Sadhana Can be Done Anywhere

(Not Only at Himalayas or Pondicherry)

Words of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother

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Section: I

What is Yoga?

Yoga is the contact of the humanity in us with the deity in which it dwells, of the finite with the Infinite, of the as yet accomplished evolving & imperfect humanity with its yet unevolved attainable perfection,…

(CWSA, Vol. 12, p.333)

Perfection in the sense in which we use it in Yoga, means a growth out of a lower undivine into a higher divine nature. In terms of knowledge it is a putting on the being of the higher self and a casting away of the darker broken lower self or a transforming of our imperfect state into the rounded luminous fullness of our real and spiritual personality.

(CWSA, Vol. 24, p. 698)

Yoga means freedom from *dwandwa.* The Yogin is free from the bondage of pleasure and pain, of anger and hatred and attachment, of liking and disliking, because he looks with equal eyes on all. He does not shrink from misfortune or misery, happiness or unhappiness. He rises above the bondage of the body, because no man can give him pleasure or pain, because he has his own source of strength, of delight and happiness.

(CWSA, Vol. 08, p. 51)

Yoga means union and the whole object of Yoga is the union of the human soul with the supreme Being and of the present nature of humanity with the eternal, supreme or divine Nature.

The greater the union, the greater the Yoga, the more complete the union, the more complete the Yoga.

(CWSA, Vol. 12, pp. 334-35)

Yoga is not a thing of ideas but of inner spiritual experience. Merely to be attracted to any set of religious or spiritual ideas does not bring with it any realisation. Yoga means a change of consciousness; a mere mental activity will not bring a change of consciousness, it can only bring a change of mind. (CWSA, Vol. 28, p. 321)

The object of Yoga is a change of consciousness, and opening into spiritual knowledge and experience and union with the Divine. (CWSA, Vol. 35, p. 541)

There are different conceptions of the supreme Being and to each conception corresponds a school of Yoga with its separate idea and discipline. But these are partial and not complete systems; or rather they are complete in themselves, but do not cover the whole human being and nature. Most of them lead away from life and are useful only to the few who are moved to turn away from human existence and seek the bliss of some other state of being. To humanity at large this kind of Yoga has no real message. **The complete Yoga will be one which accepts God in the world and oneness with all beings and solidarity with the human kind, fills life and existence with the God-consciousness and not only raises man the individual but leads man the race towards a total perfection.**

(CWSA, Vol. 12, p. 335) **Sri Aurobindo**

Yoga helps you to become fully conscious of your destiny, that is, your mission in the universe, and not only at the present moment but what it was in the past and what it will be in the future.

(CWM Vol. 6, p. 448) *The Mother*

Integral Yoga

This is a Yoga of transformation of the being, not solely a Yoga of the attainment of the inner Self or the Divine, though that attainment is its basis without which no transformation is possible. In this transformation there are four elements, the psychic opening, the transit through [the] occult, the spiritual release, the supramental perfection. If any of the four is unachieved, the Yoga remains incomplete.

(CWSA, Vol. 12, pp. 367-68)

Our Yoga is a Yoga of transformation, but a transformation of the whole consciousness and the whole nature from the top to the bottom, from its hidden inward parts to its most tangible external movements. It is neither an ethical change nor a religious conversion, neither sainthood nor ascetic control, neither a sublimation nor a suppression of the life and vital movements that we envisage, nor is it either a glorification or a coercive control or rejection of the physical existence. What is envisaged is a change from a lesser to a greater, from a lower to a higher, from a surface to a deeper consciousness — indeed to the largest, highest, deepest possible and a total change and revolution of the whole being in its stuff and mass and every detail into that yet unrealised diviner nature of existence.

Sri Aurobindo

(CWSA, Vol. 12, p. 371)

Object of Integral Yoga

The object of our Yoga is **self-perfection, not self-annulment.***

There are two paths set for the feet of the Yogin,

- **withdrawal from the universe and**
- **perfection in the Universe;**
- the first comes by asceticism,
- the second is effected by tapasya;
- the first receives us when we lose God in Existence,
- the second is attained when we fulfil existence in God.

Let ours be the path of perfection, not of abandonment; let our aim be victory in the battle, not the escape from all conflict. ...

God created the world in Himself through Maya; but the Vedic meaning of Maya is not illusion, it is wisdom, knowledge, capacity, wide extension in consciousness. Prajna prasrita purani. Omnipotent Wisdom created the world, it is not the organised blunder of some Infinite Dreamer; omniscient Power manifests or conceals it in Itself or Its own delight, it is not a bondage imposed by His own ignorance on the free and absolute Brahman. ...

The world is a movement of God in His own being; we are the centres and knots of divine consciousness which sum up and support the processes of His movement….

Let us lead forward God's movement, play out His play, work out His formula, execute His harmony, express Him through ourselves in His system. This is our joy and our self-fulfillment…

(CWSA, Vol. 12, pp. 96-97)

*Paragraph, bullet point and emphasis done by the compiler.

Perfection has to be worked out,
harmony has to be accomplished.

