit être concentré sur aucune en particulier* — It [my being] knows that this active state of love should be constant and impersonal, that is, absolutely independent of circumstances and persons, since it cannot and must not be concentrated upon any one thing in particular

608 *La Paix régnera sur terre* — Peace will reign upon earth

**Original English Texts of French Words  
in “On Entretiens avec la Mère” in Section Five**

*French Translation* — English Original

- 623 *Même ceux qui ont la volonté de s'enfuir [du monde], quand ils arrivent de l'autre côté, peuvent trouver que la fuite ne sert pas à grand-chose après tout* — And as for those who have the will of running away [from the world], even they, when they go over to the other side, may find that the flight was not of much use after all.
- 623 *En fait, la mort a été attachée à toute vie sur terre* — Death as a fact has been attached to all life upon earth
- 623 *Si cette croyance pouvait être rejetée, d'abord de la mentalité consciente, . . . la mort ne serait plus inévitable* — If this belief could be cast out first from the conscious mind, . . . death would no longer be inevitable
- 624 *êtres pervers et hostiles de plus grande envergure et d'une plus haute origine que tous ceux dont j'ai parlé jusqu'à présent* — perverse or hostile beings of a greater make and higher origin than those of whom I have till now spoken
- 624 *la marche interne de l'univers* — the inner march of the universe

PART THREE: TRANSLATIONS OF PRAYERS OF THE MOTHER

*Prières et Méditations de la Mère*

The Mother's *Prières et Méditations de la Mère* consists of extracts from her spiritual journal which she selected for publication. The first edition of the French original was printed for private circulation in 1932. An edition meant for the general public was released in 1944, and new editions followed in 1952, 1973, 1980 and 1990. In 1952 the title was shortened to *Prières et Méditations*.

An English translation of the entire text of *Prières et Méditations de la Mère* was published in 1948. A second, newly translated edition

came out in 1979; the text of this edition was reproduced in 2003.

Of the 313 prayers in the original French edition of *Prières et Méditations de la Mère*, only 24 were translated fully or in part by Sri Aurobindo. His own handwritten manuscripts of these prayers or parts of prayers still exist. Twenty-two of the 24 translations were first published in 1941 in *Prayers and Meditations of the Mother*, which contained 61 prayers; the remaining two translations were published subsequently: the prayer of 28 November 1913 was brought out in 1962 in a slightly enlarged edition of the book above; the prayer of 28 December 1928 came out in 1979 in a complete translation of all the prayers, entitled *Prayers and Meditations*, which is volume 1 of the Collected Works of the Mother. These 24 translations, along with “Radha’s Prayer”, make up the contents of Part Three of the present volume. Sri Aurobindo also revised in his own hand translations of around one hundred prayers done by others. These revised translations have not been included in the present volume; more than half were first published in the 1941 edition mentioned above.

**Radha’s Prayer.** The Mother originally wrote “Radha’s Prayer” in English on 12 January 1932 and rendered it into French the following day. Sri Aurobindo then translated the French version into English.

The Mother wrote this prayer for a disciple who was preparing to perform a dance about Radha. In a letter to the disciple the Mother wrote:

To complete what I told you yesterday about Radha’s dance I have noted this down as an indication of the thought and feeling Radha must have within her when she stands at the end in front of Krishna:

“Every thought of my mind, every emotion of my heart, every movement of my being, every feeling and every sensation, each cell of my body, each drop of my blood, all, all is yours, yours absolutely, yours without reserve. You can decide my life or my death, my happiness or my sorrow, my pleasure or my pain; whatever you do with me, whatever comes to me from you will lead me to the Divine Rapture.”<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> *Words of the Mother—III* (Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 2004), Collected Works of the Mother, volume 15, p. 209.