



All India Magazine

July 2021

A Primer for Sadhana

Words of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother

Q: Tell me, Mother, what am I?

Outwardly, you are an unconscious child striving to become conscious.

Inwardly, you are an eternal soul attempting to manifest in a body.

CWM 17: 74-75

The Mother

This issue is Compiled by: K. C. Anand

ALL INDIA MAGAZINE

A Monthly Magazine of Sri Aurobindo Society

Annual Subscription: Rs.200 in India, US \$ 25 by Air-mail

Owner: Sri Aurobindo Society

Printer: Swadhin Chatterjee for Sri Aurobindo Ashram Press

Publisher: Pradeep Narang for Sri Aurobindo Society

Published from: Society House, 11 Saint Martin Street, Puducherry - 605 001

Printed from: Sri Aurobindo Ashram Press, No 38, Goubert Avenue,
Puducherry - 605 001, India.

Editor: Dr. Alok Pandey

Registered with the Registrar of Newspapers for India : No. 22334/71

Phone Nos:(0413) 2336396-97-98

Email: info@aurosociety.org Website: www.aurosociety.org

A Primer for Sadhana

Words of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother

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

CONTENTS

Section I

To Know Why We Live	...	4
What is Existence	...	6
The Fundamental Reality	...	8

Section II

Why Pursue Sadhana	...	9
In Yoga Who is the Sadhaka and the Sadhana	...	12
What is Openness and How to Open Oneself	...	14
The Faith Demanded of Us	...	16

Section III

Interiorisation and Discovery of the Divine Presence Within	...	19
Whole Process of Yoga Starts with Surrender	...	24
Secret of the Perfect Kind of Sadhana	...	26
Basic Requisite — Self-Consecration	...	28
Turn Whole Life into a Continuous and a Devoted Self-giving to the Eternal	...	30
Guidance on Three Aspects of Sadhana	...	33
Work and the Right Attitude in Work	...	37

In Brief

To be Constantly Conscious of the Divine	...	38
Remember Always	...	42

*A Note: We hope this compilation will inspire the reader to study the Complete Works of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother. Or the reader may choose **one** guiding light and immerse himself totally in it till it becomes a part of his consciousness.*

To Know Why We Live

The purpose of individual existence is **the joy of discovering*** the Divine and uniting with Him. When one has understood this, then one is ready to gain the strength to surmount all difficulties.

CWM Vol. 16, p. 423

22 November 1971

*

To know why we live: discovery of the Divine and **conscious union*** with Him.

The aspiration to concentrate solely on this realisation.

To know how to transform all circumstances into a means of reaching this goal.

CWM Vol. 16, p. 428

22 December 1971

*

Essentially there is but one single true reason for living: it is to know oneself. We are here to learn — to learn what we are, why we are here, and what we have to do. And if we don't know that, our life is altogether empty — for ourselves and for others.

CWM Vol. 6, pp. 15-16

03 February 1954

* *Emphasis added by the compiler*

Only Thou — that is all.

And it is quite evident that the creation has that as its goal, that wonderful delight... of feeling itself to be Thou.

CWM 11: 268 (28 August 1971)

The Mother

Life has a purpose.

This purpose is to find and to serve the Divine.

The Divine is not far, He is in ourselves, deep inside and above the feelings and the thoughts. With the Divine is peace and certitude and even the solution of all difficulties.

Hand over your problems to the Divine and He will pull you out of all difficulties.

CWM Vol. 14, p. 5 (3 July 1970)

The Mother

*

The Divine is that from which all comes, in which all lives, and to return **to the truth of the Divine*** now clouded over by Ignorance is the soul's aim in life. In its supreme Truth, the Divine is absolute and infinite peace, consciousness, existence, power and Ananda.

CWSA Vol. 28, p. 5 (SABCL Vol. 23, p. 1081)

*

We know the Divine and become the Divine, because we are That already in our secret nature. ... all becoming is an unfolding. Self-attainment **is the secret***; self-knowledge and an increasing consciousness are **the means and the process.***

CWSA Vol. 23, p. 54 (SABCL Vol. 20, p. 48)

Sri Aurobindo

Our life shall find in its fulfilled response
Above, the boundless hushed beatitudes,
Below, the wonder of the embrace divine.

Savitri, p. 315

Sri Aurobindo

What is Existence

Existence is not a fluke, a random creation by nobody, a thing that unaccountably happened to be. It carries in itself the Word of God, it is full of a hidden Divine Presence.

Existence is not a blind machine that somehow came and started a set ignoble motion without object or sense or purpose. Existence is a Truth of things unfolding by a gradual process of manifestation, an evolution of its own involved Reality.

Existence is not an illusion, a Maya that had no reason, no business to exist, could not exist, does not exist but only seems to be. A mighty Reality manifests in itself this marvelous universe.

*

Manifestation is not an episode of the Eternal. It is his face and body of glory that is imperishable, it is the movement of his joy and power...

*

All that is is the manifestation of a Divine Infinite. The universe has no other reason for existence.

*

The Divine that we adore is not only a remote extra-cosmic Reality, but a half-veiled Manifestation present and near to us here in the universe. Life is the field of a divine manifestation not yet complete: here, in life, on earth, in the body, — *ihaiva* [here (itself)] as the Upanishads insist, — we have to unveil the Godhead; here we must make its transcendent greatness, light and sweetness real to our consciousness, here possess and, as far as may be, express it.

CWSA 12: 218, 219, 218; CWSA 23: 74

Evolution is nothing but the progressive unfolding of Spirit out of the density of material consciousness and the gradual self-revelation of God out of this apparent animal being.

*

All evolution is in essence a heightening of the force of consciousness in the manifest being so that it may be raised into the greater intensity of what is still unmanifest, from matter into life, from life into mind, from the mind into the spirit.

*

All evolution is the progressive self-revelation of the One to himself in the terms of the Many out of the Inconscience through the Ignorance towards self-conscious perfection.

