# Basic Elements of Sadhana

*Words of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother*

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✻

*Flower on the Cover:*

**Psychological Perfection**

*(Spiritual Significance given by the Mother)*

*Botanical Name: Plumeria rubra*

## Did You Know This?

... that the more you give yourself the more you have the experience — it is not just a feeling or impression or sensation, it is a total experience — that the more you give yourself to the Divine the more He is with you, totally, constantly, at every minute, in all your thoughts, all your needs, and that there's no aspiration which does not receive an immediate answer; and you have the sense of a complete, constant intimacy, of a total nearness. It is as though you carried... as though the Divine were all the time with you; you walk and He walks with you, you sleep and He sleeps with you, you eat and He eats with you, you think and He thinks with you, you love and He is the love you have. But for this one must give himself entirely, totally, exclusively, reserve nothing, keep nothing for himself and not keep back anything, not disperse anything also: the least little thing in your being which is not given to the Divine is a waste; it is the wasting of your joy, something that lessens your happiness by that much, and all that you don't give to the Divine is as though you were holding it in the way of the possibility of the Divine's giving Himself to you. You don't feel Him close to yourself, constantly with you, because you don't belong to Him, because you belong to hundreds of other things and people; in your thought, your action, your feelings, impulses... there are millions of things which you do not give Him, and that is why you don't feel Him always with you, because all these things are so many screens and walls between Him and you. But if you give Him everything, if you keep back nothing, He will be constantly and totally with you in all that you do, in all that you think, all that you feel, always, at each moment.

**The Mother**

## Three Basic Elements of Sadhana

In all that is done in the universe, the Divine
through his Shakti is behind all action but
he is veiled by his Yoga Maya and works through
the ego of the Jiva in the lower nature.

In Yoga also it is the Divine who is
the Sadhaka and the Sadhana;
it is his Shakti with her light, power, knowledge,
consciousness, Ananda, acting upon the Adhara and,
when it is opened to her, pouring into it
with these divine forces that makes the Sadhana possible.

But so long as the lower nature is active
the personal effort of the Sadhaka remains necessary.

**The personal effort** required is a triple labour of
**aspiration, rejection** and **surrender**...

**Sri Aurobindo**

# Aspiration

**Words of Sri Aurobindo**

*[The personal effort required is:]*
***... an aspiration vigilant, constant, unceasing — the mind's will, the heart's seeking, the assent of the vital being, the will to open and make plastic the physical consciousness and nature. ...***

*

It [aspiration] is the call of the being for higher things — for the Divine, for all that belongs to the higher or Divine Consciousness.

*

Aspiration should be not a form of desire, but the feeling of an inner soul's need, and a quiet settled will to turn towards the Divine and seek the Divine.

*

Pulling comes usually from a desire to get things for oneself — in aspiration there is a self-giving for the higher consciousness to descend and take possession — the more intense the call the greater the self-giving.

*

The spiritual aspiration is innate in man; for he is, unlike the animal, aware of imperfection and limitation and feels that there is something to be attained beyond what he now is...

Up till this advent of a developed thinking mind in Matter evolution had been effected, not by the self-aware aspiration, intention, will or seeking of the living being, but subcon-

sciously or subliminally by the automatic operation of nature... Man has seen that there can be a higher status of consciousness than his own; the evolutionary oestrus is there in his parts of mind and life, the aspiration to exceed himself is delivered and articulate within him...

*

The process of Yoga is a turning of the human soul from the egoistic state of consciousness absorbed in the outward appearances and attractions of things to a higher state in which the Transcendent and Universal can pour itself into the individual mould and transform it. The first determining element of the siddhi is, therefore, the intensity of the turning, the force which directs the soul inward. The power of aspiration of the heart, the force of the will, the concentration of the mind, the perseverance and determination of the applied energy are the measure of that intensity. The ideal sadhaka should be able to say in the Biblical phrase, "My zeal for the Lord has eaten me up." It is this zeal for the Lord, — *utsāha*, the zeal of the whole nature for its divine results, *vyākulatā*, the heart's eagerness for the attainment of the Divine, — that devours the ego and breaks up the limitations of its petty and narrow mould for the full and wide reception of that which it seeks, that which, being universal, exceeds and, being transcendent, surpasses even the largest and highest individual self and nature.

*

The acceptance of a new spiritual idea-force and upward orientation in the being, an illumination, a turning or conversion seized on by the will and the heart's aspiration, — this is the momentous act which contains as in a seed all the results that the Yoga has to give. The mere idea or

# Three Basic Elements of Sadhana

(Spiritual Significance of the Flowers
given by the Mother)

## Aspiration

## Detachment from all that is not the Divine

## Surrender

intellectual seeking of something higher beyond, however strongly grasped by the mind's interest, is ineffective unless it is seized on by the heart as the one thing desirable and by the will as the one thing to be done. For truth of the Spirit has not to be merely thought but to be lived, and to live it demands a unified single-mindedness of the being; so great a change as is contemplated by the Yoga is not to be effected by a divided will or by a small portion of the energy or by a hesitating mind. He who seeks the Divine must consecrate himself to God and to God only.

*

The aspiration of the psychic being is for the opening of the whole lower nature, mind, vital, body to the Divine, for the love and union with the Divine, for its presence and power within the heart, for the transformation of the mind, life and body by the descent of the higher consciousness into this instrumental being and nature.

*

Demand or desire comes from the mental or the vital, but a psychic or spiritual need is a different thing. The psychic does not demand or desire — it aspires; it does not make conditions for its surrender or withdraw if its aspiration is not immediately satisfied—for the psychic has complete trust in the Divine or in the Guru and can wait for the right time or the hour of the Divine Grace. The psychic has an insistence of its own, but it puts its pressure not on the Divine, but on the nature, placing a finger of light on all the defects there that stand in the way of the realisation, sifting out all that is mixed, ignorant or imperfect in the experience or in the movements of the yoga and never satisfied with itself or with the nature till it has got it perfectly open to the Divine, free from all

forms of ego, surrendered, simple and right in the attitude and all the movements. This is what has to be established entirely in the mind and vital and in the physical consciousness...

*

**Words of the Mother**

*Q: What is exactly meant by a sincere aspiration?*

An aspiration which is not mixed with any interested and egoistic calculation.

*

Beyond words, above thoughts the flame of an intense aspiration must always burn, steady and bright.

*

Our only aspiration must be for spiritual progress. It is only for that that we must pray.