Imperfection,
limitation,
death,
grief,
ignorance,
matter,

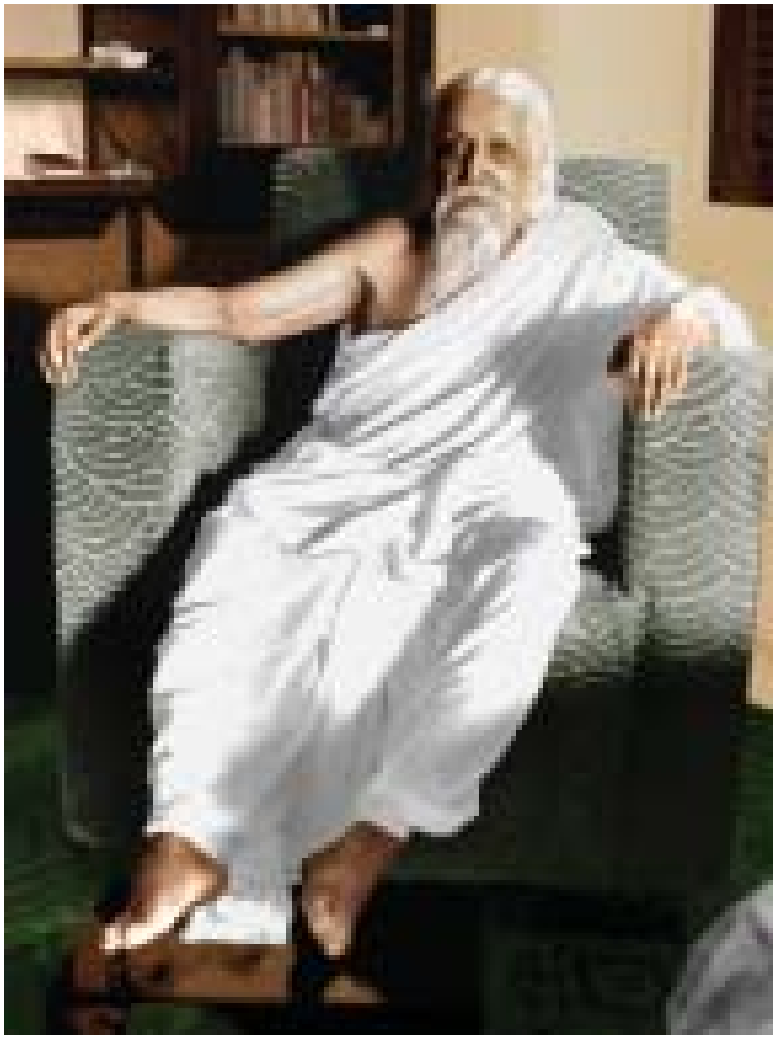
are only the first terms of the formula — unintelligible till we have worked out the wider terms and reinterpreted the formulary; they are the initial discords of the musician's tuning.

- Out of imperfection we have to construct perfection,
- out of limitation to discover infinity,
- out of death to find immortality,
- out of grief to recover divine bliss,
- out of ignorance to rescue divine self-knowledge,
- out of matter to reveal Spirit.

To work out this end for ourselves and for humanity is the object of our Yogic practice.

Sri Aurobindo

(CWSA, Vol. 12, p. 97)



Even through the tangled anarchy called Fate
And through the bitterness of death and fall
An outstretched Hand is felt upon our lives.

Sri Aurobindo

(*Savitri*, CWSA, Vol. 33, p. 59)

Section: II

How do I Begin?

It is quite possible for you to do sadhana at home and in the midst of your work — many do so.

What is necessary at the beginning is

- to remember the Mother as much as possible,
- to concentrate on her in the heart for a time every day,
- if possible thinking of her as the Divine Mother,
- to aspire to feel her there within you,
- offer her your works and
- pray that from within she may guide and sustain you.

This is a preliminary stage which often takes long, but if one goes through it with sincerity and steadfastness, the mentality begins little by little to change and a new consciousness opens in the sadhak which begins to be aware more and more of the Mother's presence within, of her working in the nature and in the life or of some other spiritual experience which opens the gate towards realisation.

(CWSA, Vol. 32, p. 186)

What do you call meditation? Shutting the eyes and concentrating? It is only one method for calling down the true consciousness. To join with the true consciousness or feel its descent is the only thing important and if it comes without the orthodox method, as it always did with me, so much the better. Meditation is only a means or device, the true movement is when even walking, working or speaking one is still in sadhana.

(CWSA, Vol. 35, p. 229) **Sri Aurobindo**

The Obstacles in Ordinary Life

In work done outside, the ego remains often concealed and satisfies itself without being detected — but when there is the pressure of sadhana, it is obliged to show itself: then what has to be done is to reject it and free oneself and make the object of the work the Divine alone.

(CWSA, Vol. 35, p. 813)

The Yogic atmosphere is not easy to keep when one is in constant contact with people who are living in another consciousness—it is only when one has got a complete foundation in the outer as well as the inner consciousness that one can do it completely in all surroundings.

(CWSA, Vol. 35, p. 812)

In the ordinary life, people accept the vital movements, anger, desire, greed, sex etc. as natural, allowable and legitimate things, part of the human nature. Only so far as society discourages them or wishes to keep them within fixed limits or subject to a decent restraint or measure, people try to control them so as to conform to the social standard of morality or rule of conduct…. on the contrary as in all spiritual life, the conquest and complete mastery of these things is demanded. That is why the struggle is more felt, not because these things rise more strongly in sadhaks than in ordinary men, but because of the intensity of the struggle between the spiritual mind which demands control and the vital movements which rebel and wish to continue in the new as they did in the old life….

