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The Mother's Presence

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The Mother's Presence

Matter shall reveal the Spirit's face. — Sri Aurobindo

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Editorial note: *The Mother is the central key to Sri Aurobindo's Integral yoga of supramental transformation. Where is this key to be found? What do we have to do to discover the Mother? Is it enough to undertake an outer journey through the physical landscapes of our globe or is it primarily an inner journey undertaken through the inner spaces of our soul? Having found Her either through faith or a direct vision what is to be done to open ourselves to Her, to receive Her transforming touch? These are some of the many questions that the disciples asked Sri Aurobindo since he installed the Divine Mother in Her present complete incarnation and physical embodiment. The beauty of Sri Aurobindo's replies are that they are as much valid today as yesterday. On the occasion of the Mother's 143rd birth anniversary, we dedicate this issue to the responses given by Sri Aurobindo and the Mother to these questions.*



Live always as if you were under the very eye of the Supreme and of the Divine Mother. Do nothing, try to think and feel nothing that would be unworthy of the Divine Presence.

CWSA 32: 172

Sri Aurobindo

The Ever Living Presence

She Is Always Present

You have said: "Always behave as if the Mother was looking at you; because she is, indeed, always present."1 Does this mean that the Mother knows all our insignificant thoughts at all times, or only when she concentrates?

It is said that the Mother is always present and looking at you. That does not mean that in her physical mind she is thinking of you always and seeing your thoughts. There is no need of that, since she is everywhere and acts everywhere out of her universal knowledge.

*

The Mother is always with you. The vital has its desires and therefore does not believe in the Mother's presence. You have to call down the Mother's Force into it to remove its doubts and desires.

*

The Mother is always with you. Put your faith in her, remain quiet within and do with that quietude what has to be done. You will become more and more aware of her constant Presence, will feel her action behind yours and the burden of your work will no longer be heavy on you.

*

You have written: "Always behave as if the Mother was looking at you; because she is, indeed, always present." On the other hand, you wrote to me recently that it was not physically possible for her to be present everywhere. When I asked the Mother about this, she said that she could be present in many places. How to reconcile these contradictory statements?

If by physically you mean corporeally, in her visible tangible material body, it is obvious that it cannot be. When you asked Mother the question she did not understand you to mean that —she said she could be present everywhere, and she meant, of course, in her consciousness. It is the consciousness and not the body that is the being, the person; the body is only a support and instrument for the action of the consciousness. Mother can be personally present in her consciousness. The universal presence of course is always there and the universal and personal are two aspects of the same being.

CWSA 32: 169-71

In what sense is the Mother “everywhere”? Is it because she has descended to the universal and has complete knowledge of the forces working there? I suppose the universal or “everywhere” includes the physical plane. If so, does the Mother know all the happenings and events on the physical plane?

Including what Lloyd George had today for breakfast or what Roosevelt said to his wife about their servants? Why should the Mother “know” in the human way all such happenings on the physical plane? Her business in her embodiment is to know the working of the universal forces and use them for her work; for the rest she knows what she needs to know, sometimes with her inner self, sometimes with her physical mind. All knowledge is available in her universal self to her, but she brings forward only what is meant to be brought forward so that the work may be done.

CWSA 32: 169-70

Constant presence of the Mother

The constant presence of the Mother comes by practice; the Divine Grace is essential for success in the sadhana, but it is the practice that prepares the descent of the Grace.

You have to learn to go inward, ceasing to live in external things only, quiet the mind and aspire to become aware of the Mother's workings in you.

CWSA 32: 172

Feeling the Mother's Presence

There is no such necessary precedence as that first one must feel the Presence and then only can one feel oneself the Mother's; it is more often the increase of the feeling that brings the Presence. For the feeling comes from the psychic consciousness and it is the growth of the psychic consciousness that makes the constant Presence at last possible. The feeling comes from the psychic and is true of the inner being — its not being yet fulfilled in the whole does not make it an imagination; on the contrary, the more it grows the more is the likelihood of the whole being fulfilling this truth; the inner *bhāva* takes more and more possession of the outer consciousness and remoulds it so as to make it a truth there also. This is the constant principle of action in the Yogic transformation — what is true within comes out and takes possession of the mind and heart and will and through them prevails over the ignorance of the outer members and brings the inner truth out there also.

CWSA 32: 174

Opening to the Mother's Presence

Make yourself quiet and open—have complete confidence and you will feel the Mother's presence with you.

*

The Mother says, "Keep yourself always open to me" and "I am always with you and around you." How am I to feel her presence always? Also, what does "conscious" mean and how does one become conscious?