*

Evolution in its essence is not the development of a more and more organised body or a more and more efficient life — these are only its machinery and outward circumstance. Evolution is the strife of a Consciousness somnambulised in Matter to wake and be free and find and possess itself and all its possibilities to the very utmost and widest, to the very last and highest. Evolution is the emancipation of a self-revealing Soul secret in Form and Force, the slow becoming of a Godhead, the growth of a Spirit.

In this evolution mental man is not the goal and end, the completing value, the highest last significance; he is too small and imperfect to be the crown of all this travail of Nature.

CWSA 12: 334; 22: 754-55; 12: 219, 166

Sri Aurobindo

The Fundamental Reality Hidden from Our Knowledge

And a Means by Which We can Arrive at the True Knowledge

All existence, whatever its appearance or its process of being, is and draws its substance, origin, energy, truth from a Spirit which is the beginning, middle and end of all — itself being eternal, infinite, self-existent beyond end or beginning, beyond Space and Time, beyond Form and Quality and Circumstance as well as in Space and Time, in Form and Quality and Circumstance. This is the fundamental Reality which is hidden from our knowledge, the one Truth on which all other truths depend, those that affirm it as well as those that seem to contradict it. To be conscious of this Reality and its right relations with the other truths or appearances of existence, to live in it and govern by its Truth all our being, consciousness, nature, will, action would then be the law of a perfect life. If human life is imperfect, it is because its consciousness moves seeking, groping, experimenting in a fundamental ignorance of the real truth of its own being and is therefore unable to know or to effectuate the true law of its life. It is only if man can overcome this ignorance and inability that he can hope to perfect his life and nature. ... The hope that by using our reason and observing or utilising the laws of Nature we can arrive at a perfect life here is futile, for our nature here being itself ignorant and imperfect cannot arrive at anything better than a mitigated imperfection and ignorance. But if there is a means by which we can arrive at a true knowledge of the reality behind things and enter into its Truth and Light and Power then there is no reason why our life here should not become divine and perfect. It is through Yoga that this means can be found. ... CWSA 12: 177-78 **Sri Aurobindo**

Why Pursue Sadhana

What do you want the Yoga for? To get power? To attain to peace and calm? To serve humanity?

None of these motives is sufficient to show that you are meant for the Path.

The question you are to answer is this: Do you want the Yoga for the sake of the Divine? Is the Divine the supreme fact of your life, so much so that it is simply impossible for you to do without it? Do you feel that your very *raison d'être* is the Divine and without it there is no meaning in your existence? If so, then only can it be said that you have a call for the Path.

CWM 3: 1

Q: "This liberation, perfection, fullness too must not be pursued for our own sake, but for the sake of the Divine." [Sri Aurobindo]

But isn't the sadhana we do done for ourselves?

But he stresses precisely that. It is simply in order to stress the point. It means that all this perfection which we are going to acquire is not for a personal and selfish end, it is in order to be able to manifest the Divine, it is put at the service of the Divine. We do not pursue this development with a selfish intention of personal perfection; we pursue it because the divine Work has to be accomplished.

Q: *But why do we do this divine Work? It is to make ourselves...*

No, not at all! It is because that's the divine Will. It is not at all for a personal reason, it must not be that. It is be-

cause it's the divine Will and it's the divine Work.

So long as a personal aspiration or desire, a selfish will, get mingled in it, it always creates a mixture and is not exactly an expression of the divine Will. The only thing which must count is the Divine, His Will, His manifestation, His expression. **One is here for that, one is that**, and nothing else. And so long as there is a feeling of self, of the ego, the person, which enters, well, this proves that one is not yet what one ought to be, that's all. I don't say that this can be done overnight but still this indeed is the truth.

It is just because even in this field, the spiritual field, there are far too many people (I could say even the majority of those who take to the spiritual life and do yoga), far too many of these who do it for personal reasons, all kinds of personal reasons: some because they are disgusted with life, others because they are unhappy, others still because they want to know more, others because they want to become spiritually great, others because they want to learn things which they may be able to teach others; indeed there are a thousand personal reasons for taking up yoga. But the simple fact of **giving oneself to the Divine** so that the Divine takes you and makes of you what He wills, and this in all its purity and constancy, well, there are not many who do that and yet this indeed is the truth; and with this one goes straight to the goal and never risks making mistakes. But all the other motives are always mixed, tainted with ego; and naturally they can lead you here and there, very far from the goal also.

But that kind of feeling that you have only one single reason for existence, one single goal, one single motive, the entire, perfect, complete consecration to the Divine to the point of not being able to distinguish yourself from Him any

longer, to be Himself entirely, completely, totally without any personal reaction intervening, this is the ideal attitude; and besides, it is the only one which makes it possible for you to go forward in life and in the work, absolutely protected from everything and protected from yourself which is of all dangers the greatest for you — there is no greater danger than the self (I take "self" in the sense of an egoistic self). ...

Q: *But why does the Divine want to manifest Himself on earth in this chaos?*

Because this is why He has created the earth, not for any other motive; the earth is He Himself in a deformation and He wants to establish it back again in its truth. Earth is not something separated from Him and alien to Him. It is a deformation of Himself which must once again become what it was in its essence, that is, the Divine.

Q: *Then why is He a stranger to us?*

But He is not a stranger, my child. You fancy that He is a stranger, but He is not, not in the least. He is the essence of your being — not at all alien. You may not know Him, but He is not a stranger; He is the very essence of your being. Without the Divine you would not exist. Without the Divine you could not exist even for the millionth part of a second. Only, because you live in a kind of false illusion and deformation, you are not conscious. You are not conscious of yourself, you are conscious of something which you think to be yourself, but which isn't you.

Q: *Then what is myself, Sweet Mother?*

The Divine!