In sadhana the mental or moral control has to be replaced by the spiritual mastery—for the mental control is only partial and it controls but does not liberate; it is

only the psychic and spiritual that can do that. That is the main difference in this respect between the ordinary and the spiritual life.

(CWSA, Vol. 28,pp. 420-421)

As for our own position it is that ordinary life... exists and is very real, but that it is an Ignorance, a thing founded on what is from the spiritual point of view a falsehood. So it is logical to avoid it or rather we are obliged to have some touch with it but we minimise that as much as possible except in so far as it is useful for our purpose. We have to turn life from falsehood into spiritual truth, from a life of ignorance into a life of spiritual knowledge. But until we have succeeded in doing that for ourselves, it is better to keep apart from the life of Ignorance of the world — otherwise our little slowly growing light is likely to be submerged in the seas of darkness all around it. Even as it is, the endeavour is difficult enough — it would be tenfold more difficult if there were no isolation.

(CWSA, Vol. 35, p. 813)

It is quite true that aspiration, rejection and the remembrance of the Mother and surrender to her and union with her consciousness are the main means of the sadhana. It is also true that to seek the supramental for oneself by one's own means is a folly; that I have said from the beginning and emphasised it recently more and more. It is true also that to make the union with the Divine the cardinal aim and all the rest subsidiary and a consequence of it, not to seek progress, experiences, etc., for their own sake or for the sake of the ego is the proper attitude for the sadhak. It is true finally that meditation, vision and almost all else in the Yoga can be misused if the sadhak is self-centred, egoistic and

obscure. But that does not mean that meditation, vision etc., are of no use and should be avoided in the sadhana.

The theory that once you remember the Mother always, everything you do flows from the Divine and therefore it does not matter what you do is rather a dangerous one. It may end by giving sanction instead of rejection to many things that ought to go out of the nature.

As for living a free outer life it cannot be said that that is good for everybody at every stage any more than living a retired life is good for everybody or at every stage. The disadvantage of a free jolly outward social life without restrictions is that one becomes entirely or mostly externalised and that all sorts of vital interchanges are part of it which can hamper the inner growth or the total self-consecration to the Divine. The disadvantage of too complete a retirement is that it makes the person one-sided and shut up in himself, subjective, without the stabilising contact with earth and consequently with the danger of morbidity and self-delusion. A middle path with the rule of living more and more within, standing back from outward things but not throwing them aside, looking at them with a new consciousness, a new view and acting on them from this inner consciousness is the best way. But there is need for some at some stages to minimise outward contacts without abolishing them during part of the process of this shifting of the consciousness. No absolute rule can be laid down in this matter.

Sri Aurobindo

(CWSA, Vol. 32, pp. 137-38)

Always behave as if the Mother was looking at you;
because she is, indeed, always present.

(CWSA, Vol. 32, p. 179) *Sri Aurobindo*

Sadhana Outside Sri Aurobindo Ashram

It is quite a mistake to suppose that everybody has eventually to come and join the Pondicherry Asram. That is not the Mother's intention, nor is it physically possible. The work to be done is not supposed to be confined to Pondicherry.

(CWSA, Vol. 35, p. 815)

It is quite possible to follow the Yoga while remaining outside the Asram. There are many both in Northern and Southern India who do it.

(CWSA, Vol. 32, p. 106)

This inner contact, inner help can very well be received at a distance…. we have disciples in France and some of these have been able already to establish an inner closeness with us and to become aware of our nearness and help in their spiritual endeavour and experience.

(CWSA,Vol. 32, p. 107)

In the Yoga practised here the aim is to rise to a higher consciousness and to live out of the higher consciousness alone, not with the ordinary motives.

This means a change of life as well as a change of consciousness. But all are not so circumstanced that they can cut loose from the ordinary life; they accept it therefore as a field of experience and self- training in the earlier stages of the sadhana. But they must take care to look at it as a field of experience only and to get free from the ordinary desires, attachments and ideas which usually go with it; otherwise, it becomes a drag and hindrance on their sadhana.

(CWSA Vol. 28, p. 422)

Q: I cannot understand whether I am doing Yoga. Can it be said that I am doing your Purna Yoga?

Everyone who is turned to the Mother is doing my Yoga. It is a great mistake to suppose that one can "do" the Purna Yoga — i.e. carry out and fulfil all the sides of the Yoga by one's own effort. No human being can do that. What one has to do is to put oneself in the Mother's hands and open oneself to her by service, by bhakti, by aspiration; then the Mother by her light and force works in him so that the sadhana is done. It is a mistake also to have the ambition to be a big Purna Yogi or a supramental being and ask oneself how far have I got towards that. The right attitude is to be devoted and given to the Mother and to wish to be whatever she wants you to be. The rest is for the Mother to decide and do in you.

(CWSA, Vol. 32, pp. 151-152)

Q: A correspondent has asked whether it is possible to receive spiritual initiation from you.

There is no formal initiation; acceptance is sufficient,..

(CWSA, Vol. 35, p. 551)

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.