The Divine Mother is everywhere and at all times she is with you. If one opens and becomes conscious, then one can feel her presence. It is because the nature is ignorant, full of itself and its desires that one cannot feel the presence. If one turns from self and desires and lives inwardly and outwardly for the Divine, then one begins to feel the divine Presence.

CWSA 32: 167

It is by the constant remembrance that the being is prepared for the full opening. By the opening of the heart the Mother's presence begins to be felt and by the opening to her Power above the Force of the higher consciousness comes down into the body and works there to change the whole nature.

*

The formless and the form

It is quite necessary to realise the Mother in her formless presence and not only in her form.

*

Is there any difference between the Mother's Presence and the Divine Consciousness?

One can feel the Divine Consciousness impersonally as a new consciousness only. The Mother's Presence is something more —one feels herself there present within or above

or enveloping one or all these together.

*

The feeling of the Mother's Presence or nearness does not depend on whether you write or do not write. Many who write often do not feel it, some who write seldom feel her always close.

*

You write: "One can feel the Divine Consciousness impersonally as a new consciousness only" but that the Mother's presence is something more. You also wrote in another letter that the Divine Presence in the heart is much more than the consciousness. In what way is the Presence more than the consciousness?

I meant that one can feel the divine consciousness as an impersonal spiritual state, a state of peace, light, joy, wideness without feeling in it the Divine Presence. The Divine Presence is felt as that of one who is the living source and essence of that light etc., a Being therefore, not merely a spiritual state. The Mother's Presence is still more concrete, definite, personal — it is not that of Someone unknown, of a Power or Being, but of one who is known, intimate, loved, to whom one can offer all the being in a living concrete way. The image is not indispensable, though it helps — the presence can be inwardly felt without it.

CWSA 32: 172-74

Pranam to the Mother

Is the idea of not coming to Pranam usually a hostile suggestion?

It is a hostile suggestion almost always.

How can the idea of not coming to Pranam be accepted, as some have done?

Various motives are played upon—pride, the desire not to be like others, not to be dependent on the Mother, the wish to protect some wrong movement from the Mother's control, the idea of doing the sadhana in one's own way free from the pressure of the Truth etc.

*

I felt a disinclination to come to Pranam, a dryness and lack of interest in anything, an absence of love for Mother. What is the use of going to Pranam in such a dry manner or simply for protection or peace or any such selfish object?

That is a suggestion which should be entirely rejected. It is the usual attack trying to act on the physical consciousness through dryness and depression

CWSA 32:559

Feeling the Mother's Presence in Sleep

Is what X writes in his poem possible? He says:

“Even in sleep-depths I am wide awake
To thy sweet Presence that is always there.”

That does happen, but usually only when the psychic is in full activity.

*

It [*feeling the Mother's presence during sleep*] follows naturally the presence in the waking state, but it takes a little time.

CWSA 32: 188-89

Sri Aurobindo



When I sit in meditation before the Mother's photographs or the painting of her feet, I get more Force than when I sit at a distance — on my easy chair, for example. I have noticed that this happens invariably and I suppose it is not subjective merely. But I want to know the real truth from you.

No, it is not subjective merely. By your meditating near them, you have been able to enter through them into communion with the Mother and something of her presence and power is there.

CWSA 32: 183

Sri Aurobindo

Your experience about the photograph was a very fine and true experience. The Mother's presence can be felt through the photograph by one who regards it with devotion towards her. It was her true presence that was there, her subtle physical presence and all you felt was true. It shows that your physical mind is opening to the true consciousness. It is quite sure that this will grow and the remnants of the old movements are bound to disappear.

CWSA 32: 184

Remembering the Mother

Today I felt that the only thing important is the Divine, nothing else. I tried to keep this experience all day long, but just before I sat down to write, I felt depression and confusion coming. But still I remembered my experience.

That is what should always be done. If, instead of yielding to the depression and confusion when they come, you immediately remembered and turned to the Mother, calling the Light and Force, remembering the Divine, rejecting everything else, then these lapses would diminish and light would come into the whole nature.

*

It is the outer nature that is obscure and when it is at ease, feels no necessity of remembering the Mother — when the difficulty comes, then it feels the necessity and remembers. But the inner being is not like that.

*

To remember The Mother always and to offer up to her all that comes is just the thing to do. There must come a condition in which you live within in the psychic consciousness with the feeling of the Mother's constant presence, while all

the outer activities go on only on the surface and the Mother's Force acts on them to change them into more and more true psychic and spiritual action.....

*

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 32: 184-86

Sri Aurobindo

It is for most people not easy to feel the Mother's presence with the work — they feel as if they are doing the work, the mind getting busy and not having the right passivity or quietude.