*

If you are in a state of conscious aspiration and very sincere, well, everything around you will be arranged in order to help in your aspiration, whether directly or indirectly, that is, either to make you progress, put you in touch with something new or to eliminate from your nature something that has to disappear. This is something quite remarkable. If you are truly in a state of intensity of aspiration, there is not a circumstance which does not come to help you to realise this aspiration. Everything comes, everything, as though there were a perfect and absolute consciousness organising around you all things . ...

If you say to the Divine with conviction, "I want only You", the Divine will arrange all the circumstances in such a way as to compel you to be sincere. [But] Something in

the being... [says] "I want only You."... the aspiration... and then one wants a hundred odd things all the time, isn't that so? At times something comes, just... usually to disturb everything — it stands in the way and prevents you from realising your aspiration. Well, the Divine will come without showing Himself, without your seeing Him, without your having any inkling of it, and He will arrange all the circumstances in such a way that everything that prevents you from belonging solely to the Divine will be removed from your path, inevitably. Then when all is removed, you begin to howl and complain; but later, if you are sincere and look at yourself straight in the eye... you have said to the Lord, you have said, "I want only You." He will remain close to you, all the rest will go away. This is indeed a higher Grace. Only, you must say this with conviction. I don't even mean that you must say it integrally, because if one says it integrally, the work is done. What is necessary is that one part of the being, indeed the central will, says it with conviction: "I want only You." Even once, and it suffices: all that takes more or less long, sometimes it stretches over years, but one reaches the goal.

*

When you come to the Yoga, you must be ready to have all your mental buildings and all your vital scaffoldings shattered to pieces. You must be prepared to be suspended in the air with nothing to support you except your faith. You will have to forget your past self and its clingings altogether, to pluck it out of your consciousness and be born anew, free from every kind of bondage. Think not of what you were, but of what you aspire to be; be altogether in what you want to realise. Turn from your dead past and look straight towards the future. Your religion, country, family lie there; it is the DIVINE.

# Rejection

**Words of Sri Aurobindo**

*[The personal effort required is:]*
***... rejection of the movements of the lower nature***

***— rejection of the mind's ideas, opinions, preferences, habits, constructions,* so that *the true knowledge may find free room in a silent mind,***

***— rejection of the vital nature's desires, demands, cravings, sensations, passions, selfishness, pride, arrogance, lust, greed, jealousy, envy, hostility to the Truth,* so that *the true power and joy may pour from above into a calm, large, strong and consecrated vital being,***

***— rejection of the physical nature's stupidity, doubt, disbelief, obscurity, obstinacy, pettiness, laziness, unwillingness to change, Tamas,* so that *the true stability of Light, Power, Ananda may establish itself in a body growing always more divine...***

*

**Rejection — A corollary to aspiration**

All interference from below that would falsify the truth of the superior action must first be inhibited or rendered impotent, and it must be done by our own free choice. A continual and always repeated refusal of the impulsions and falsehoods of the lower nature is asked from us and an insistent support to the Truth as it grows in our parts; for the progressive settling into our nature and final perfection of the incoming informing Light, Purity and Power needs for its development and sustenance our free acceptance of it and our stubborn rejection of all that is contrary to it, inferior or incompatible.

In the first movement of self-preparation, the period of

personal effort, the method we have to use is this concentration of the whole being on the Divine that it seeks and, as its corollary, this constant rejection, throwing out, *katharsis*, of all that is not the true Truth of the Divine. An entire consecration of all that we are, think, feel and do will be the result of this persistence.

*

Unfortunately, there *is* the resistance, a very obscure and obstinate resistance. That necessitates a negative element in the yoga, an element of rejection of things that stand in the way and of pressure upon those forms that are crude and useless to disappear, on those that are useful but imperfect or have been perverted to retain or to recover their true movement. To the vital this pressure is painful, first, because it is obscure and does not understand and, secondly, because there are parts of it that want to be left to their crude motions and not to change. That is why the intervention of a psychic attitude is so helpful. For the psychic has the happy confidence, the ready understanding and response, the spontaneous surrender...

At the same time, it is not from the negative part of the movement that you have to judge the yoga, but from its positive side; for the negative part is temporary and transitional and will disappear, the positive alone counts for the ideal and for the future.... This yoga is not a rejection of life or of closeness and intimacy between the Divine and the sadhaks. Its ideal aims at the greatest closeness and unity on the physical as well as the other planes, at the most divine largeness and fullness and joy of life.

*

**Rejection of the activities of physical-mind, desire-mind and thought-mind**

To deal with this mind two things are necessary, (1) not so much to try to control or fight with or suppress it as to stand back from it: one looks at it and sees what it is but refuses to follow its thoughts or run about among the objects it pursues, remaining at the back of the mind quiet and separate; (2) to practise quietude and concentration in this separateness, until the habit of quiet takes hold of the physical mind and replaces the habit of these small activities. This of course takes time and can only come by practice.

*

The desire-mind must also be rejected from the instrument of thought and this is best done by the detachment of the Purusha from thought and opinion itself.

*

The method with the thought-mind will be the same as with all the rest of the being. The Purusha, having used the thought-mind for release from identification with the life and body and with the mind of desire and sensations and emotions, will turn round upon the thought-mind itself and will say "This too I am not; I am not the thought or the thinker; all these ideas, opinions, speculations, strivings of the intellect, its predilections, preferences, dogmas, doubts, self-corrections are not myself; all this is only a working of Prakriti which takes place in the thought-mind." Thus a division is created between the mind that thinks and wills and the mind that observes and the Purusha becomes the witness only; he sees, he understands the process and laws of his thought, but detaches himself from it. Then as the master of the sanction he withdraws his past sanction from the tangle of the mental undercurrent and the reasoning intellect and causes both to cease from their importunities. He

becomes liberated from subjection to the thinking mind and capable of the utter silence.

*

**Release from the siege of the lower vital**

There is only one way of escape from this siege of the lower vital nature. It is the entire rejection of all egoistic vital demand, claim and desire and the replacement of the dissatisfied vital urge by the purity of psychic aspiration. Not the satisfaction of these vital clamours nor, either, an ascetic retirement is the true solution, but the surrender of the vital being to the Divine and a single-minded consecration to the supreme Truth into which desire and demand cannot enter. For the nature of the supreme Truth is Light and Ananda, and where desire and demand are there can be no Ananda.

*

The rejection of desire is essentially the rejection of the element of craving, putting that out from the consciousness itself as a foreign element not belonging to the true self and the inner nature. But refusal to indulge the suggestions of desire is also a part of the rejection; to abstain from the action suggested, if it is not the right action, must be included in the yogic discipline. It is only when this is done in the wrong way, by a mental ascetic principle or a hard moral rule, that it can be called suppression. The difference between suppression and an inward essential rejection is the difference between mental or moral control and a spiritual purification.