Sri Aurobindo

(CWSA, Vol. 35, p. 825)

Right Attitude in the World

When one is living in the world, one cannot do as in an Ashram — one has to mix with others and keep up outwardly at least ordinary relations with others. The important thing is to keep the inner consciousness open to the Divine and grow in it. As one does that, more or less rapidly according to the inner intensity of the sadhana, the attitude towards others will change. All will be seen more and more in the Divine and the feelings, actions, etc. will more and more be determined, not by the old external reactions, but by the growing consciousness within you.

(SABCL, Vol. 23, p. 869)

The best way to prepare oneself for the spiritual life when one has to live in the ordinary occupations and surroundings is to cultivate an entire equality and detachment and the *samatā* of the Gita with the faith that the Divine is there and the Divine Will at work in all things even though at present under the conditions of a world of Ignorance. Beyond this are the Light and Ananda towards which life is working, but the best way for their advent and foundation in the individual being and nature is to grow in this spiritual equality. That would also solve your difficulty about things unpleasant and disagreeable. All unpleasantness should be faced with this spirit of *samatā*.

(SABCL, Vol. 23, p. 869)

The life of *samsāra* is in its nature a field of unrest — to go through it in the right way one has to offer one's life and actions to the Divine and pray for the peace of the Divine within. When the mind becomes quiet, one can feel the Divine Mother supporting the life and put everything into her hands.

(SABCL, Vol. 23, p. 870)

Peace is never easy to get in the life of the world and never constant, unless one lives deep within and bears the external activities as only a surface front of being.

(SABCL, Vol. 23, p. 870)

The protection and help will be there as they were here. You have only to keep yourself open to them and live inwardly seeking to become more and more conscious so that you may feel the Divine Presence and Power.

As to the Bombay atmosphere, keep inwardly separate from it, even while mixing with others. See it as a thing outside and not belonging to the inner world in which you yourself live. If you can achieve this inward separateness, it will not be able to cloud you, whatever its daily pressure.

(CWSA, Vol. 35, pp. 811-12)

Work here and work done in the world are of course not the same thing. The work there is not in any way a divine work in special — it is ordinary work in the world. But still one must take it as a training and do it in the spirit of karmayoga — what matters there is not the nature of the work in itself but the spirit in which it is done. **It must be in the spirit of the Gita, without desire, with detachment, without repulsion, but doing it as perfectly as possible, not for the sake of the family or promotion or to please the superiors, but simply because it is the thing that has been given in the hand to do. It is a field of inner training, nothing more.** One has to learn in it three things, equality, desirelessness, dedication. It is not the work as a thing for its own sake, but one's doing of it and one's way of doing it that one has to dedicate to the Divine. Done in that spirit it does not matter what the work is. If one trains oneself spiritually like that, then one will be ready to do in the true way what-

ever special work directly for the Divine (such as the Asram work) one may any day be given to do.

(CWSA, Vol. 35, pp. 753-54)

The work to be done is too great for the outer mind to understand how it is to be done; it is only by growing light and experience that one day it begins to understand—it is also too great and difficult for it to do by itself,—it can only help the Power that is working by its readiness, aspiration, faith, quietude.

(CWSA, Vol. 32, p. 157)

But in no sadhak are these things constant — the aspiration gets suspended, the faith wavers, the quietude is disturbed or shaken — but still the Mother is there at work and one has only to persevere, — finally the perseverance will be justified by the result.

To give up is the one thing one must never do.

(CWSA, Vol. 32, p. 157)

The inner spiritual progress does not depend on outer conditions so much as in the way we react to them from within — that has always been the ultimate verdict of spiritual experience. It is why we insist on taking the right attitude and persisting in it, on an inner state not dependent on outer circumstances, a state of equality and calm, if it cannot be at once of inner happiness, on going more and more within and looking from within outwards instead of living in the surface mind which is always at the mercy of the shocks and blows of life. It is only from that inner state that one can be stronger than life and its disturbing forces and hope to conquer.

To remain quiet within, firm in the will to go through,

refusing to be disturbed or discouraged by difficulties or fluctuations, that is one of the first things to be learned in the Path. To do otherwise is to encourage the instability of consciousness, the difficulty of keeping experience of which you complain. It is only if you keep quiet and steady within that the lines of experience can go on with some steadiness — though they are never without periods of interruption and fluctuation; but these, if properly treated, can then become periods of assimilation and exhaustion of difficulty rather than denials of sadhana.

(SABCL Vol. 23, pp. 650-51)

A spiritual atmosphere is more important than outer conditions; if one can get that and also create one's own spiritual air to breathe in and live in it, that is the true condition of progress.

(SABCL Vol, 23, p. 651)

The sunlit path can be followed by those who are able to practice surrender, first a central surrender and afterwards a more complete self-giving in all the parts of the being. If they can achieve and preserve the attitude of the central surrender, **if they can rely wholly on the Divine and accept cheerfully whatever comes to them from the Divine, then their path becomes sunlit and may even be straightforward and easy.** They will not escape all difficulties, no seeker can, but they will be able to meet them without pain and despondency, ... trusting in the inner guidance and perceiving it more and more ... It can also be followed even when one feels no light and no guidance, if there is or if one can acquire a bright settled faith and happy bhakti or has the nature of the spiritual optimist and the firm belief or feeling that all that is done by the Divine is done for the best

even when we cannot understand his action. But all have not this nature, most are very far from it, and the complete or even the central surrender is not easy to get, and to keep it always is hard enough for our human nature. When these things are not there, the liberty of the soul is not attained and we have instead to undergo the law or fulfil a hard and difficult discipline.