CWSA 32: 189

Sri Aurobindo



Constant remembrance of the Divine

Spontaneous and joyful. The ideal condition.

(Spiritual significance and explanation given by the Mother)

Botanical name: *Lonicera japonica*

Remember the Mother and, though physically far from her, try to feel her with you and act according to what your inner being tells you would be her will. Then you will be best able to feel her presence and mine and carry our atmosphere around you as a protection and a zone of quietude and light accompanying you everywhere.

CWSA 32: 185

Sri Aurobindo

The Psychic Door

The Psychic and the Mother's Presence

The Mother's presence is always there; but if you decide to act on your own — your own idea, your own notion of things, your own will and demand upon things, then it is quite likely that her presence will get veiled; it is not she who withdraws from you, but you who draw back from her. But your mind and vital don't want to admit that, because it is always their preoccupation to justify their own movements. If the psychic were allowed its full predominance, this would not happen; it would have felt the veiling, but it would at once have said, "There must have been some mistake in me, a mist has arisen in me," and it would have looked and found the cause.

*

When I am alone I feel a sweet flow of love for the Mother and surrender to her welling out from my heart. But when I am in her physical presence I do not feel this love. Why does this happen?

It is when you live in the psychic that there is this feeling — but the psychic commands at present only a part of the mind and vital — it does not yet control the most external parts, that is why you do not feel it when in the Mother's physical presence.

*

If you feel the Mother's presence for the greater part of the day, it means that it is your psychic being that is active and feels like that — for without the activity of the psychic it would not be possible. Therefore your psychic being is there and not at all far off.

*

What you feel is not imagination. You have been going more and more into the psychic consciousness deep within you. When one is in the psychic, one begins to feel the presence of the Mother always with one and this becomes more and more frequent, constant, vivid and real as the psychic develops its power. This presence is felt in different ways by different sadhaks, but it is a true experience of the sadhana. It is what we mean when we say that the sadhak must come to feel always the presence of the Mother in his heart or within him. For in fact she is there always, only her presence is veiled by the ordinary movements of the mind, vital and physical, but when these become quiet and the psychic unveils itself, then one feels the presence of the Divine within.

*

He must go into himself and find the presence of the Divine Mother within and the psychic behind the heart and from there the knowledge will come and also the power to dissolve the inner obstacles.

The guarantee of the goal

It is good that you have come out of the bad condition. It is true that before the darshan or at that time attacks are apt to be violent — for the forces that oppose are very conscious and use their whole strength to spoil the darshan if they can. What has to be gained is the constant prominence of that part which is always aware of the Mother — it is of course the psychic — for that though it can be covered over for the time being cannot be misled by the contrary suggestions. Once it is awake, it always reemerges from obscurity — that is the guarantee of the final arrival at the goal, but if it can be maintained in front or even consciously felt behind in all conditions, then the stages of the

way also become comparatively safe and can be passed with greater ease and security.

CWSA 32: 186-88

There cannot be any ego behind the psychic and the psychic condition. However, the ego coming from the vital tries to associate itself with the psychic. If you observe anything of this nature, do not accept it but surrender it to the Mother in order to be freed from it.

The straight road is the way of the psychic; it goes up without winding on the strength of surrender and in the light of true vision; somewhat straight, somewhat circuitous is the path of the mental askesis and completely tortuous is the path of the vital, full of desire and lacking in knowledge; but as the vital has true yearning, it is nevertheless possible to go by that road.

Bengali writings: 399

Need for reliance on The Mother

If you entertain a desire, become impatient for the fruits of sadhana, then how will you remain peaceful and silent? A great work like the transformation of human nature, can it be done in a moment? Remain quiet, let the force of the Mother work in you, then in time everything will be accomplished.

If you remain peaceful within, in a state of surrender, then obstacles and difficulties will not be able to disturb you. Unhappiness and anxiety and “Why is this not happening? When will it happen?”, if you allow these feelings to enter into you, then obstacles and difficulties will find strength. Why do you pay so much attention to them? Concentrate on the Mother. Remain peaceful and surrendered within. The petty defects of the lower nature cannot be got rid of so eas-

ily. It is useless to be agitated over them. When the Mother's Force fully occupies the entire being down to the subconscious, they will go. The length of time necessary for that does not matter. The complete transformation requires time.

*

We have neither moved away from you nor abandoned you. When your mind and vital become disturbed, then these false ideas enter into your mind. Even if the ego rises and the difficulties come you must not lose faith in the Mother. Keep on calling her quietly and remain calm, the difficulties and the ego will leave you.