When one lives in the true consciousness one feels the desires outside oneself, entering from outside, from the universal lower Prakriti, into the mind and the vital parts. ... The first condition for getting rid of desire is, therefore, to

become conscious with the true consciousness...

*

**Conquest of the inertia of the physical**

In the physical it is inertia, obscurity, inability that come up and the obstinacy of these things. The only thing to do in this unpleasant phase is to be more obstinate than the physical inertia and to persist in a fixed endeavour — steady persistency without any restless struggle — to get a wide and permanent opening made even in this solid rock of obstruction.

*

Cast away from you these movements of doubt, depression and the rest which are no part of your true and higher nature. Reject these suggestions of inability, unfitness and all these irrational movements of an alien force. Remain faithful to the Light of your soul even when it is hidden by clouds. ... The one need for you and for all is to be, even in the darkness of the powers of obscurity of the physical consciousness, stubbornly faithful to your soul and to the remembrance of the Divine Call. Be faithful and you will conquer.

*

The first means is not to get upset when it [inertia] comes or when it stays. The second is to detach yourself, not only yourself above but yourself below and not identify. The third is to reject everything that is raised by the inertia and not regard it as your own or accept it at all.

If you can do these things then there will be something in you that remains perfectly quiet even in the greatest inertia. Through that quiet part you can bring down peace, force, even light and knowledge into the inertia itself.

## Surrender

**Words of Sri Aurobindo**

*[The personal effort required is:]*
***... surrender of oneself and all one is and has and every plane of the consciousness and every movement to the Divine and the Shakti.***

*

... what we call Samarpana [is] — rather inadequately rendered by the English word surrender.

*

The first word of the supramental Yoga is surrender; its last word also is surrender. It is by a will to give oneself to the eternal Divine, for lifting into the divine consciousness, for perfection, for transformation, that the Yoga begins; it is in the entire giving that it culminates; for it is only when the self-giving is complete that there comes the finality of the Yoga, the entire taking up into the supramental Divine, the perfection of the being, the transformation of the nature.

*

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

*

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

*

An inert passivity is constantly confused with the real surrender, but out of an inert passivity nothing true and powerful can come. It is the inert passivity of physical Nature that leaves it at the mercy of every obscure or undivine influence. A glad and strong and helpful submission is demanded to the working of the Divine Force, the obedience of the illumined disciple of the Truth, of the inner Warrior who fights against obscurity and falsehood, of the faithful servant of the Divine.

*

Surrender is from within, opening and giving the mind, vital, physical, all to the Mother for her to take them as her own and re-create them in their true being which is a portion of the Divine; all the rest follows as a consequence.

*

What I mean by surrender is this inner surrender of the mind and vital. There is, of course, the outer surrender also: the giving up of all that is found to conflict with the spirit or need of the sadhana, the offering, the obedience to the guidance of the Divine, whether directly, if one has reached that stage, or through the psychic or to the guidance of the Guru.

*

The method we have to pursue ... is to put our whole conscious being into relation and contact with the Divine and to call Him in to transform our entire being into His. Thus in a sense God Himself, the real Person in us, becomes the sadhaka of the sadhana as well as the Master of the Yoga by whom the lower personality is used as the centre of a divine transfiguration and the instrument of its own perfection. ...

In psychological fact this method translates itself into the progressive surrender of the ego with its whole field and all its apparatus to the Beyond-ego with its vast and incalculable but always inevitable workings.

*

**Words of the Mother**

*[The process of surrender]*

You can surrender either through knowledge or through devotion. You may have a strong intuition that the Divine alone is the truth and a luminous conviction that without the Divine you cannot manage. Or you may have a spontaneous feeling that this line is the only way of being happy, a strong psychic desire to belong exclusively to the Divine: "I do not belong to myself," you say, and give up the responsibility of your being to the Truth. Then comes self-offering. ...

*

In the beginning you start by making this offering in a general way, as though once for all; you say, "I am the servant of the Divine; my life is given absolutely to the Divine; all my efforts are for the realisation of the Divine Life." But that is only the first step; for this is not sufficient. When the resolution has been taken, when you have decided that the whole of your life shall be given to the Divine, you have still at every moment to remember it and carry it out in all the details

of your existence. You must feel at every step that you belong to the Divine; you must have the constant experience that, in whatever you think or do, it is always the Divine Consciousness that is acting through you. 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.

This is what you have to do to carry out your general offering in detailed offerings. Live constantly in the presence of the Divine; live in the feeling that it is this presence which moves you and is doing everything you do. Offer all your movements to it, not only every mental action, every thought and feeling but even the most ordinary and external actions such as eating; when you eat, you must feel that it is the Divine who is eating through you. When you can thus gather all your movements into the One Life, then you have in you unity instead of division. No longer is one part of your nature given to the Divine, while the rest remains in its ordinary ways, engrossed in ordinary things; your entire life is taken up, an integral transformation is gradually realised in you.

*

And once the self-giving is complete, consecration follows: it is the crown of the whole process of realisation, the last step of the gradation, after which there is no more trouble and everything runs smoothly. But you must not forget that you cannot become integrally consecrated at once. You are often deluded into such a belief when, for a day or two, you have a strong movement of a particular kind. You are led

to hope that everything else will automatically follow in its wake; but in fact if you become the least bit self-complacent you retard your own advance. For your being is full of innumerable tendencies at war with one another — almost different personalities, we may say. When one of them gives itself to the Divine, the others come up and refuse their allegiance. ... Patiently you have to go round your whole being, exploring each nook and corner, facing all those anarchic elements in you which are waiting for their psychological moment to come up.

*

*Q: When we are concentrated in mental movements or intellectual pursuits, why do we sometimes forget or lose touch with the Divine?*

You lose it because your consciousness is still divided. The Divine has not settled into your mind; you are not wholly consecrated to the Divine Life. Otherwise you could concentrate to any extent upon such things and still you would have the sense of being helped and supported by the Divine.

In all pursuits, intellectual or active, your one motto should be, "Remember and Offer." Let whatever you do be done as an offering to the Divine. And this too will be an excellent discipline for you; it will prevent you from doing many foolish and useless things.

*

The condition to be aimed at, the real achievement 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 with-

out the Divine, the very source of your action disappears; knowledge, power, all are gone. ...

Whenever you find that you can do something without feeling the presence of the Divine and yet be perfectly comfortable, you must understand that you are not consecrated in that part of your being. That is the way of the ordinary humanity which does not feel any need of the Divine. But for a seeker of the Divine Life it is very different. And when you have entirely realised unity with the Divine, then, if the Divine were only for a second to withdraw from you, you would simply drop dead; for the Divine is now the Life of your life, your whole existence, your single and complete support. If the Divine is not there, nothing is left.