Sri Aurobindo

(SABCL, Vol. 24, p. 1621)

It is not our experience that by meditation alone it is possible to change the nature, nor has retirement from outward activity and work much profited those who have tried it; in many cases it has been harmful. A certain amount of concentration, an inner aspiration in the heart and an opening of the consciousness to the Mother's presence there and to the descent from above are needed. But without action, without work the nature does not really change; it is there and by contact with men that there is the test of the change in the nature. As for the work one does, there is no higher or lower work; all work is the same provided it is offered to the Mother and done for her and in her power.

(CWSA, Vol. 32, p. 252) *Sri Aurobindo*

Easiest Way: Be the True Child of 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.

(CWSA, Vol. 32.p. 460)

The realisation of the psychic being, its awakening and the bringing of it in front depend mainly on the extent to which **one can develop a personal relation with the Divine,** a relation of Bhakti, love, reliance, self-giving, rejection of the insistences of the separating and self-asserting mental, vital and physical ego.

(SABCL, Vol. 22, pp. 341-42) **Sri Aurobindo**

You must tell me everything very sincerely and without fear. Telling me everything very frankly brings you closer to me.

(CWM, Vol. 17, p. 3)

And with the candour of a child, the simplicity of a child for whom there are no complications, give yourself to that Grace and let it do everything.

What is necessary is not to listen to what resists, not to believe what contradicts — to have trust, a real trust, a confidence which makes you give yourself fully without calculating, without bargaining. Trust! The trust that says, "Do this, do this for me, I leave it to You."

That is the best way.

The Mother

(CWM, Vol. 9, p. 427)

Q: "... the difficulty faced in the right spirit and conquered, one finds that an obstacle has disappeared." What is the right spirit?

... the right spirit means not to lose courage, not to lose one's faith, not to be impatient, not to be depressed; to remain very quiet and peaceful with as much aspiration as one can have, and not worry about what is happening. To have the certitude that this will pass and all will be well. This indeed is the best thing.

(CWM, Vol. 7, pp. 9-10) *The Mother*

The Way to Advance Towards the Supramental Change

Q: ... I have been wondering whether I would realise up to the supramental consciousness. ...

1. A quiet mind makes consciousness easier.

2. If you keep a quiet mind and a constant contact with myself and the Mother and the true Light and Force, then things will become easy and straight—it is the ***only*** way to get to the realisation.

3. It is a mistake to think that this method will not lead you to the supramental realisation. **It is the only way to advance towards the supramental change.**

4. It is because you become doubtful and begin to follow after other ways and other (lower) experiences that you get again confused and full of incertitudes.

5. Keep to *one* way, the way shown to you by me. It is by following this way that you can reach the wideness you want — if you run about on many ways, that will bring not wideness but confusion.

6. Here in the lower nature there are many things, but they are in a state of disharmony, so to follow them all together means disharmony, confusion, want of organisation, fight. In the higher (supramental) nature there is a greater wideness and much more is there than in the lower nature; but all is harmony, organisation, peace. Follow therefore the one way that leads to the higher supramental nature.

7. Do not be impatient, because full knowledge does not come to you at once. In quietude of mind keep the contact, let the true Light and Force work and with time all knowledge will come and the Truth will grow in you.

(CWSA, Vol. 32, pp. 98-99)

The supramental change is a thing decreed and inevitable in the evolution of the earth-consciousness; for its upward ascent is not ended and mind is not its last summit. But that the change may arrive, take form and endure, there is needed the call from below with a will to recognise and not deny the Light when it comes, and there is needed the sanction of the Supreme from above. The power that mediates between the sanction and the call is the presence and power of the Divine Mother. The Mother's power and not any human endeavour and tapasya can alone rend the lid and tear the covering and shape the vessel and bring down into this world of obscurity and falsehood and death and suffering Truth and Light and Life divine and the immortal's Ananda.

Sri Aurobindo

(CWSA, Vol. 32, p. 26)

Silence all outside noise,
aspire for the Divine's help;
open integrally to it when it comes
and surrender to its action,
and it will effectively bring about your transformation.

(CWM, Vol. 15, p. 87) *The Mother*

Section: III

The Remembrance and Consciousness in Work

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 realized in you.

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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 Mother

(CWM, Vol. 3, pp. 23-24, 26)

It is easy for one, comparatively, to remember and be conscious when one sits quiet in meditation; it is difficult when one has to be busy with work. **The remembrance and consciousness in work have to come by degrees,** you must not expect to have it all at once; nobody can get it all at once. **It comes in two ways, — first**, if one practises remembering the Mother and offering the work to her each time one does something (not all the time one is doing, but at the be-

ginning or whenever one can remember,) then that slowly becomes easy and habitual to the nature. **Secondly,** by the meditation an inner consciousness begins to develop which, after a time, not at once or suddenly, becomes more and more automatically permanent. One feels this as a separate consciousness from that outer which works.

At first this separate consciousness is not felt when one is working, but as soon as the work stops one feels it was there all the time watching from behind; afterwards it begins to be felt during the work itself, as if there were two parts of oneself — one watching and supporting from behind and remembering the Mother and offering to her and the other doing the work. When this happens, then to work with the true consciousness becomes more and more easy.