CWM 7: 198-99

The Mother

In Yoga Who is the Sadhaka and the Sadhana

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

In Yoga also it is the Divine who is the Sadhaka and the Sadhana; it is his Shakti with her light, power, knowledge, consciousness, Ananda, acting upon the adhara and, when it is opened to her, pouring into it with these divine forces that makes the Sadhana possible. But so long as the lower nature is active the personal effort of the Sadhaka remains necessary.

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

CWSA 32: 6 (SABCL 25: 6-7)

In this Yoga the whole principle is to open oneself to the Divine Influence. It is there above you and, if you can once become conscious of it, you have then to call it down into you. It descends into the mind and into the body as Peace, as a Light, as a Force that works, as the Presence of the Divine with or without form, as Ananda. Before one has this consciousness, one has to have faith and aspire for the opening. Aspiration, call, prayer are forms of one and the same thing and are all effective; you can take the form that comes to you or is easiest to you. The other way is concentration; you concentrate your consciousness in the heart (some do it in the head or above the head) and meditate on the Mother in the heart and call her in there. One can do either and both at different times — whatever comes naturally to you or you are moved to do at the moment. Especially in the begin-

ning the one great necessity is to get the mind quiet, reject at the time of meditation all thoughts and movements that are foreign to the sadhana. In the quiet mind there will be a progressive preparation for the experience. But you must not become impatient if all is not done at once; it takes time to bring entire quiet into the mind; you have to go on till the consciousness is ready.

CWSA 29: 106 (SABCL 23: 604-05)

A disclosure from within or a descent from above are the two sovereign ways of the Yoga-siddhi. An effort of the external surface mind or emotions, a tapasya of some kind may seem to build up something of these things, but the results are usually uncertain and fragmentary compared to the result of the two radical ways. That is why in this Yoga we insist always on an "opening" — an opening inwards of the inner mind, vital, physical to the inmost part of us, the psychic, and an opening upwards to what is above the mind — as indispensable for the fruits of the sadhana.

CWSA 30: 324 (SABCL 24: 1163-64)

[From a letter to a disciple]:

There has never been here any real surrender, any giving up of yourself freely and simply into the hands of the Divine Mother. And yet that is the only way to succeed in the supramental Yoga. To be a Yogi, a Sannyasi, a Tapaswi is not the object here. The object is transformation, and the transformation can only be done by a force infinitely greater than your own; it can only be done by being truly like a child in the hands of the Divine Mother.

CWSA 32: 143 (SABCL 25: 129)

Sri Aurobindo

What is Openness and How to Open Oneself

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 impulsions 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.

CWSA 32: 151 (SABCL 25: 123-24)

Opening is a thing that happens of itself by sincerity of will and aspiration.

CWSA 29: 105 (SABCL 23: 604)

Surrender is the best way of opening; but aspiration and quietness can do it up to a certain point so long as there is not the surrender.

CWSA 29: 106 (SABCL 23: 603)

It is by confidence in the Mother that the opening needed will come when your consciousness is ready. ...

It is not by meditation alone that what is needed will come. It is by faith and openness to the Mother.

CWSA 29: 109 (SABCL 23: 604)

Keep yourself open to the Mother, remember her always and let her Force work in you, rejecting all other influences — that is the rule for Yoga.

CWSA 29: 109 (SABCL 23: 604)

It is true that the Force can work effectively without any effort on your part. It is not the effort, it is the assent of the being that it needs for its work.

CWSA 31: 721 (SABCL 23: 697)

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: 151 (SABCL 25: 124)

Openness and, whenever needed, passivity, but to the highest consciousness, not to anything that comes.

Therefore, there must be a certain quiet vigilance even in the passivity. Otherwise there may be either wrong movements or inertia.

CWSA 32: 119 (SABCL 23: 607)

Work is part of the Yoga and it gives the best opportunity for calling down the Presence, the Light and the Power into the vital and its activities; it increases also the field and the opportunity of surrender.

CWSA 32: 247 (SABCL 25: 200)

By remaining psychically open to the Mother, all that is necessary for work or sadhana develops progressively, that is one of the chief secrets, the central secret of the sadhana.

CWSA 32: 154 (SABCL 25: 121)

Sri Aurobindo

The Faith Demanded of Us

The fundamental faith in Yoga is this, inherent in the soul, that the Divine exists and the Divine is the one thing to be followed after — nothing else in life is worth having in comparison with that. It was this faith growing in you that made you come for Yoga and this faith has not died or diminished — to judge from what you say in your letters, it has become more insistent and abiding. So long as a man has that, he is marked for the spiritual life and I will say that, even if his nature is full of obstacles and crammed with denials and difficulties, and even if he has many years of struggle, he is marked out for success in the spiritual life.

It is this faith that you need to develop, — a faith which is in accordance with reason and common sense — that if the Divine exists and has called you to the Path, as is evident, then there must be a Divine Guidance behind and that through and in spite of all difficulties you will arrive. Not to listen to the hostile voices that suggest failure or to the voices of impatient vital haste that echo them, not to believe that because great difficulties are there, there can be no success or that because the Divine has not yet shown himself he will never show himself, but to take the position that everyone takes when he fixes his mind on a great and difficult goal, "I will go on till I succeed and I will succeed — all difficulties notwithstanding." To which the believer in the Divine adds, "The Divine exists, he is there, and since he exists, my following after the Divine cannot fail. I will go on through everything till I find him."