*

For example, you have decided to offer your life to the Divine, you take that decision. But all of a sudden, something altogether unpleasant, unexpected happens to you and your first movement is to react and protest. Yet you have made the offering, you have said once for all: "My life belongs to the Divine", and then suddenly an extremely unpleasant incident happens (that can happen) and there is something in you that reacts, that does not want it. But here, if you want to be truly logical with your offering, you must bring forward this unpleasant incident, make an offering of it to the Divine, telling him very sincerely: "Let Your will be done; if You have decided it that way, it will be that way." And this must be a willing and spontaneous adhesion. So it is very difficult.

Even for the smallest thing, something that is not in keeping with what you expected, what you have worked for, instead of an opposite reaction coming in — spontaneously, irresistibly, you draw back: "No, not that" — if you

have made a complete surrender, a total surrender, well, it does not happen like that: you are as quiet, as peaceful, as calm in one case as in the other. And perhaps you had the notion that it would be better if it happened in a certain way, but if it happens differently, you find that this also is all right. You might have, for example, worked very hard to do a certain thing, so that something might happen, you might have given much time, much of your energy, much of your will, and all that not for your own sake, but, say, for the divine work (that is the offering); now suppose that after having taken all this trouble, done all this work, made all these efforts, it all goes just the other way round, it does not succeed. If you are truly surrendered, you say: "It is good, it is all good, it is all right; I did what I could, as well as I could, now it is not my decision, it is the decision of the Divine, I accept entirely what He decides." On the other hand, if you do not have this deep and spontaneous surrender, you tell yourself: "How is it? I took so much trouble to do a thing which is not for a selfish purpose, which is for the Divine Work, and this is the result, it is not successful!" Ninety-nine times out of a hundred, it is like that.

True surrender is a very difficult thing.

*

When the vital consents to collaborate (which is already a big step), when it decides that it too is going to work, to devote all its effort and all its energy to accomplish the work, even then there is underneath, well hidden somewhere, a sort of—how shall we call it?— an expectation that things will turn out well and the result will be favourable. And that veils the complete sincerity. For this expectation is an egoistic, personal thing, and this veils the full sincerity. ...

When you are doing a thing, always those two, the mind

and the vital are there, trying to draw some benefit or other out of what you are doing: the benefit of personal satisfaction, the benefit of happiness, the benefit of a good opinion that you have of yourself. It is difficult not to deceive oneself.

*

*Q: Does not surrender consist in offering one's work like a good servant?*

Work is a good discipline. But it is not this idea, it is not the idea of a passive, unconscious and almost involuntary submission. It is not that. It does not lie only in work.

The most important surrender is the surrender of your character, your way of being, so that it may change. If you do not surrender your very own nature, never will this nature change. It is this that is most important. You have certain ways of understanding, certain ways of reacting, certain ways of feeling, almost certain ways of progressing, and above all, a special way of looking at life and expecting from it certain things — well, it is this you must surrender. That is, if you truly want to receive the divine Light and transform yourself, it is your whole way of being you must offer — offer by opening it, making it as receptive as possible so that the divine Consciousness which sees how you ought to be, may act directly and change all these movements into movements more true, more in keeping with your own truth. This is infinitely more important than surrendering what one does. It is not what one does (what one does is very important, that's evident) that is the most important thing but what one *is*.

*

The path is long, but self-surrender makes it short; the way is difficult, but perfect trust makes it easy.

Section II

## Five Inner Qualities Necessary for Sadhana

*Mother shows the white Champak flower she is holding in her hand. She has named the flower "Psychological Perfection".*

Who remembers this?
*(Counting the petals)* One, two, three, four, five psychological perfections. What are the five psychological perfections? ... ...

Sri Aurobindo has said... that surrender is the first and absolute condition for doing the yoga. So... this is not just one of the necessary qualities: it is the first attitude indispensable for beginning the yoga. If one has not decided to make a total surrender, one cannot begin.

But for this surrender to be total, all these qualities are necessary. ...

So here's my proposal: we put surrender first, at the top of the list, that is, we accept what Sri Aurobindo has said — that to do the integral yoga one must first resolve to surrender entirely to the Divine, there is no other way, this is *the* way. But after that one must have the five psychological virtues, five psychological perfections, and we say that these perfections are:

Sincerity or Transparency

Faith or Trust (Trust in the Divine, naturally)

Devotion or Gratitude

Courage or Aspiration

Endurance or Perseverance.

**The Mother**

## Sincerity or Transparency

**Words of the Mother**

... the first among them all is sincerity. For if there is no sincerity, one cannot advance even by half a step. So that is the first, and it is always there.

But it is possible to translate it by another word, if you prefer it, which would be "transparency". I shall explain this word:

Someone is in front of me and I am looking at him; I look into his eyes. And if this person is sincere or "transparent", through his eyes I go down and I see his soul — clearly. But — this is precisely the experience — when I look at somebody and see a little cloud, then I continue, I see a screen, and then sometimes it is a wall, and afterwards it is something quite black; and all this must be crossed, and holes bored in order to go through; and even then I am not sure if at the last minute I may not find myself before a door of bronze so thick that I shall never get through and see his soul; so, of such a person I can immediately say that he is not sincere. But I can also say, figuratively, that he is not transparent. That is the first thing.

*

Sincerity means to lift all the movements of the being to the level of the highest consciousness and realisation already attained.

Sincerity exacts the unification and harmonisation of the whole being in all its parts and movements around the central Divine Will.

*

Sincerity is the gate to Divinity.

*

***Q: What do I need to develop most? And what do I need to reject most?***

Develop — sincerity (that is, an integral adhesion to the Divine's way).

Reject — the pull of the old human habits.

*

In your sadhana what is important is sincerity at every point; if there is that, mistakes can be rectified and do not so much matter. If there is any insincerity, that pulls down the sadhana at once. But whether this constant sincerity is there or there is any falling off from it at any point, is a thing you must learn to see in yourself; if there is the earnest and constant will for it, the power to see will come.

*

To begin with, it must be said that sincerity is progressive, and as the being progresses and develops, as the universe unfolds in the becoming, sincerity too must go on perfecting itself endlessly. Every halt in that development necessarily changes the sincerity of yesterday into the insincerity of tomorrow.