It is the same with all the rest. It is by the development of the inner consciousness that all the things you speak of will be set right. For instance it is a part of the being that has *utsāha* for the work, another that feels the pressure of quietude and is not so disposed to work. Your mood depends on which comes up at the time - it is so with all people. To combine the two is difficult, but a time comes when they do get reconciled - one remains poised in an inner concentration while the other is supported by it in its push towards work. The transformation of the nature, the harmonising of all these discordant things in the being are the work of sadhana. Therefore you need not be discouraged by observing these things in you. There is hardly anybody who has not found these things in himself. All this can be arranged by the action of the inner Force with the constant consent and call of the sadhak. By himself he might not be able to do it, but with the Divine Force working within all can be done.

Sri Aurobindo

(SABCL, Vol 23, pp.689-90)

Be a Mould for Divine Manifestation

Q Mother, if for instance in the long jump one makes an effort to jump a greater and greater distance, how does one do the divine work?

Eh? Excuse me, **it is not for the pleasure of doing the long jump, it is to make your body more perfect in its functioning, and, therefore, a more suitable instrument for receiving the divine forces and manifesting them.**

Why, everything, everything one does … must be done in this spirit, otherwise you do not even profit by the opportunity given to you, the circumstances given to you. I explained to you the other day, didn't I, that the Consciousness is here, penetrating all things and trying to manifest in all movements? But if you, on your side, tell yourself that the effort you are making, the progress you are making, you make in order to become more capable of receiving this Consciousness and of manifesting it, the work will naturally be much better and much quicker. And this seems to me even quite elementary, to tell you the truth; I am surprised that it could be otherwise!

The Mother

(CWM, Vol. 6, p. 269)

…the divine Shakti not only inspires and guides, but initiates and carries out your works; all your movements are originated by her, all your powers are hers, mind, life and body are conscious and joyful instruments of her action, means for her play, moulds for her manifestation in the physical universe.

Sri Aurobindo

(CWSA, Vol. 32, pp. 12-13)

The Integral Life — To be Transformed

In the integral Yoga, the integral life down even to the smallest detail has to be transformed, to be divinised. There is nothing here that is insignificant, nothing that is indifferent.

You cannot say, "When I am meditating, reading philosophy or listening to these conversations I will be in this condition of an opening towards the Light and call for it, but when I go out to walk or see friends I can allow myself to forget all about it." To persist in this attitude means that you will remain untransformed and never have the true union; always you will be divided; you will have at best only glimpses of this greater life.

For although certain experiences and realisations may come to you in meditation or in your inner consciousness, your body and your outer life will remain unchanged. An inner illumination that does not take any note of the body and the outer life, is of no great use, for it leaves the world as it is. This is what has continually happened till now. Even those who had a very great and powerful realisation withdrew from the world to live undisturbed in inner quiet and peace; the world was left to its ways, and misery and stupidity, Death and Ignorance continued, unaffected, their reign on this material plane of existence. (CWM, Vol. 3, p. 24)

An ideal of this kind may be good for those who want it, but it is not our Yoga. **For we want the divine conquest of this world, the conquest of all its movements and the realisation of the Divine here.** But if we want the Divine to reign here we must give all we have and are and do here to the Divine. **It will not do to think that anything is unimportant or that the external life and its necessities are no part of the Divine Life.** If we do, we shall remain where we have always been and there will be no conquest of the external world; nothing abiding there will have been done. (CWM, Vol. 3, pp. 24-25)

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.

Q. Often in the beginning of the action this can be done; but as one gets engrossed in the work, one forgets. How is one to remember?

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 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.

In the beginning of the Yoga you are apt to forget the Divine very often. But by constant aspiration you increase your remembrance and you diminish the forgetfulness. But this should not be done as a severe discipline or a duty; it must be a movement of love and joy. Then very soon a stage will come when, if you do not feel the presence of the Divine at every moment and whatever you are doing, you feel at once lonely and sad and miserable.

Whenever you find that you can do something without feeling the presence of the Divine and yet be perfectly com-

fortable, 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 realized 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.

Q. In the initial stages of Yoga, is it well for the Sadhak to read ordinary books?

You can read sacred books and yet be far away from the Divine; and you can read the most stupid productions and be in touch with the Divine. It is not possible to get an idea of what the transformed consciousness and its movements are until you have had a taste of the transformation. There is a way of consciousness in union with the Divine in which you can enjoy all you read, as you can all you observe, even the most indifferent books or the most uninteresting things. You can hear poor music, even music from which one would like to run away, and yet you can, not for its outward self but because of what is behind, enjoy it. You do not lose the distinction between good music and bad music, but you pass through either into that which it expresses. For there is nothing in the world which has not its ultimate truth and support in the Divine. And if you are not stopped by the appearance, physical or moral or aesthetic, but get behind and are in touch with the Spirit, the Divine Soul in things, you can reach beauty and delight even through what affects the ordinary sense only as something poor, painful or discordant.