Bengali Writings: 377

One has to keep this kind of *feeling* and unquestioning faith. For this *faith*, belief and *conviction* in a sadhak greatly help the Mother's Force to act.

*

Why do you feel sorry? If one depends on the Mother and remains unperturbed in all circumstances, there can be no question of sorrow. Vainly does man expect happiness and peace from his fellow beings.

*

Once an inner union with the Mother has been formed, instead of this thought and fear one has to keep this certitude and the faith in the Mother that Her victory is inevitable, in spite of thousands of difficulties, innumerable mistakes and all obscurity in the outer nature.

*

Always one has to keep absolute faith in the Mother that one is in her hands, that everything will be done through her power. And therefore the obstacle can create no sorrow and despair.

*

Spiritual practice must be done with a firm and calm mind and with an unshakable faith and reliance on the Mother. *Depression* must find no place there. If it comes, it must be refused and cast aside. “I am low and mean, nothing can be done by me. The Mother has driven me off. I shall go away.” When these ideas come in, then you must know that they are the *suggestions* of the lower nature and are quite contrary to the truth of Yoga. Give no quarter to such ideas.

Bengali Writings: 387 – 388

Disturbances and difficulties

The truth is that you must not be subject to the ego or the external nature in your work. If you are, the work cannot form a part of the sadhana; instead, it becomes equivalent to trivial and ordinary work. Even the work must be done from within in a spirit of surrender.

Bengali Writings: 377 – 378

These vital disturbances are now occurring repeatedly in some people. Like a disease they go from one person to another; especially the feeling, “I want to die, I do not wish to keep this body, it is not possible to do yoga and sadhana in this body,” is strong. However, the idea, “By leaving the body I shall attain the realisation in yoga without any difficulty in another body,” is extremely erroneous. If you give up the body in this way, there will be still greater difficulties in the next birth and you will not have any relation with the Mother. All this is an attack of the hostile forces. Their aim is to break the sadhana of the sadhak, break the health of the Mother, break the Ashram and our work. You must be on your guard. Do not allow them to enter into you.

Bengali Writings: 381

Difficulties are the results of the outer nature of human beings. This nature does not change in a day or in a few days, not even in great sadhaks. But if you can entirely depend on the Mother and aspire to her in silence and calm and go on without anxiety, then the difficulties can do nothing, even if they come in your way. In time their force will diminish, perish and no longer exist.

*

Every one has this kind of difficulty. Identification with the Mother at every moment cannot easily be done. It is done by a steady spiritual practice.

*

Difficulties matter little. They are nothing but what exists in the outer nature of human beings. Gradually they will be driven out by the Force of the Mother. So there is no cause for anxiety or depression.

*

Always remember the Mother. Call upon her. Then the difficulties will go away. Do not be afraid, do not be perturbed by the difficulties. Call upon the Mother steadily.

*

However infinite the difficulties may seem to be, this *appearance* is not real. It is merely the demoniac illusion. Treading the way of truth the path becomes clear at last.

*

It is something like that. But difficulty does not leave any one so easily, even a very great Yogi. It is a bit easier to get rid of the mental difficulty than of the vital and the physical. It takes time to be free from the vital and physical difficulties.

*

What does it matter? Even great sadhaks are open to difficulties. If one can live in the *psychic state*, if one is united with

the Mother, then these attacks must go in vain.

Bengali Writings: 383 – 385

Don't worry on that account. It is not easy always to remember the presence of the Mother. When the whole being is filled with the Mother's *presence*, then you will remember her automatically, and you can by no means forget her.

*

Go on with your sadhana in a quiet manner. Sorrow or despair will no longer remain in you. All darkness will disappear in the long run.

*

When the tamasic state, rising from the subconscious, attacks the body, one feels as if one were ill. Call the Mother's force from above into your body, all this will go away.

Bengali Writings: 391

First step to getting rid of difficulties

To get rid of the subconscious difficulties, first one has to recognise them, next reject them, and finally bring the inner or the higher light of the Mother into the body consciousness. Then the ignorant movements of the subconscious will be driven away and the movements of the other consciousness will be established. But this cannot be done easily; you have to do it patiently; a determined patience is required. Trust in the Mother is the only means. However, if one can remain inside and maintain the inner vision and consciousness, there is not much suffering and labour — but it is not always possible to do this and it is then that faith and patience are particularly necessary.

When the physical consciousness becomes strong, it covers up everything and tries to spread all over the being,

this state is produced because when the physical consciousness in its distinct nature expresses itself, everything seems to be full of inertia and obscurity, void of the light of knowledge and the drive of force. Do not give your assent to this condition — if it comes, call the Mother's light and force to enter into the body-consciousness and make it luminous and powerful.