To be perfectly sincere it is indispensable not to have any preference, any desire, any attraction, any dislike, any sympathy or antipathy, any attachment, any repulsion. One must have a total, integral vision of things, in which everything is in its place and one has the same attitude towards all things: the attitude of true vision. This programme is obviously very difficult for a human being to realise. Unless he has decided to divinise himself, it seems almost impossible that he could be free from all these contraries within him. And yet, so long as one carries them in himself, one cannot

be perfectly sincere. Automatically the mental, the vital and even the physical working is falsified. I am emphasising the physical, for even the working of the senses is warped: one does not see, hear, taste, feel things as they are in reality as long as one has a preference. So long as there are things which please you and others which don't, so long as you are attracted by certain things, and repulsed by others, you cannot see things in their reality; you see them through your reaction, your preference or your repulsion. The senses are instruments which get out of order, in the same way as sensations, feelings and thoughts. Therefore, to be sure of what you see, what you feel, what you experience and think, you must have a complete detachment; and this is obviously not an easy task. But until then your perception cannot be wholly true, and so it is not sincere.

Naturally, this is the maximum. There are crass insincerities which everybody understands and which, I believe, it is not necessary to dwell upon, as for example, saying one thing and thinking another, pretending that you are doing one thing and doing another, expressing a wish which is not your real wish. I am not even speaking of the absolutely glaring lie which consists in saying something different from the fact, but even that diplomatic way of acting which consists in doing things with the idea of obtaining a certain result, in saying something and expecting it to have a certain effect; every combination of this kind which naturally makes you contradict yourself, is a kind of insincerity gross enough for everybody to easily recognise.

But there are others more subtle which are difficult to discern. For instance, so long as you have sympathies and antipathies, quite naturally and as it were spontaneously you will have a favourable perception of what is sympathetic to you and an unfavourable perception of what — or

whom — you dislike. And there too the lack of sincerity will be flagrant. However, you may deceive yourself and not perceive that you are being insincere. Then in that case, you have, as it were, the collaboration of mental insincerity. For it is true that there are insincerities of slightly different types according to the state of being or the parts of the being. Only, the origin of these insincerities is always a similar movement arising from desire and the seeking of personal ends — from egoism, from the combination of all the limitations arising from egoism and all the deformations arising from desire.

In fact, as long as the ego is there, one cannot say that a being is perfectly sincere, even though he is striving to become sincere. One must pass beyond the ego, give oneself up totally to the divine Will, surrender without reserve and without calculation... then one can be perfectly sincere, but not before.

That does not mean that one should not make an effort to be more sincere than one is, saying to oneself, "All right, I shall wait for my ego to disappear in order to be sincere", because one may reverse the terms and say that if you do not try sincerely your ego will never disappear. Therefore, sincerity is the basis of all true realisation, it is the means, the path — and it is also the goal. Without it you are sure to make innumerable blunders and you have constantly to redress the harm you have done to yourself and to others.

There is, besides, a marvellous joy in being sincere. Every act of sincerity carries in itself its own reward: the feeling of purification, of soaring upwards, of liberation one gets when one has rejected even one tiny particle of falsehood.

Sincerity is the safeguard, the protection, the guide, and finally the transforming power.

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*The only thing* that is truly effective is the change of consciousness; it is the inner liberation through an intimate, constant union, absolute and inevitable, with the vibration of the supramental forces. The preoccupation of every second, the will of all the elements of the being, the aspiration of the entire being, including all the cells of the body, is this union with the supramental forces, the divine forces. And there is no longer any need at all to be preoccupied with what the consequences will be. What has to be in the play of the universal forces and their manifestation will be, quite naturally, spontaneously, automatically, there is no need to be preoccupied with it. The only thing that matters is the constant, total, complete contact — constant, yes, constant— with the Force, the Light, the Truth, the Power, and that ineffable delight of the supramental consciousness.

That is sincerity. All the rest is an imitation, it is almost a part one plays for oneself.

Perfect purity is *to be*, to be ever more and more, in a self-perfecting becoming. One must never pretend that one *is*: one must *be*, spontaneously. This is sincerity.

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The important point is to be *more and more* sincere, always more sincere so that you never deceive yourself in the integrality of your aspiration.

This sincerity brings the sure help of the divine Grace.

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**Words of Sri Aurobindo**

What I mean by subtle methods is psychological, non-mechanical processes, e.g., concentration in the heart, surrender, self-purification, working out by inner means the change of the consciousness. This does not mean that there

is no outer change: the outer change is necessary but as a part of the inner change. If there is impurity or insincerity within, the outer change will not be effective, but if there is a sincere inner working, the outer change will help it and accelerate the process.... The most important thing for the purification of the heart is an absolute sincerity. No pretence with oneself, no concealment from the Divine, or oneself, or the Guru, a straight look at one's movements, a straight will to make them straight.

*

Sincerity means more than mere honesty. It means that you mean what you say, feel what you profess, are earnest in your will. As the sadhak aspires to be an instrument of the Divine and one with the Divine, sincerity in him means that he is really in earnest in his aspiration and refuses all other will or impulse except the Divine's.

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[Sincerity is] to allow no part of the being to contradict the highest aspiration towards the Divine.

*

To be entirely sincere means to desire the divine Truth only, to surrender yourself more and more to the Divine Mother, to reject all personal demand and desire other than this one aspiration, to offer every action in life to the Divine and do it as the work given without bringing in the ego.

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The one condition of getting rid of things is an absolute central sincerity in all the parts of the being, and that means an absolute insistence on the Truth and nothing but the Truth.

## Faith or Trust

**Words of Sri Aurobindo**

Faith is the soul's witness to something not yet manifested, achieved or realised, but which yet the Knower within us, even in the absence of all indications, feels to be true or supremely worth following or achieving. This thing within us can last even when there is no fixed belief in the mind, even when the vital struggles and revolts and refuses.

*

... a faith ... is the reflex in the lower consciousness of a Truth or real Idea yet unrealised in the manifestation.

*

This *śraddhā* — the English word faith is inadequate to express it — is in reality an influence from the supreme Spirit and its light a message from our supramental being which is calling the lower nature to rise out of its petty present to a great self-becoming and self-exceeding. And that which receives the influence and answers to the call is not so much the intellect, the heart or the life mind, but the inner soul which better knows the truth of its own destiny and mission.

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Ramakrishna even went so far as to say, when asked whether blind faith was not wrong, that blind faith was the only kind to have, for faith is either blind or it is not faith but something else — reasoned inference, proved conviction or ascertained knowledge.

*

The fundamental faith in yoga is this, inherent in the soul,

that the Divine exists and the Divine is the one thing to be followed after — nothing else in life is worth having in comparison with that. So long as a man has that faith, he is marked for the spiritual life and I will say that, even if his nature is full of obstacles and crammed with denials and difficulties, and even if he has many years of struggle, he is marked out for success in the spiritual life.