CWSA 29: 93-94 (SABCL 23: 573)

The faith demanded of us both in its general principle and

its constant particular application amounts to a large and ever increasing and a constantly purer, fuller and stronger assent of the whole being and all its parts to the presence and guidance of God and the Shakti. The faith in the Shakti, as long as we are not aware of and filled with her presence, must necessarily be preceded or at least accompanied by a firm and virile faith in our own spiritual will and energy and our power to move successfully towards unity and freedom and perfection. Man is given faith in himself, his ideas and his powers that he may work and create and rise to greater things and in the end bring his strength as a worthy offering to the altar of the Spirit. This spirit, says the Scripture, is not to be won by the weak, *nāyam ātmā balahīnena labhyaḥ*. All paralysing self-distrust has to be discouraged, all doubt of our strength to accomplish, for that is a false assent to impotence, an imagination of weakness and a denial of the omnipotence of the spirit. A present incapacity, however heavy may seem its pressure, is only a trial of faith and a temporary difficulty and to yield to the sense of inability is for the seeker of the integral Yoga a non-sense, for his object is a development of a perfection that is there already, latent in the being, because man carries the seed of the divine life in himself, in his own spirit, the possibility of success is involved and implied in the effort and victory is assured because behind is the call and guidance of an omnipotent power. At the same time this faith in oneself must be purified from all touch of rajasic egoism and spiritual pride. The sadhaka should keep as much as possible in his mind the idea that his strength is not his own in the egoistic sense but that of the divine universal Shakti and whatever is egoistic in his use of it must be a cause of limitation and in the end an obstacle. CWSA 23: 779-80 (SABCL 21: 751-52)

He is the one Existence: he is the original and universal Delight that constitutes all things and exceeds them; he is the one infinite Consciousness that composes all consciousnesses and informs all their movements; he is the one illimitable Being who sustains all action and experience: his will guides the evolution of things towards their yet unrealised but inevitable aim and plenitude.

To him the heart can consecrate itself, approach him as the supreme Beloved, beat and move in him as in a universal sweetness of Love and a living sea of Delight. For his is the secret Joy that supports the soul in all its experiences and maintains even the errant ego in its ordeals and struggles till all sorrow and suffering shall cease. His is the Love and the Bliss of the infinite divine Lover who is drawing all things by their own path towards his happy oneness.

On him the Will can unalterably fix as the invisible Power that guides and fulfils it and as the source of its strength. In the impersonality this actuating Power is a self-illuminated Force that contains all results and calmly works until it accomplishes, in the personality an all-wise and omnipotent Master of the Yoga whom nothing can prevent from leading it to its goal.

This is the faith with which the seeker has to begin his seeking and endeavour; for in all his effort here, but most of all in his effort towards the Unseen, mental man must **perforce** proceed by faith. When the realisation comes, the faith divinely fulfilled and completed will be transformed into an eternal flame of knowledge.

Interiorisation and Discovery of the Divine Presence Within

People are occupied with outward things. That means that the consciousness is turned towards external things — that is, all the things of life which one sees, knows, does — instead of being turned inwards in order to find the deeper truth, the divine Presence. This is the first movement. You are busy with all that you do, with the people around you, the things you use; and then with life: sleeping, eating, talking, working a little, having a little fun also; and then beginning over again: sleeping, eating, etc., etc., and then it begins again. And then what this one has said, what that one has done, what one ought to do, the lesson one ought to learn, the exercise one ought to prepare; and then again whether one is keeping well, whether one is feeling fit, etc. This is what one usually thinks about.

So the first movement — and it is not so easy — is to make all that pass to the background, and let one thing come inside and in front of the consciousness as the important thing: the discovery of the very purpose of existence and life, to learn what one is, why one lives, and what there is behind all this. This is the first step: to be interested more in the cause and goal than in the manifestation. That is, the first movement is a withdrawal of the consciousness from this total identification with outward and apparent things, and a kind of inward concentration on what one wants to discover, the Truth one wants to discover. This is the first movement. ...

One can't jump over this stage. One must first find one's soul, this is absolutely indispensable, and identify oneself with it. Later one can come to the transformation.

CWM 7: 354-55

A few simple words of advice may be useful to one who has resolved to undertake it [discovery of the Divinity within].

The first and perhaps the most important point is that the mind is incapable of judging spiritual things. All those who have written on this subject have said so; but very few are those who have put it into practice. And yet, in order to proceed on the path, it is absolutely indispensable to abstain from all mental opinion and reaction.

Give up all personal seeking for comfort, satisfaction, enjoyment or happiness. Be only a burning fire for progress, take whatever comes to you as an aid to your progress and immediately make whatever progress is required.

Try to take pleasure in all you do, but never do anything for the sake of pleasure. Never get excited, nervous or agitated. Remain perfectly calm in the face of all circumstances. And yet be always alert to discover what progress you still have to make and lose no time in making it.

Never take physical happenings at their face value. They are always a clumsy attempt to express something else, the true thing which escapes our superficial understanding.

Never complain of the behaviour of anyone, unless you have the power to change in his nature what makes him act in this way; and if you have the power, change him instead of complaining.

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

for persistence and perseverance in the effort.

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

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

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

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

CWM 12: 32-35

The Mother

The supreme Shastra of the integral Yoga is the eternal Veda secret in the heart of every thinking and living being. The lotus of the eternal knowledge and the eternal perfection is a bud closed and folded up within us. It opens swiftly or gradually, petal by petal, through successive realisations, once the mind of man begins to turn towards the Eternal, once his heart, no longer compressed and confined by attachment to finite appearances, becomes enamoured, in whatever degree, of the Infinite.