Bengali Writings: 291-92

The difficulties do not go away easily. Even all the difficulties of a very great sadhak do not disappear in a moment on a fixed day. I have already said it many times that one has to remain peaceful and unagitated and slowly advance with full trust in the Mother — it cannot be done in an instant. “I want everything today”: if you make this demand, it may create more difficulties. One has to remain calm and quiet.

Bengali Writings: 398-99

Peace is the first to come; unless the whole instrument becomes full of peace, it is difficult for the knowledge to descend. Once peace is established, the vast infinite consciousness of the Mother manifests itself; the ego is drowned in it and finally disappears without leaving any trace. In that infinity only the Mother and her eternal portion are left.

This is very good. It is a genuine experience. When this peace spreads in the entire being and becomes firm, solid and durable, the first foundation of the spiritual consciousness is established.

To bring down peace and force in the nervous system is the only way to strengthen the nerves.

Bengali Writings: 401

The more one thinks of the obstacles, the more power they have over one. One should open oneself to the Mother and think more of the Divine, of the light, peace and Ananda.

This limitless peace, the more it increases, the better it is. Peace is the foundation of the yoga.

When this empty state comes, remain calm and call the Mother. Everyone has this empty state, only when it is full of peace, can it be beneficial. If there is unrest, it gives no result.

Bengali Writings: 401

This feeling is very good. One has to feel what the Mother is giving within — people make so many mistakes by looking at the outward appearance. They forget to accept the inner gift or are incapable of receiving it.

*

The diamond light is the Mother's light at its strongest. It is only natural for this light to come out of the body of the Mother like this and fall on the sadhak if he is in a good condition.

*

An emanation or a part of Her being and consciousness comes out of the Mother to each sadhak and as her image and representative remains with him to help him. In fact, it is the Mother Herself who comes out in that form.

Bengali Writings: 403, 406

Dependence on the Mother

The Mother's attitude never changes. It remains always the same. When a sadhak sees her according to his mental ideas, he finds her attitude changed. But this is not true.

*

You are not without the Mother Divine. The Mother is really with you. It is to bring down the higher light and the higher consciousness that a sadhak goes down to hell. With this belief go on with a steady heart. The light and consciousness are sure to descend.

*

One has to practise spirituality silently, calmly, fearlessly with the constant belief that the victory of the Mother is sure to take place.

*

Who will go away? Those who have no sincerity, no faith and trust in the Mother; those who look upon their own imagination as something greater than the will of the Mother, they might go away. But he who seeks the Truth, who has faith and confidence, who wants the Mother, has nothing to be afraid of; even if there are a thousand difficulties, he will surmount them; if he has numerous defects in his nature, he will rectify them; even if he falls, he will rise again and finally one day he will reach the goal of his sadhana.

*

This is not the right attitude, your sadhana has not been ruined; the Mother has not abandoned you; she has neither moved away from you nor is she displeased with you — these are vital imaginations and should not be given any place. Keep a simple and quiet confidence in the Mother. Without being afraid of the difficulties call in the Mother's Force. All that you have received is inside; there will be even further progress.

*

Remain quiet and conscious. Call the Mother, the good condition will return. To make full surrender takes time. Surrender all that you find still remaining over. Only thus, by repeat-

ing it constantly, the surrender becomes complete.

*

Be always calm and let the higher Consciousness of the Mother descend into you — this alone will gradually transform your external consciousness.

Bengali Writings: 415

Defects of nature

There is no sadhak, in spite of his being a child of the Divine, who has not numerous little defects in his nature. As soon as one becomes aware of them, they have to be rejected; one has to aspire more ardently for the Mother's Force so that these little defects of the nature may slowly be eradicated; but faith, surrender and reliance on the Mother must always remain intact. To get rid of these defects entirely is a matter of time; one must not be disturbed because they are there.

*

This should not upset you. In the path of yoga such a condition invariably comes — when it is time to descend into the physical consciousness and the subconscious, and it may last long. But the Mother is there behind the veil and she will reveal herself later on; this lower kingdom will be transformed into the kingdom of light that is above — keep this strong faith and, by constantly surrendering all, advance towards the end of this stage that is full of difficulties.

*

Relation with the outer world must be maintained but all that must remain on the outer surface. You should live within, close to the Mother and watch everything from there — this is what is wanted. It is the first step of the Karmayoga. Then from within conduct all external work with the help of

the Mother's force. This is the second step. If you can do this, then you will not have any further trouble.