(CWM, Vol. 3, pp. 26-27) **The Mother**

Mental Anxiety and Trust in Spiritual Power

It is obvious that what especially characterises man is this mental capacity of watching himself live. The animal lives spontaneously, automatically, and if it watches itself live, it must be to a very minute and insignificant degree, and that is why it is peaceful and does not worry. Even if an animal is suffering because of an accident or an illness, this suffering is reduced to a minimum by the fact that it does not observe it, does not project it in its consciousness and into the future, does not imagine things about its illness or its accident.

With man there has begun this perpetual worrying about what is going to happen, and this worry is the principal, if not the sole cause of his torment. With this objectivising consciousness there has begun anxiety, painful imaginations, worry, torment, anticipation of future catastrophes, with the result that most men—and not the least conscious, the most conscious—live in perpetual torment. Man is too conscious to be indifferent, he is not conscious enough to know what will happen. Truly it could be said without fear of making a mistake that of all earth's creatures he is the most miserable.

The human being is used to being like that because it is an atavistic state which he has inherited from his ancestors, but it is truly a miserable condition. And it is only with this spiritual capacity of rising to a higher level and replacing the animal's unconsciousness by a spiritual super-consciousness that there comes into the being not only the capacity to see the goal of existence and to foresee the culmination of the effort but also a clear-sighted trust in a higher spiritual power to which one can surrender one's whole being, entrust oneself, give the responsibility for one's life and future and so abandon all worries. ...

This torment can come to an end only with a total surrender to a higher consciousness than his own to which he can totally entrust himself, hand over his worries and leave the care of guiding his life and organising everything.

How can a problem be solved when one doesn't have the necessary knowledge? And the unfortunate thing is that man believes that he has to resolve all the problems of his life, and he does not have the knowledge needed to do it. That is the source, the origin of all his troubles—that perpetual question, "What should I do?..." which is followed by another one still more acute, "What is going to happen?" and at the same time, more or less, the inability to answer.

That is why all spiritual disciplines begin with the necessity of surrendering all responsibility and relying on a higher principle.

Otherwise peace is impossible....

The next step is to face the problem, but with the calm and certitude of an absolute trust in the supreme Power which knows, and can make you act. And then, instead of abandoning action, one can act in a higher peace that is strong and dynamic.

This is what could be called a new aspect of the divine intervention in life, a new form of intervention of the divine forces in existence, a new aspect of spiritual realisation.

(CWM, Vol. 9, pp. 303-305) **The Mother**

If truly you love the Divine, prove it by remaining quiet and peaceful. All that comes to each one in life, comes from the Divine to teach us a lesson, and if we take it in the right spirit, we make rapid progress.

Try to do so. *The Mother*

(CWM, Vol. 14, p. 219)



Here must the traveller of the upward Way —
For daring Hell's kingdoms winds the heavenly route —
Pause or pass slowly through that perilous space,
A prayer upon his lips and the great Name.

Sri Aurobindo

Savitri, CWSA, Vol. 33, p. 210

Conscious Relation with the Life Behind the Appearances

To become a little more conscious of oneself, to enter into relation with the life behind the appearances, does not seem to you to be the greatest good. When you sit in a comfortable chair, in front of a lavish meal, when you fill your stomach with delicious dishes, that certainly appears to you much more concrete and much more interesting. And if you look at the day that has passed, if you take stock of your day, if you have had some material advantage, some pleasure, a physical satisfaction, you mark it as a good day; but if you have received a good lesson from life, if it has given you a knock on your nose to tell you that you are a stupid fellow, you do not give thanks to the Grace, you say, "Oh, life is not always fun!"

…from the inner point of view, from the point of view of the true life, we have fallen back terribly and that for the acquisition of a few ingenious mechanisms, a few encouragements to physical laziness, the acquisition of instruments and gadgets that lessen the effort of living, we have renounced the reality of the inner life. It is that sense which has been lost and it needs an effort for you to think of learning the meaning of life, the purpose of existence, the goal towards which we must advance, towards which all life advances, whether you want it or not. One step towards the goal, oh! it needs so much effort to do that. And generally one thinks of it only when the outer circumstances are not pleasant.

How far we are from the times when the shepherd, who did not go to school and kept watch over his flock at night under the stars, could read in the stars what was going to happen, commune with something which expressed itself through Nature, and had the sense of the profound beauty and that peace which a simple life gives!

It is very unfortunate that one has to give up one thing in order to gain another. **When I speak of the inner life, I am far from opposing any modern inventions, far from it, but how much these inventions have made us artificial and stupid! How much we have lost the sense of true beauty, how much we burden ourselves with useless needs!**

Perhaps the time has come to continue the ascent in the curve of the spiral and now with all that this knowledge of matter has brought us, we shall be able to give to our spiritual progress a more solid basis. **Strong with what we have learnt of the secrets of material Nature, we shall be able to join the two extremes and rediscover the supreme Reality in the very heart of the atom.**

(CWM, Vol. 3, pp. 205-206) **The Mother**

Faithfulness to the Light and the Call

When I spoke of being faithful to the light of the soul and the divine Call, ... I was simply suggesting the great need in all crises and attacks, – to refuse to listen to any suggestions, impulses, lures and to oppose to them all the call of the Truth, the imperative beckoning of the Light. In all doubt and depression, to say "I belong to the Divine, I cannot fail"; to all suggestions of impurity and unfitness, to reply "I am a child of Immortality chosen by Sri Aurobindo and the Mother; I have but to be true to myself and to them–the victory is sure; even if I fell, I would be sure to rise again"; to all impulsions to depart and serve some other ideal, to reply "This is the greatest, this is the Truth, this alone can satisfy the soul within me; I will endure through all tests and tribulations to the very end of the divine journey." This is what I mean by faithfulness to the Light and the Call.