CWSA 23: 53 (SABCL 20: 47)

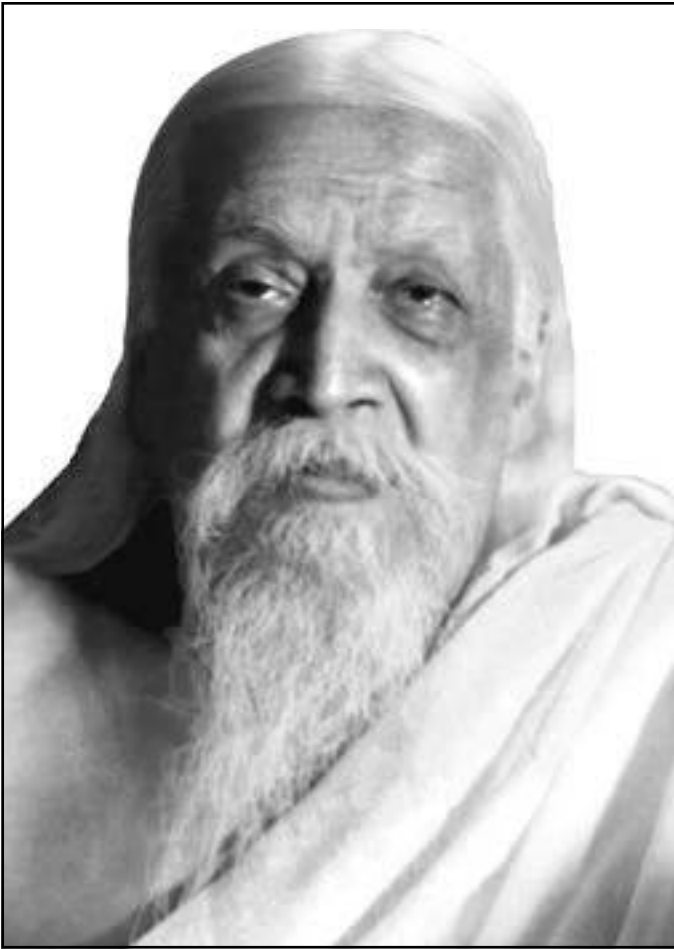
Sri Aurobindo



*Awakened to the meaning of my heart
That to feel love and oneness is to live
And this the magic of our golden change,
Is all the truth I know or seek...*

— Savitri

*Sri Aurobindo, Savitri: Last page
(The Next Step in Evolution)*



When we have passed beyond individualising, then we shall be real Persons. Ego was the helper; Ego is the bar....

Transform the divided individual into the world-personality; let all thyself be the divine. This is thy goal.

CWSA 13: 199 (SABCL 16: 377)

Sri Aurobindo

(The Next Step in Evolution)

Whole Process of Yoga Starts with Surrender

Surrender is the decision taken to hand over the responsibility of your life to the Divine. Without this decision nothing is at all possible; if you do not surrender, the Yoga is entirely out of the question. Everything else comes naturally after it, for the whole process starts with surrender. You can surrender either through knowledge or through devotion.

CWM 3: 126

There are two paths of Yoga, one of *tapasyā* (discipline), and the other of surrender. The path of *tapasyā* is arduous. Here you rely solely upon yourself, you proceed by your own strength. You ascend and achieve according to the measure of your force. There is always the danger of falling down. And once you fall, you lie broken in the abyss and there is hardly a remedy. The other path, the path of surrender, is safe and sure. It is here, however, that the Western people find their difficulty. They have been taught to fear and avoid all that threatens their personal independence. They have imbibed with their mothers' milk the sense of individuality. And surrender means giving up all that. In other words, you may follow, as Ramakrishna says, either the path of the baby monkey or that of the baby cat. The baby monkey holds to its mother in order to be carried about and it must hold firm, otherwise if it loses its grip, it falls. On the other hand, the baby cat does not hold to its mother, but is held by the mother and has no fear nor responsibility; it has nothing to do but to let the mother hold it and cry *ma ma*.

If you take up this path of surrender fully and sincerely, there is no more danger or serious difficulty. The question

is to be sincere. If you are not sincere, do not begin Yoga. If you were dealing in human affairs, then you could resort to deception; but in dealing with the Divine there is no possibility of deception anywhere. You can go on the Path safely when you are candid and open to the core and when your only end is to realise and attain the Divine and to be moved by the Divine.

CWM 3: 4-5

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

CWM 4: 373

The Mother

Secret of the Perfect Kind of Sadhana

Panacea there is, but **only one** ... the attitude of perfect *nirbhar* which is the great secret of the most perfect kind of sadhana. ...

"Nirbhar" means reliance on the Divine whatever the condition or the difficulties. "Nirbhar" when all is going well, does not mean much. It is a poise one has to take and you can grow into it.

Sri Aurobindo

Nirodbaran's Correspondence with Sri Aurobindo, Vol. II (1984 ed.) pp. 650-57

If one has within him faith in the divine grace, that the divine grace is watching over him, and that no matter what happens the divine grace is there, watching over him, one may keep this faith all one's life and always; and with this one can pass through all dangers, face all difficulties, and nothing stirs, for you have the faith and the divine grace is with you. It is an infinitely stronger, more conscious, more lasting force which does not depend upon the conditions of your physical build, does not depend upon anything except the divine grace alone, and hence it leans on the Truth and nothing can shake it.

CWM 5: 297

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

Well, when one aspires for the Force, when one asks the Divine for help, if one asks with the unshakable certitude that it will come, that it is impossible that it won't, then it

is sure to come. It is this kind... yes, this is truly an inner opening, this trustfulness. And some people are constantly in this state. When there is something to be received, they are always there to receive it. ...

If the trust is there, spontaneous, candid, unquestioning, it works better than anything else, and the results are marvellous. It is with the contradictions and doubts of the mind that one spoils everything, with this kind of notion which comes when one is in difficulties: "Oh, it is impossible! I shall never manage it. And if it is going to be aggravated, if this condition I am in, which I don't want, is going to grow still worse, if I continue to slide down farther and farther, if, if, if, if..." like that, and one builds a wall between oneself and the force one wants to receive.