*

This you should always remember, that if you go forward with full trust in the Mother, then whatever may be the circumstances and the difficulties, however long a time may be necessary, you will most certainly reach your goal — no obstacle, delay or adverse condition can mar the ultimate success.

*

It is not right to assume from her outer appearance during the Pranam or Darshan that the Mother is pleased or displeased. People are constantly making this error that the Mother is displeased, the Mother is severe, the Mother does not want me, she is keeping me away from her, etc. and so many other false notions; then yielding to despair they create their own difficulties on the way. Instead of doing all this, maintain an unshakable trust in the love and help of the Mother within you and go forward on the path of sadhana with a quiet and cheerful mind. Those who do that are safe. When the difficulties come and the ego rises up, they are not touched; they say, "The Mother is there, whatever she does is all right; though I may not see her for the time being, still she is with me, all around me; I have nothing to fear." This is what you should do. One has to maintain this trust and continue to do the sadhana.

*

The blue light is mine, the white light is the Mother's. When the Higher Consciousness with its universality first begins to descend into the being, it is very natural to see blue light.

*

The white rose signifies loving surrender to the Mother. Its

result will be the spread of light and truth in your *ādhāra*. The white lotus means the Mother's fully awakened Consciousness on your mental plane. The *red-gold* is the radiance of the *Supramental* in the physical.

Bengali Writings: 415-423

Devotion — Faith — Reliance

Sitting calm and quiet remember the Mother and open yourself to her. This is the rule of meditation.

*

To do both is best. If it were possible to do sadhana from a distance, that would be the best, but that cannot always be done. But the fact is that you have to do your sadhana by creating a place of safety or a fort in the psychic — that is to say, rely on the Mother calmly and quietly without getting restless, say cheerfully that what she says is right. These small imperfections are a greater obstacle than big ones. But they have to be slowly brought out and imperfections turned into perfections. This cannot be done all at once.

*

The straight road to truth is open in the heart. Whatever is offered goes up to the Mother and gets merged in her Truth and becomes all truth.

*

Don't be afraid or upset. This is the way of Yoga. You have to get over the dark state; you have to remain quiet even in darkness.

*

The tapasya is this: to be quiet, to call upon the Mother, to reject calmly restlessness, despair, desires and lusts.

*

Always remain quiet, calmly calling in the Mother's Force and throwing aside all worry.

*

When the consciousness becomes wide and universal and sees the Mother in the whole universe, then the ego does not stick. Only your true being, which is the Mother's child and her portion, rests on the Mother's lap.

Bengali Writings: 424-430

Is it not a big boast that all this has happened only for you? "I am very good, very powerful, everything is being done by me, without me the Mother's work cannot be done." This is undeniably a kind of vanity. "I am worse than the worst. Everything has come to a stand-still owing to my opposition. God cannot carry on his work." This is, in an opposite way, another sort of vanity.

Bengali Writings: 426

Opening to Her Presence

The Meaning of Opening

What is real opening?

It is the receptivity to the Mother's presence and her forces.

What is the right and perfect rule of opening?

Aspiration, quietude, widening of oneself to receive, rejection of all that tries to shut you to the Divine.

How shall I know that I am opening to the Mother and not to other forces?

You have to be vigilant and see that there is no movement of disturbance, desire, ego.

What are the signs of a real opening to the Mother?

That shows itself at once — when you feel the divine peace, equality, wideness, light, Ananda, Knowledge, strength, when you are aware of the Mother's nearness or presence or the working of her Force, etc., etc. If any of these things are felt, it is the opening — the more are felt, the more complete the opening.

What is the way to open all the knots of the being?

By aspiration, by consent of the being to the workings of the Divine Force, by the descent and working of that Force.

25 April 1933

What does “opening” mean? Is it “not to keep anything secret from the Mother”?

That is the first step towards opening.

How to open

How does one “open”?

By faith and surrender in a quiet mind.

*

To be open is simply to be so turned to the Mother that her Force can work in you without anything refusing or obstructing her action. If the mind is shut up in its own ideas and refuses to allow her to bring in the Light and the Truth, if the vital clings to its desires and does not admit the true initiative and impulses that the Mother’s power brings, if the physical is shut up in its desire, habits and inertia and does not allow the Light and Force to enter in it and work, then one is not open. It is not possible to be entirely open all at once in all the movements, but there must be a central opening in each part and a dominant aspiration or will in each part (not in the mind alone) to admit only the Mother’s workings, the rest will then be progressively done.

*

To remain open to the Mother is to remain always quiet and happy and confident, not restless, not grieving or desponding, to let her force work in you, guide you, give you knowledge, give you peace and Ananda. If you cannot keep yourself open, then aspire constantly but quietly that you may be open.