(CWSA, Vol. 32, p. 104) *Sri Aurobindo*

To Do Yoga in Worldly Circumstances is More Difficult, But It is More Complete

Q: Friends from outside have often asked me this question: "When one is compelled to earn his living, should one just conform to the common code of honesty or should one be still more strict?"

This depends upon the attitude your friend has taken in life. If he wants to be a sadhak, it is indispensable that rules of ordinary morality do not have any value for him. Now, if he is an ordinary man living the ordinary life, it is a purely practical question, isn't it? He must conform to the laws of the country in which he lives to avoid all trouble! But all these things which in ordinary life have a very relative value and can be looked upon with a certain indulgence, change totally the minute one decides to do yoga and enter the divine life. Then, all values change completely; what is honest in ordinary life, is no longer at all honest for you. Besides, there is such a reversal of values that one can no longer use the same ordinary language. If one wants to consecrate oneself to the divine life, one must do it truly, that is, give oneself entirely, no longer do anything for one's own interest, depend exclusively upon the divine Power to which one abandons oneself. Everything changes completely, doesn't it?— everything, everything, it is a reversal. What I have just read from this book applies solely to those who want to do yoga; for others it has no meaning, it is a language which makes no sense, but for those who want to do yoga it is imperative. It is always the same thing in all that we have recently read: one must be careful not to have one foot on one side and the other foot on the other, not to stand in two different boats each following its own course. This is what Sri Aurobindo said: one must not lead a "double life". One must give up one thing or the other — one can't follow both.

This does not mean, however, that one is obliged to get out of the conditions of one's life: it is the inner attitude which must be totally changed. One may do what one is in the habit of doing, but do it with quite a different attitude. **I don't say it is necessary to give up everything in life and go away into solitude, to an ashram necessarily, to do yoga. Now, it is true that if one does yoga in the world and in worldly circumstances, it is more difficult, but it is also more complete.** Because, every minute one must face problems which do not present themselves to someone who has left everything and gone into solitude; for such a one these problems are reduced to a minimum — while in life one meets all sorts of difficulties, beginning with the incomprehension of those around you with whom you have to deal; one must be ready for that, be armed with patience, and a great indifference. But **in yoga one should no longer care for what people think or say; it is an absolutely indispensable starting-point.** You must be absolutely immune to what the world may say or think of you and to the way it treats you. People's understanding must be something quite immaterial to you and should not even slightly touch you. That is why it is generally much more difficult to remain in one's usual surroundings and do yoga than to leave everything and go into solitude; it is much more difficult, but we are not here to do easy things — easy things we leave to those who do not think of transformation.

(CWM Vol. 4, pp. 376-77) **The Mother**



Surrender

O Thou of whom I am the instrument,
O secret Spirit and Nature housed in me,
Let all my mortal being now be blent
In Thy still glory of divinity.

I have given my mind to be dug Thy channel mind,
I have offered up my will to be Thy will:
Let nothing of myself be left behind
In our union mystic and unutterable.

My heart shall throb with the world-beats of Thy love,
My body become Thy engine for earth-use;
In my nerves and veins Thy rapture's streams shall move;
My thoughts shall be hounds of Light for Thy
power to loose.

Keep only my soul to adore eternally
And meet Thee in each form and soul of Thee.

Sri Aurobindo

CWSA 2: 611

Upcoming Workshops
by SAFIM
at Sri Aurobindo Society, Pondicherry

Science of Living — Towards Life Beautiful

"Science of Living — Towards Life Beautiful" is a 3-day workshop for families, helping them bond with each other, find a deeper connect in their relationships, and in the process discover a true and lasting happiness and a profounder fulfillment to life.

Children are welcome. We have creative activities for children. Minimum age for children is 6 & maximum 16 years.

Date: 29th - 31th (Thur - Sat) May 2014

Unleashing the Powers Within

"Unleashing the Powers Within" a path-breaking module developed by SAFIM for students UG & PG from any field of study, is focused on bringing out the inherent potential of the youth. It is based on the concept of 'within outward' where the inner human potential is enhanced and utilized to bring about change on the outside.

Date: 6th - 7th (Fri - Sat) June 2014

Harvesting Values

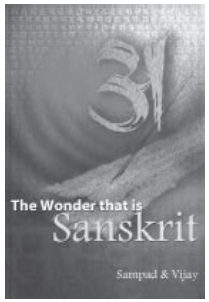
'Harvesting Values' is a 2-day open workshop which aims to explore values in the depth of its significance – its strengths, its challenges, its foundation and the foundation that it gives to our lives. In this workshop, we will seek values beyond the ethical boundaries within which it is usually defined and try to find how it connects us with our true selves.

Date: 18th - 19th (Fri - Sat) July 2014

Organised by:
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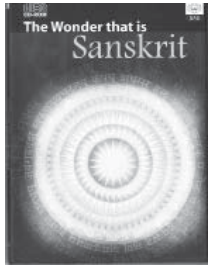
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