CWM 6: 403-04

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

CWM 3: 83-84

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

CWM 15: 169

The Mother

Basic Requisite — Self-Consecration

But on that which as yet we know not how shall we concentrate? And yet we cannot know the Divine unless we have achieved this concentration of our being upon him. A concentration which culminates in a living realisation and the constant sense of the presence of the One in ourselves and in all of which we are aware, is what we mean in Yoga by knowledge and the effort after knowledge. It is not enough to devote ourselves by the reading of Scriptures or by the stress of philosophic reasoning to an intellectual understanding of the Divine; for at the end of our long mental labour we might know all that has been said of the Eternal, possess all that can be thought about the Infinite and yet we might not know him at all. This intellectual preparation can indeed be the first stage in a powerful Yoga, but it is not indispensable: it is not a step which all need or can be called upon to take. Yoga would be impossible, except for a very few, if the intellectual figure of knowledge arrived at by the speculative or meditative Reason were its indispensable condition or a binding preliminary.

All that the Light from above asks of us that it may begin its work is a call from the soul and a sufficient point of support in the mind. This support can be reached through an insistent idea of the Divine in the thought, a corresponding will in the dynamic parts, an aspiration, a faith, a need in the heart. Any one of these may lead or predominate, if all cannot move in unison or in an equal rhythm. The idea may be and must in the beginning be inadequate; the aspiration may be narrow and imperfect, the faith poorly illumined or even, as not surely founded on the rock of knowledge, fluctuating, uncertain, easily diminished; often even it may be

extinguished and need to be lit again with difficulty like a torch in a windy pass.

But if once there is a resolute self-consecration from deep within, if there is an awakening to the soul's call, these inadequate things can be a sufficient instrument for the divine purpose. Therefore the wise have always been unwilling to limit man's avenues towards God; they would not shut against his entry even the narrowest portal, the lowest and darkest postern, the humblest wicket-gate. Any name, any form, any symbol, any offering has been held to be sufficient **if there is the consecration along with it**; for the Divine knows himself in the heart of the seeker and accepts the sacrifice.

CWSA 23: 81-82 (SABCL 20: 74-75)

Sri Aurobindo

... the more you give yourself to the Divine the more He is with you, totally, constantly, at every minute, in all your thoughts, all your needs, and that there's no aspiration which does not receive an immediate answer; and you have the sense of a complete, constant intimacy, of a total nearness. It is as though you carried... as though the Divine were all the time with you; you walk and He walks with you, you sleep and He sleeps with you, you eat and He eats with you, you think and He thinks with you, you love and He is the love you have. But for this one must give himself entirely, totally, exclusively, reserve nothing, keep nothing for himself and not keep back anything, not disperse anything also: the least little thing in your being which is not given to the Divine is a waste; it is the wasting of your joy, something that lessens your happiness by that much, and all that you don't give to the Divine is as though you were holding it in the way of the possibility of the Divine's giving Himself to

you. You don't feel Him close to yourself, constantly with you, because you don't belong to Him, because you belong to hundreds of other things and people; in your thought, your action, your feelings, impulses... there are millions of things which you do not give Him, and that is why you don't feel Him always with you, because all these things are so many screens and walls between Him and you. But if you give Him everything, if you keep back nothing, He will be constantly and totally with you in all that you do, in all that you think, all that you feel, always, at each moment. But for this you must give yourself absolutely, keep back nothing; each little thing that you hold back is a stone you put down to build up a wall between the Divine and yourself. And then later you complain: "Oh, I don't feel Him!" What would be surprising is that you could feel Him.

CWM 7: 243

The Mother

Turn Whole Life into a Continuous And a Devoted Self-giving to the Eternal

The law of sacrifice is the common divine action that was thrown out into the world in its beginning as a symbol of the solidarity of the universe. It is by the attraction of this law that a divinising principle, a saving power descends to limit and correct and gradually to eliminate the errors of an egoistic and self-divided creation. This descent, this sacrifice of the Purusha, the Divine Soul submitting itself to Force and Matter so that it may inform and illuminate them, is the seed of redemption of this world of Inconscience and Ignorance. ...

... the true essence of sacrifice is not self-immolation, it is self-giving; its object not self-effacement, but self-fulfilment; its method not self-mortification, but a greater life, not self-mutilation, but a transformation of our natural human parts into divine members, not self-torture, but a passage from a lesser satisfaction to a greater Ananda...

The one entirely acceptable sacrifice is a last and highest and uttermost self-giving, — it is that surrender made face to face, with devotion and knowledge, freely and without any reserve to One who is at once our immanent Self, the environing constituent All, the Supreme Reality beyond this or any manifestation and, secretly, all these together, concealed everywhere, the immanent Transcendence. For to the soul that wholly gives itself to him, God also gives himself altogether. Only the one who offers his whole nature, finds the Self. Only the one who can give everything, enjoys the Divine All everywhere. Only a supreme self-abandonment attains to the Supreme. Only the sublimation by sacrifice of all that we are, can enable us to embody the Highest and live here in the immanent consciousness of the transcendent Spirit.

This, in short, is the demand made on us, that we should turn our whole life into a conscious sacrifice. Every moment and every movement of our being is to be resolved into a continuous and a devoted self-giving to the Eternal. All our actions, not less the smallest and most ordinary and trifling than the greatest and most uncommon and noble, must be performed as consecrated acts. Our individualised nature must live in the single consciousness of an inner and outer movement dedicated to Something that is beyond us and greater than our ego. No matter what the gift or to whom it is presented by us, there must be a consciousness

in the act that we are presenting it to the one divine Being in all beings. Our commonest or most grossly material actions must assume this sublimated character; when we eat, we should be conscious that we are giving our food to that Presence in us; it must be a sacred offering in a temple and the sense of a mere physical need or self-gratification must pass away from us. In any great labour, in any high discipline, in any difficult or noble enterprise, whether undertaken for ourselves, for others or for the race, it will no longer be possible to stop short at the idea of the race, of ourselves or of others. The thing we are doing must be consciously offered as a sacrifice of works, not to these, but either through them or directly to the One Godhead; the Divine Inhabitant who was hidden by these figures must be no longer hidden but ever present to our soul, our mind, our sense. The workings and results of our acts must be put in the hands of that One in the feeling that that Presence is the Infinite and Most High by whom alone our labour and our aspiration are possible. For in his being all takes place; for him all labour and aspiration are taken from us by Nature and offered on his altar. Even in those things in which Nature is herself very plainly the worker and we only the witnesses of her working and its containers and supporters, there should be the same constant memory and insistent consciousness of a work and of its divine Master. Our very inspiration and respiration, our very heart-beats can and must be made conscious in us as the living rhythm of the universal sacrifice.