CWSA 32: 150-51

Sri Aurobindo

Guidance from the Mother on sadhana

Divine Mother, I wish to get light on the following points. Have I the capacity and are there potentialities in me to follow this path?

This is not the question, the question is whether you have the necessary aspiration, determination and perseverance and whether you can by the intensity and persistence of your aspiration make all the parts of your being answer to the call and become one in the consecration.

How should I continue my practice (sadhana) after returning home?

Quiet yourself and in the quiet see and feel the Mother.

How can I meditate? What is meant by opening? Where should I open?

An inner purity and receptivity that freely lets in the Mother's influence. Begin with the heart.

I aspire for the higher life from above the head; but I always feel strained in the middle part of the forehead. What should I do?

Do not strain yourself.

How does the psychic being open? How to understand the psychic and vital beings in the Adhara?

By the force of aspiration and the grace of the Mother.

Psychic: your true being, the being that is in the heart and that is the spark of the Mother's own consciousness.

Vital: the part from which proceed desires and hunger and dynamic activities, having its physical basis round about the navel.

My family consists of myself, wife, two sons and one girl. I desire to come here and stay permanently, but my wife does not approve of it. What should I do?

Detachment.

What attitude should I keep while doing my works of daily routine? How should I act with family members, relatives and friends?

Detachment.

What should I read at present?

Sri Aurobindo's books.

How to open to the Mother? The following are the means:

(1) To remember You constantly or from time to time —

Good.

(2) By taking Your name through Japa —

Helpful.

(3) *With the help of meditation—*

More difficult if one has not the habit of meditation.

(4) *By conversation about You with those who love and respect You —*

Risky because, when talking, often some nonsense or at least some useless things can be said.

(5) *By reading Your books—*

Good.

By spending time in thoughts of You —

Very good.

By sincere prayers—

Good.

*

Our human consciousness has windows that open on the Infinite but generally men keep these windows carefully shut. They have to be opened wide and allow the Infinite freely to enter into us and transform us.

Two conditions are necessary for opening the windows:

- 1) ardent aspiration;
- 2) progressive dissolution of the ego.

The Divine help is assured to those who set to work sincerely.

*

What is the best method to find the Divine who is in each of us and in all things?

Aspiration.

Concentration in the solar plexus region.

If need be, a prayer addressed to the Divine:

I belong to You and I want to know You so that all that I do is nothing but what you want me to do.

*

Encourage only what leads quickly to the Lord and serves His divine purpose.

CWM 14: 38-42

The Mother

Opening to the Mother and the Integral Yoga

The Truth for you is to feel the Divine in you, open to the Mother and work for the Divine till you are aware of her in all your actions. The physical presence here is not enough; there must be this consciousness of the divine presence in your heart and the divine guidance in your acts. This the psychic being can easily, swiftly, deeply feel if it is fully awake; once the psychic has felt it, it can spread to the mental and vital also.

CWSA 32: 153

Sri Aurobindo says in reply to your letter that you can meditate on the Mother in the heart and call on her — remember her and dedicate or offer to her all your life and thoughts and actions. If you like you can make a japa of her name. You can call to her to purify your being and change your nature. Or you can concentrate to call down from above you (where it always is) first her calm and peace, then her power and

light and her ananda. It is always there above the head — but superconscient to the human mind — by aspiration and concentration it can become conscient to it and the adhar can open to it so that it descends and enters into mind, life and body.

*

Keep yourself open, remember the Mother always — call for her help and guidance in your work. You must get into a condition in which not only the calmness remains always but the sadhana is going on all the time in work and rest as well as in meditation.

*

Openness is not always complete from the first — a part of the being opens, other parts of the consciousness remain still closed or half open only — one has to aspire till all is open. Even with the best and most powerful sadhak the full opening takes time; nor is there anyone who has been able to abandon everything at once without any struggle. There is no reason to feel therefore that if you call, you will not be heard — the Mother knows the difficulties of human nature and will help you through. Persevere always, call always and then after each difficulty there will be a progress.

CWSA 32: 155-57

If you cannot meditate, pray. Offer all you do to the Mother and pray to her to take control of your actions and your nature. Love and worship. What is needed is to get a full opening in which you will become conscious of the Mother. These things will bring the opening. Only, even if it takes time, you must not get depression, despair or revolt — for these things get into the way of the opening.

*

It is by the constant remembrance that the being is prepared for the full opening. By the opening of the heart the Mother's presence begins to be felt and by the opening to her Power above the Force of the higher consciousness comes down into the body and works there to change the whole nature.