*

We have to have the faith that in spite of our ignorance and errors and weaknesses and in spite of the attacks of hostile forces and in spite of any immediate appearance of failure the Divine Will is leading us, through every circumstance, towards the final Realisation. This faith will give us equanimity; it is a faith that accepts what happens, not definitively but as something that has to be gone through on the way. Once equanimity is established there can be established too another kind of faith, supported by it, which can be made dynamic with something from the supramental consciousness and can overcome the present circumstances and determine what will happen and help to bring down the Realisation of the Will of the Transcendent Divine.

The faith that goes to the Cosmic Divine is limited in the power of its action by the necessities of the play.

To get entirely free from these limitations one must reach the Transcendent Divine.

*

**Words of the Mother**

Faith is certainly a gift given to us by the Divine Grace. It is like a door suddenly opening upon an eternal truth, through which we can see it, almost touch it. ...

In the ignorance and darkness of the beginning, faith is

the most direct expression of the Divine Power which comes to fight and conquer.

*

A pure faith is something all-powerful and irresistible. One doesn't often find a faith that is all-powerful and irresistible, and this shows that it is not quite pure. The question should be put like this: each one of us has a faith, for example, a faith in something, say a faith in the divine Presence within us. If our faith were pure, we would at once be aware of this divine Presence within us. This example is very easy to understand. You have faith, it is there, but you don't have the experience. Why? Because the faith is not pure. If the faith were quite pure, immediately, the thing would be done. This is very true. So, when you become aware that the thing is not realised at once, you can begin to look: "But why isn't it realised? What is there in my faith?" And if you go on looking with the same sincerity, you will find that there are many little things in it, so many little things — not big, as big as this — which are repulsive. Little things. So many times a little conceit comes in, and then a desire, not a very violent one — it doesn't show itself very much. The importance it gives you, the power it will give you and the satisfaction it will give you...

*

... if your faith is not made of a complete trust in the Divine, well, you may very easily remain under the impression that you have faith and yet be losing all trust in the divine Power or divine Goodness, or the Trust the Divine has in you. These are the three stumbling-blocks: Those who have what they call an unshakable faith in the Divine, and say, "It is the Divine who is doing everything, who can do everything; all

that happens in me, in others, everywhere, is the work of the Divine and the Divine alone", if they follow this with some kind of logic, after some time they will blame the Divine for all the most terrible wrongs which take place in the world and make of Him a real demon, cruel and frightful — if they have no trust.

Or again, they do have faith, but tell themselves, "Well, I have faith in the Divine, but this world, I see quite well what it's like! First of all, I suffer so much, don't I? I am very unhappy, far more unhappy than all my neighbours"—for one is always far more unhappy than all one's neighbours—"I am very unhappy and, truly, life is cruel to me. But then the Divine is divine, He is All-Goodness, All-Generosity, All-Harmony, so how is it that I am so unhappy? He must be powerless; otherwise being so good how could He let me suffer so much?"

That is the second stumbling-block.

And the third: there are people who have what may be called a warped and excessive modesty or humility and who tell themselves, "Surely the Divine has thrown me out, I am good for nothing, He can do nothing with me, the only thing for me is to give up the game, for He finds me unworthy of Him!"

So, unless one adds to faith a total and complete trust in the Divine Grace, there will be difficulties. So both are necessary....

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The most important condition is an almost childlike trust, the candid trust of a child who is sure that it will come, who doesn't even ask himself about it; when he needs something he is sure that it is going to come. Well, it is this, this kind of trust — this indeed is the most important condition.

To aspire is indispensable. But some people aspire with such a conflict inside them between faith and absence of faith, trust and distrust, between the optimism which is sure of victory and a pessimism which asks itself when the catastrophe will come. Now if this is in the being, you may aspire but you don't get anything. And you say, "I aspired but didn't get anything." It is because you demolish your aspiration all the time by your lack of confidence. But if you truly have trust... Children when left to themselves and not deformed by older people have such a great trust that all will be well! For example, when they have a small accident, they never think that this is going to be something serious: they are spontaneously convinced that it will soon be over, and this helps so powerfully in putting an end to it.

Well, when one aspires for the Force, when one asks the Divine for help, if one asks with the unshakable certitude that it will come, that it is impossible that it won't, then it is sure to come. It is this kind... yes, this is truly **an inner opening**, this trustfulness. And some people are constantly in this state. When there is something to be received, they are always there to receive it. ... If the trust is there, spontaneous, candid, unquestioning, it works better than anything else, and the results are marvellous. It is with the contradictions and doubts of the mind that one spoils everything...

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At the very moment when everything seems to go from bad to worse, it is then that we must make a supreme act of faith and know that the Grace will never fail us.

*

Have a steady faith in the divine Grace.

## Devotion or Gratitude

**Words of Sri Aurobindo**

The nature of Bhakti is adoration, worship, self-offering to what is greater than oneself...

*

... bhakti in its fullness is nothing but an entire self-giving.

*

Bhakti is not an experience, it is a state of the heart and soul. It is a state which comes when the psychic being is awake and prominent.

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*Q: How to get a pure and complete devotion ?*

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

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.

*

The soul's turning through love to the Divine must be through a love that is essentially divine, but as the instrument of expression at first is a human nature, it takes the forms of human love and bhakti. It is only as the consciousness deepens, heightens and changes that that greater eternal love can grow in it and openly transform the human into the divine. But in human love itself there are several kinds of motive-forces. There is a psychic human love which rises from deep within and is the result of the meeting of

the inner being with that which calls it towards a divine joy and union; it is, once it becomes aware of itself, something lasting, self-existent, not dependent upon external satisfactions, not capable of diminution by external causes, not self-regarding, not prone to demand or bargain but giving itself simply and spontaneously, not moved to or broken by misunderstandings, disappointments, strife and anger, but pressing always straight towards the inner union. It is this psychic love that is closest to the divine and it is therefore the right and best way of love and bhakti. But that does not mean that the other parts of the being, the vital and physical included, are not to be used as means of expression or that they are not to share in the full play and the whole meaning of love, even of divine love. On the contrary, they are a means and can be a great part of the complete expression of divine love, — provided they have the right and not the wrong movement. ... Physical means can be and are used in the approach to divine love and worship; they have not been allowed merely as a concession to human weakness, nor is it the fact that in the psychic way there is no place for such things. On the contrary, they are one means of approaching the Divine and receiving the Light and materialising the psychic contact, and so long as it is done in the right spirit and they are used for the true purpose they have their place.

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Radha is the personification of the absolute love for the Divine, total and integral in all parts of the being from the highest spiritual to the physical, bringing the absolute self-giving and total consecration of all the being and calling down into the body and the most material nature the supreme Ananda.