CWSA 23: 106-111 (SABCL 20: 99-103)

Sri Aurobindo

Guidance on Three Aspects of Sadhana

The first true object of spiritual seeking:*

To find the Divine is indeed the first reason for seeking the spiritual Truth and the spiritual life; it is the one thing indispensable and all the rest is nothing without it. The Divine once found, to manifest Him, — that is, first of all to transform one's own limited consciousness into the Divine Consciousness, to live in the infinite Peace, Light, Love, Strength, Bliss, to become that in one's essential nature and, as a consequence, to be its vessel, channel, instrument in one's active nature. To bring into activity the principle of oneness on the material plane or to work for humanity is a mental mistranslation of the Truth — these things cannot be the first true object of spiritual seeking. We must find the Self, the Divine, then only can we know what is the work the Self or the Divine demands from us. Until then our life and action can only be a help or means towards finding the Divine and it ought not to have any other purpose. As we grow in the inner consciousness, or as the spiritual Truth of the Divine grows in us, our life and action must indeed more and more flow from that, be one with that. But to decide beforehand by our limited mental conceptions what they must be is to hamper the growth of the spiritual Truth within. As that grows we shall feel the Divine Light and Truth, the Divine Power and Force, the Divine Purity and Peace working within us, dealing with our actions as well as our consciousness, making use of them to reshape us into the Divine Image, removing the dross, substituting the pure gold of the Spirit. Only when the Divine Presence is there in us always and the consciousness transformed,

* Sub-titles added.

can we have the right to say that we are ready to manifest the Divine on the material plane. To hold up a mental ideal or principle and impose that on the inner working brings the danger of limiting ourselves to a mental realisation or of impeding or even falsifying by a halfway formation the true growth into the full communion and union with the Divine and the free and intimate outflowing of His will in our life. This is a mistake of orientation to which the mind of today is especially prone. It is far better to approach the Divine for the Peace or Light or Bliss that the realisation of Him gives than to bring in these minor things which can divert us from the one thing needful. The divinisation of the material life also as well as the inner life is part of what we see as the Divine Plan, but it can only be fulfilled by an outflowing of the inner realisation, something that grows from within outwards, not by the working out of a mental principle.

Discipline to convert the mental seeking into a spiritual experience:

You have asked what is the discipline to be followed in order to convert the mental seeking into a living spiritual experience. The first necessity is the practice of concentration of your consciousness within yourself. The ordinary human mind has an activity on the surface which veils the real Self. But there is another, a hidden consciousness within behind the surface one in which we can become aware of the real Self and of a larger deeper truth of nature, can realise the Self and liberate and transform the nature. To quiet the surface mind and begin to live within is the object of this concentration. Of this true consciousness other than the superficial there are two main centres, one in the heart (not the physical heart, but the cardiac cen-

tre in the middle of the chest), one in the head. The concentration in the heart opens within and by following this inward opening and going deep one becomes aware of the soul or psychic being, the divine element in the individual. This being unveiled begins to come forward, to govern the nature, to turn it and all its movements towards the Truth, towards the Divine, and to call down into it all that is above. It brings the consciousness of the Presence, the dedication of the being to the Highest and invites the descent into our nature of a greater Force and Consciousness which is waiting above us. To concentrate in the heart centre with the offering of oneself to the Divine and the aspiration for this inward opening and for the Presence in the heart is the first way and, if it can be done, the natural beginning; for its result once obtained makes the spiritual path far more easy and safe than if one begins the other way.

That other way is the concentration in the head, in the mental centre. This, if it brings about the silence of the surface mind, opens up an inner, larger, deeper mind within which is more capable of receiving spiritual experience and spiritual knowledge. But once concentrated here one must open the silent mental consciousness upward to all that is above mind. After a time one feels the consciousness rising upward and in the end it rises beyond the lid which has so long kept it tied in the body and finds a centre above the head where it is liberated into the Infinite. There it begins to come into contact with the universal Self, the Divine Peace, Light, Power, Knowledge, Bliss, to enter into that and become that, to feel the descent of these things into the nature. To concentrate in the head with the aspiration for quietude in the mind and the realisation of the Self and Divine above is the second way of concentration. It is im-

portant, however, to remember that the concentration of the consciousness in the head is only a preparation for its rising to the centre above; otherwise, one may get shut up in one's own mind and its experiences or at best attain only to a reflection of the Truth above instead of rising into the spiritual transcendence to live there. For some the mental concentration is easier, for some the concentration in the heart centre; some are capable of doing both alternately but to begin with the heart centre, if one can do it, is the more desirable.

Discipline with regard to the activities of the nature:

The other side of discipline is with regard to the activities of the nature, of the mind, of the life-self or vital, of the physical being. Here the principle is to accord the nature with the inner realisation so that one may not be divided into two discordant parts. There are here several disciplines or processes possible. One is to offer all the activities to the Divine and call for the inner guidance and the taking up of one's nature by a Higher Power. If there is the inward soul-opening, if the psychic being comes forward, then there is no great difficulty — there comes with it a psychic discrimination, a constant intimation, finally a governance which discloses and quietly and patiently removes all imperfections, brings the right mental and vital movements and reshapes the physical consciousness also. Another method is to stand back detached from the movements of the mind, life, physical being, to regard their activities as only a habitual formation of general Nature in the individual imposed on us by past workings, not as any part of our real being; in proportion as one succeeds in this, becomes detached, sees mind and its activities as not one-

self, life and its activities as not oneself, the body and its activities as not oneself, one becomes aware of an inner Being within us — inner mental, inner vital, inner physical — silent, calm, unbound, unattached which reflects the true Self above and can be its direct representative; from this inner silent Being proceeds a rejection of all that is to be rejected, an acceptance only of what can be kept and transformed, an inmost Will to perfection or a call to the Divine Power to do at each step what is necessary for the change of the Nature. It can also open mind, life and body to the inmost psychic entity and its guiding influence or its direct guidance. In most cases these two methods emerge and work together and finally fuse into one. But one can begin with either, the one that one feels most natural and easy to follow. ...