CWSA 32: 159,167

If I cannot concentrate or meditate, I simply imagine myself lying eternally in the Mother's lap and going out when she sends me out.

This is the best possible kind of concentration.

*

It is the true attitude so to leave all to the Mother and trust entirely in her and let her lead you on the path to the goal.

*

You have asked me, "How do you surrender to the psychic if you are not conscious of its action?" I do it in the same way that I surrender to the Force above. I simply imagine that there is the Force above or that there is a psychic being in the heart centre. Imagining so, I surrender myself to it.

It is then a *sankalpa* of surrender. But the surrender must be to the Mother — not even to the Force, but to the Mother herself.

But I do not know whether surrender to the psychic is necessary at present. My being is not yet capable of surrendering to the Force and to the psychic simultaneously.

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

CWSA 32: 147

Sri Aurobindo

The Mother as Guru and Guide

A human soul and nature cannot be dealt with by a set of mental rules applicable to everybody in the same way; if it were so, there would be no need of a Guru, each could set his chart of Yogic rules before him like the rules of Sandow's exercise and follow them till he became the perfect siddha!

CWSA 31: 349

Sri Aurobindo

I take the greatest care to open the door within all of you, so that if you have just a small movement of concentration within you, you do not have to wait for long periods in front of a closed door that will not move, to which you have no key and which you do not know how to open.

The door is open, only you must look in that direction. You must not turn your back on it.

*

I am not eager to be the Guru of anyone. It is more spontaneously natural for me to feel the Mother of all and to carry them forward silently through the power of love.

*

How do you conceive of my relation with you?

Are you not the son of the universal Mother?

*

If something wrong happens, at once repeat my name, — “Ma” ‘Ma”. Indeed it is like a meditation. Whenever you repeat the name of the Divine, you must always feel that the Divine is in your heart, — there you can feel sweetness and peace.

The Mother

When I say that I have initiated someone, I mean that I have revealed myself to this person, *without words*, and that he was capable of seeing, feeling and knowing What I am.

CWM 13: 82-83, 84

Physical nearness and inner nearness

Whether I see you or not makes no difference to the help. It will always be there.

*

You must remove two falsehoods from your mind.

1) What you get from me has nothing at all to do with what the others have or have not. My relation with you depends on you alone; I give you according to your true need and capacity. Even here, already you were alone with me; if there were no others you would receive nothing more.

2) It is a great mistake to think that physical nearness is the one thing indispensable for the progress. It will do nothing for you if you do not establish the inner contact, for without that you could remain from morning to night with me and yet you will never truly meet me. It is only by the inner opening and contact that you can realise my presence.

The Mother's retirement

The Mother's retirement¹ has posed a question of great importance for us. Is it going to widen the physical distance that was already existing between her and most Ashramites? And can the affairs of the Ashram be managed without her constant guidance? Do not the true interests of the sadhaks suffer during her retirement? Will she take the same usual care of us as she did before?

1. 1962 onwards the Mother did not come out of her room.

You ought not to forget that each one meets in life the exact expression of what he is himself. Grace and blessings are always with you. Not one day have I stopped taking the usual care of those who depend on my force.

Do the work — my inspiration and guidance will always be with you; and when it is necessary I shall see you physically. But I am working to lessen more and more this necessity. Because to be able to receive the inner guidance is indispensable for the perfection of the work.

*

Now that you are here, the only thing to do is to forget the past and to concentrate on your work here. It is true that for the moment I cannot see you regularly, but you must learn to get the *inner* contact (it is one of the chief reasons of my retirement) and then you will know that I am always with you to guide you and to help you and that you can have no better conditions than here to do properly your sadhana.

*

It would be more correct to say that certain thoughts, certain feelings and certain actions take people away from me or create a separation between someone and me in spite of all physical proximity.

*

We feel that we are separated from Your presence; but this separation is only an illusion, isn't it, my Mother?

There is no real separation, but if the consciousness takes a wrong attitude, it puts itself into a state in which it has the sensation or the feeling of separation.

*

No, this physical contact is not indispensable. Certainly for those who have the true attitude, the physical contact helps

the body to follow the movement of transformation, but the body is rarely in a state to profit by it. Generally on birthdays it is more receptive.

*

I am no more living an active life; if you are open, help is bound to come.

CWM 13: 77-80

The Mother

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 32: 151-52

Sri Aurobindo

*It is the Divine Presence that
gives value to life.*

*This Presence is the source
of all peace, all joy,
all security.*

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Flower on the Cover:

Divine Presence

*It hides from the ignorant eye its
ever-present magnificence!*

(Spiritual significance and explanation given by the Mother)

Botanical Name: Rhoeo spathacea