*

The way of the integral Yoga of bhakti will be to universalise this conception of the Deity*, to personalise him intimately by a multiple and an all-embracing relation, to make him constantly present to all the being and to devote, give up, surrender the whole being to him, so that he shall dwell near to us and in us and we with him and in him. *Manana* and *darśana*, a constant thinking of him in all things and seeing of him always and everywhere is essential to this way of devotion. When we look on the things of physical Nature, in them we have to see the divine object of our love; when we look upon men and beings, we have to see him in them and in our relation with them to see that we are entering into relations with forms of him; when breaking beyond the limitation of the material world we know or have relations with the beings of other planes, still the same thought and vision has to be made real to our minds. The normal habit of our minds which are open only to the material and apparent form and the ordinary mutilated relation and ignore the secret Godhead within, has to yield by an unceasing habit of all-embracing love and delight to this deeper and ampler comprehension and this greater relation. In all godheads we have to see this one God whom we worship with our heart and all our being; they are forms of his divinity. So enlarging our spiritual embrace we reach a point at which all is he and the delight of this consciousness becomes to us our normal uninterrupted way of looking at the world. That brings us the outward or objective universality of our union with him.

Inwardly, the image of the Beloved has to become visible to the eye within, dwelling in us as in his mansion, informing our hearts with the sweetness of his presence, presiding over all our activities of mind and life as the friend,

* The form which the mind of the devotee seizes on for adoration. – ed.

master and lover from the summit of our being, uniting us from above with himself in the universe. A constant inner communion is the joy to be made close and permanent and unfailing. This communion is not to be confined to an exceptional nearness and adoration when we retire quite into ourselves away from our normal preoccupations, nor is it to be sought by a putting away of our human activities. All our thoughts, impulses, feelings, actions have to be referred to him for his sanction or disallowance, or if we cannot yet reach this point, to be offered to him in our sacrifice of aspiration, so that he may more and more descend into us and be present in them all and pervade them with all his will and power, his light and knowledge, his love and delight. In the end all our thoughts, feelings, impulses, actions will begin to proceed from him and change into some divine seed and form of themselves; in our whole inner living we shall have grown conscious of ourselves as a part of his being till between the existence of the Divine whom we adore and our own lives there is no longer any division.

*

**Words of the Mother**

... there is another movement which should constantly accompany devotion.... That kind of sense of gratitude that the Divine exists; that feeling of a marvelling thankfulness which truly fills you with a sublime joy at the fact that the Divine exists, that there is something in the universe which is the Divine, that it is not just the monstrosity we see, that there is the Divine, the Divine exists. And each time that the least thing puts you either directly or indirectly in contact with this sublime Reality of divine existence, the heart is filled with so intense, so marvellous a joy, such a gratitude as of all things has the most delightful taste.

There is nothing which gives you a joy equal to that of gratitude. One hears a bird sing, sees a lovely flower, looks at a little child, observes an act of generosity, reads a beautiful sentence, looks at the setting sun, no matter what, suddenly this comes upon you, this kind of emotion — indeed so deep, so intense — that the world manifests the Divine, that there is something behind the world which is the Divine.

So I find that devotion without gratitude is quite incomplete, gratitude must come with devotion.

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... very few people, very few, an insignificant number, go to church or temple with a true religious feeling, that is, not to pray and beg for something from God but to offer themselves, give thanks, aspire, give themselves. There is hardly one in a million who does that.

*

To be grateful, never to forget this wonderful grace of the Supreme who leads each one to his divine goal by the shortest ways, in spite of himself, his ignorance and misunderstandings, in spite of the ego, its protests and its revolts.

The pure flame of gratefulness must always burn in our heart, warm, sweet and bright, to dissolve all egoism and all obscurity; the flame of gratefulness for the Supreme's Grace who leads the sadhak to his goal — and the more he is grateful, recognises this action of the Grace and is thankful for it, the shorter is the way.

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A devotion that keeps concentrated and silent in the depths of the heart but manifests in acts of service and obedience, is more powerful, more true, more divine, than any shouting and weeping devotion.

## Courage or Aspiration

**Words of the Mother**

I remember that once we spoke of courage as one of the perfections... But this courage means having a taste for the supreme adventure. And this taste for supreme adventure is aspiration — an aspiration which takes hold of you completely and flings you, without calculation and without reserve and without a possibility of withdrawal, into the great adventure of the divine discovery, the great adventure of the divine meeting, the yet greater adventure of the divine Realisation; you throw yourself into the adventure without looking back and without asking for a single minute, "What's going to happen?" For if you ask what is going to happen, you never start, you always remain stuck there, rooted to the spot, afraid to lose something, to lose your balance.

That's why I speak of courage — but really it is aspiration. They go together. A real aspiration is something full of courage.

*

... fear is an impurity, one of the greatest impurities, one of those which come most directly from the anti-divine forces which want to destroy the divine action on earth; and the first duty of those who really want to do yoga is to eliminate from their consciousness, with all the might, all the sincerity, all the endurance of which they are capable, even the shadow of a fear. To walk on the path, one must be dauntless, and never indulge in that petty, small, feeble, nasty shrinking back upon oneself, which is fear.

An indomitable courage, a perfect sincerity and a sincere self-giving, so that one does not calculate or bargain,

does not give with the idea of receiving, does not trust with the idea of being protected, does not have a faith which asks for proofs — it is this that is indispensable in order to walk on the path, and it is this alone which can truly shelter you from all danger.

*

Whatever you do, never forget the goal which you have set before you. There is nothing great or small once you have set out on this great discovery; all things are equally important and can either hasten or delay its success. Thus before you eat, concentrate a few seconds in the aspiration that the food you are about to eat may bring your body the substance it needs to serve as a solid basis for your effort towards the great discovery, and give it the energy for persistence and perseverance in the effort.

Before you go to sleep, concentrate a few seconds in the aspiration that the sleep may restore your fatigued nerves, bring calm and quietness to your brain so that on waking you may, with renewed vigour, begin again your journey on the path of the great discovery.

Before you act, concentrate in the will that your action may help or at least in no way hinder your march forward towards the great discovery.

When you speak, before the words come out of your mouth, concentrate just long enough to check your words and allow only those that are absolutely necessary to pass, only those that are not in any way harmful to your progress on the path of the great discovery.

To sum up, never forget the purpose and goal of your life. The will for the great discovery should be always there above you, above what you do and what you are, like a huge bird of light dominating all the movements of your being.