CWSA 29: 6-8 (SABCL 23: 516-19)

Sri Aurobindo

Work and the Right Attitude in Work

... to quiet the mind and get the spiritual experience it is necessary first to purify and prepare the nature. This sometimes takes many years. Work done with the right attitude is the easiest means for that — i.e. work done without desire or ego, rejecting all movements of desire, demand or ego when they come, done as an offering to the Divine Mother, with the remembrance of her and prayer to her to manifest her force and take up the action so that there too and not only in inner silence you can feel her presence and working.

CWSA 29: 226 (SABCL 23: 533)

Sri Aurobindo

Usually one works for one's own profit and satisfaction; instead of that, one should work to serve the Divine and express His will. (CWM 14: 323)

The Mother

To be Constantly Conscious of the Divine (Make the Divine the Living Centre of your Being)

Yoga means union with the Divine, and the union is effected through offering — it is founded on the offering of yourself to the Divine.

In the beginning you start by making this offering in a general way, as though once for all; you say, "I am the servant of the Divine; my life is given absolutely to the Divine; all my efforts are for the realisation of the Divine Life." But that is only the first step; for this is not sufficient. When the resolution has been taken, when you have decided that the whole of your life shall be given to the Divine, you have still at every moment to remember it and carry it out in all the details of your existence. You must feel at every step that you belong to the Divine; you must have the constant experience that, in whatever you think or do, it is always the Divine Consciousness that is acting through you. You have no longer anything that you can call your own; you feel everything as coming from the Divine, and you have to offer it back to its source. ...

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

its ordinary ways, engrossed in ordinary things; your entire life is taken up, an integral transformation is gradually realised in you.

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. ...

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

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

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

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 comfortable, you must understand that you are not consecrated in that part of your being. That is the way of the ordinary humanity which does not feel any need of the Divine. But for a seeker of the Divine Life it is very different. And when you have entirely realised unity with the Divine, then, if the Divine were only for a second to withdraw from you, you would simply drop dead; for the Divine is now the Life of your life, your whole existence, your single and complete support. If the Divine is not there, nothing is left.

CWM 3: 24-27

The Mother

Appendix:

Udar (an inmate of the Ashram) narrates his conversation with the Mother:

One day I asked the Mother, "I have been doing the yoga for many years but I am not *absolutely* certain how to do the yoga of Sri Aurobindo. I read all the books and try to do the yoga but I am not certain how far I have progressed." I asked the Mother to help me.

"You are doing it all wrong," She said. I became utterly nonplussed.

"But what shall I do?" I asked.

She replied, "I will do the yoga for you." I was thrilled! "What do I have to do?" I then asked.

"Give yourself over to me and I will do it for you," She said.

I asked, "How ... ?" She asked me, "Do you sincerely want to?" I answered, "yes, certainly Mother."

Then the Mother asked, "When you get up in the morning what is the first thing you do?"

I said, "I brush my teeth." She asked, "How do you brush your teeth?"

I wondered, "How?! like everybody else does."

She said, "Then you're doing it unconsciously. Instead, think of me while you are doing it. Think that I am doing it.

"Or when you are washing your face, think that I am doing it with you, or when you are eating that I am eating with you, that I am enjoying your food with you."

She added, "When you go to sleep that is the time when you should be very conscious of me. Let me put you to sleep and then the whole night you will have a conscious sleep. When you awake and begin your day you will then begin it in a more conscious way."

(Source: Udar, One of Mother's Children, p.141)

Remember Always

To be what Thou willest is to be divine.

CWM 1: 336

Every day, every moment should be an occasion for a new and completer consecration. ...

CWM 1: 80

... all suffering is the sign that the surrender is not total. Then, when you feel in you a "bang", like that, instead of saying, "Oh, this is bad" or "This circumstance is difficult," you say, "My surrender is not perfect." Then it's all right. And then you feel the *Grace* that helps you and leads you, and you go on. And one day you emerge into that peace that nothing can trouble.

CWM 15: 398

So long as you can't be in joy, a constant, calm, peaceful, luminous, invariable joy, well, it means that you have still to work to purify yourself, and sometimes work hard. But this is the sign.

It is with the sense of separation [from the origin] that pain, suffering, misery, ignorance, and all incapacities have come. It is with an absolute self-giving, self-forgetfulness in a total consecration that suffering disappears and is replaced by a **joy** which nothing can veil. ...

I am speaking of a joy which is perfect peace, shadowless light, harmony, total beauty and an irresistible power, that joy which is the divine Presence itself, in its essence, in its Will and its Realisation.

CWM 7: 401-02

The Mother

Patience and firm resolution are necessary in every method of sadhana.

Strength is all right for the strong — but aspiration and the Grace answering to it are not altogether myths; they are great realities of the spiritual life.

CWSA 29:215 (SABCL 23:530)

Sri Aurobindo

Have confidence, I am near you.

CWM 13: 70

The Mother

Rs.30.00

Vol. 50, No.12

Regd.:SSP/PY/42/2021-2023

ISSN 0972-0782

WPP No. TN/PMG/(CCR)/WPP-471/21-2023

Date of Publication: 01. 07. 2021 (Monthly)

RNI No. 22334/71



Flower on the Cover Page:

Realisation

(Significance of the Gulmohar flowers given by the Mother)

Botanical name: Delonix regia