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# Five Inner Qualities Necessary for Sadhana

(Spiritual Significance of the Flowers
given by the Mother)

Trust in the Divine

Sincerity

Gratitude

Courage

Perseverance

Aspiration is like an arrow, like this (*gesture*). So you aspire, want *very* earnestly to understand, know, enter into the truth. Yes? And then with that aspiration you do this *(gesture)*. Your aspiration rises, rises, rises, rises straight up, very strong and then it strikes against a kind of... how to put it?... lid which is there, hard like iron and extremely thick, and it does not pass through. And then you say, "See, what's the use of aspiring? It brings nothing at all. I meet with something hard and cannot pass!" But you know about the drop of water which falls on the rock, it ends up by making a chasm: it cuts the rock from top to bottom. Your aspiration is a drop of water which, instead of falling, rises. So, by dint of rising, it beats, beats, beats, and one day it makes a hole, by dint of rising; and when it makes the hole suddenly it springs out from this lid and enters an immensity of light, and you say, "Ah, now I understand."

It's like that.

So one must be very persistent, very stubborn and have an aspiration which rises straight upwards, that is, which does not go roaming around here and there, seeking all kinds of things.

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Courage is the total absence of fear in any form.

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Integral courage: whatever the domain, whatever the danger, the attitude remains the same — calm and assured.

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Whosoever has courage can give courage to others, just as the flame of the candle can light up another.

## Endurance or Perseverance

**Words of the Mother**

... if you are not able to face difficulties without getting discouraged and without giving up, because it is too difficult; and if you are incapable... well, of receiving blows and yet continuing, of "pocketing" them, as they say — when you receive blows as a result of your defects, of putting them in your pocket and continuing to go forward without flagging — you don't go very far; at the first turning where you lose sight of your little habitual life, you fall into despair and give up the game.

The most... how shall I put it? the most material form of this is perseverance. Unless you are resolved to begin the same thing over again a thousand times if need be... You know, people come to me in despair, "But I thought it was done and now I must begin again!" And if they are told, "But that's nothing, you will probably have to begin again a hundred times, two hundred times, a thousand times; you take one step forward and think you are secure, but there will always be something to bring back the same difficulty a little farther on. You think you have solved the problem, you must solve it yet once again; it will turn up again looking just a little different, but it will be the same problem", and if you are not determined that: "Even if it comes back a million times, I shall do it a million times, but I shall go through with it", well, you won't be able to do the yoga. This is absolutely indispensable.

People have a beautiful experience and say, "Ah, now this is it!..." And then it settles down, diminishes, gets veiled, and suddenly something quite unexpected, absolutely commonplace and apparently completely uninteresting comes before you and blocks your way. And then you say, "Ah!

what's the good of having made this progress if it's going to start all over again? Why should I do it? I made an effort, I succeeded, achieved something, and now it's as if I had done nothing! It's indeed hopeless." For you have no endurance.

If one has endurance, one says, "It's all right. Good, I shall begin again as often as necessary; a thousand times, ten thousand times, a hundred thousand times if necessary, I shall begin again — but I shall go to the end and nothing will have the power to stop me on the way."

This is most necessary. Most necessary.

*

... the most essential quality is perseverance, endurance, and a... what shall I call it? — a kind of inner good humour which helps you not to get discouraged, not to become sad, and to face all difficulties with a smile. There is an English word which expresses this very well — cheerfulness. If you can keep this within you, you fight much better, resist much better, in the light, these bad influences which try to hinder you from progressing.

*

One must find one's certitude within oneself, keep it in spite of everything and go one's way whatever the cost, to the very end. The Victory is for the most enduring.

To maintain one's endurance in spite of all oppositions, the support must be unshakable, and *one* support *alone* is unshakable, that of the Reality, the Supreme Truth.

It is useless to look for any other. This is the only one that never fails.

*

One form of endurance is *faithfulness*, faithfulness to one's resolution — being faithful. One has taken a resolution, one is faithful to one's resolution. This is endurance.

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.

*

The Divine Grace and Power can do everything,
but with the full assent of the sadhak.
To learn to give that full assent
is the whole meaning of the sadhana.

- Sri Aurobindo

## Sources of the Passages Published in this Compilation

**Page 4:** Collected Works of the Mother (1st ed.), Vol. 7: p. 247. **Page 5:** Sri Aurobindo Birth Centenary Library, Vol. 25: p. 6. **Pages 6-9:** SABCL 25: 6-7; *Guidance from Sri Aurobindo to Nagin Doshi*, Vol. 1: p. 106; SABCL 23: 567; 23: 566; 19: 843; 20: 51-52; 20: 63-64; 22: 283-84; 24: 1396-97. **Pages 10-11:** CWM 14: 75; 14: 78; 14: 78; 6: 176-77; 3: 83-84. **Pages 12-13:** SABCL 25: 7; 20: 80; 22: 125-26. **Page 14:** SABCL 24: 1268; 20: 339; 20: 339-40. **Page 15:** SABCL 24: 1312; 24: 1398. **Page 16:** SABCL 24: 1431-32; 24: 1425; 24: 1437-38. **Pages 17-18:** SABCL 25: 7; 24: 1169; CWSA 12: 367; SABCL 23: 588; 23: 591; 25: 4-5; 25: 273; 23: 587. **Pages 19-24:** SABCL 20: 40-41; CWM 3: 126; 3: 23-24; 3: 126-27; 3: 25-26; 3: 26-27; 5: 52-53; 5: 55-56; 4: 372-73; 14: 114. **Page 25:** CWM 8: 36, 41,42. **Pages 26-30:** CWM 8: 38; 14: 67; 14: 67; 14: 69; 14: 70; 8: 397-400; 9: 118-19; 14: 73-74. **Pages 30-31:** SABCL 23: 903, *Guidance* Vol. 1: p. 110; *IBID*; SABCL 25: 205; 23: 562. **Pages 32-33:** SABCL 23: 573; 20: 39; 21: 746; 23: 572-73; 23: 573; 23: 579. **Pages 33-36:** CWM 9: 351-52; 15: 341; 8: 38-39; 6: 403-04; 15: 94 also 118-19; 14: 91. **Pages 37-39:** SABCL 23: 776; 23: 799; 23: 776, 25: 184; 23: 755-56; 23: 796; 21: 575-76. **Pages 40-41:** CWM 8: 40; 6: 194-95; *White Roses*, Message of 26.06.1964; 14: 103. **Pages 42-45:** CWM 8: 40-41; 8: 261-62; 12: 34-35; 7: 239; 10: 284; 14: 181; 14: 182. **Pages 46-47:** CWM 8: 41-42; 8: 23; 9: 255; 8: 42. **Page 49:** *Mother India*, Jan. 1979, p. 5; SABCL 23: 583.

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