

**All India Magazine**  
**July 2024**

**Simplicity**

A vibrant field of daisies in various colors (white, yellow, pink) with a soft, glowing background. The flowers are in sharp focus in the foreground, while the background is a soft, out-of-focus blur of green and yellow, creating a dreamy, ethereal atmosphere. The overall color palette is bright and cheerful, with a warm, golden light filtering through the scene.



**Flower on the Cover:  
Integral Simplicity**

*The simplicity that comes from perfect sincerity.  
(Significance and explanation of the flower given by the Mother)*

Botanical name: *Vittadinia triloba*

Common name: Creeping daisy

Here, I have brought you two flowers. They have two different yet very typically Indian fragrances: this one is Straightforwardness, and this is Simplicity. I have always found that this one (*Mother holds out the Simplicity*) has a cleansing fragrance: when you breathe it, ah, everything becomes clean — it's wonderful! (*Mother breathes in the flower's fragrance.*) Once I cured myself of the onset of a cold with it — this can be done when you catch it at the very beginning. It fills you completely, the nose, the throat....

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**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.

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

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# SIMPLICITY

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

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Editorial note: *There is a great beauty in simplicity. This is something we see clearly in Nature's early creations. But as evolution enters into more and more complexity with the coming of mentalised man, this simplicity is lost in the endless maze of mental ignorance. Now we stand at the crossroads of human evolution wherein this immense complexity has to give way to a divine simplicity. This issue is dedicated to this important but rare quality.*



*Divine purity: it is happy just to be, in all simplicity.*

*The Mother, CWM 14: 150*

## Simplicity: A Divine Quality

### True spirituality

I get ten-page letters telling me "spiritual experiences" — which are completely in the vital. They don't understand a thing. Even in Auroville they're like that, they don't understand.

So I wrote... (*Mother tries to recall*) what did I write?... I don't remember. *True spirituality*... I know I put *simplicity*. "True spirituality" in big letters.

I should have put *true spirituality is very simple!* (*Mother laughs*) *That's even better.*

*The Mother: Conversation with a Disciple, March 6, 1971*

### Divine Omnipotence

Just these last few days (because of all kinds of things — people, and things that happen), I have been increasingly seeing that the human concept of divine Omnipotence is the concept of an omnipotence which would operate without rhyme or reason, through a succession of whims, any old how — that's what people call "Omnipotence": being able to do the most stupid things at will.

Obviously, that doesn't quite conform to a higher Harmony(!) Yet human beings are like that: if the god they worship or the divine they want to manifest isn't willing to do, to execute whatever comes into their heads in a totally incoherent and arbitrary way, he isn't all-powerful!

I am magnifying it to make it more easily perceptible; it's not like that: they deceive themselves (if you tell them that, they protest), but they deceive themselves, and it comes down to what I've just said.

When you succeed in going into that Consciousness of Harmony (but not an individual or local harmony), a Universal Har-

mony — even ultra-universal, in which the universe is only one part — then values change completely, completely....

All things are so simple and at the same time so complex. ...

*The Mother: Conversation with a Disciple, July 5, 1967*

### **Sincerity and simplicity**

You see, it sounds like a child's prattling, because... The expression of these present experiences isn't an intellectual expression at all, and to those who don't understand that it's the experience of the physical substance, of the cells, the most material form, it quite simply sounds like a child's prattling. It's an experience as a child might have, without the complications and explanations supplied by intellectual development.

And this simplicity, this lack of complication and sophistication, is what gives these things great value, in the sense that it gives them perfect sincerity and simplicity. In anything expressed mentally, vitally, intellectually, there is always more in the form, in the word, in the expression, more than in the experience — it gets enlarged and rounded out (!) What is said is more than what is meant to be said. While here, it's the perfectly pure experience, which feels the words as a sort of shrinking, a diminishing, and at the same time as bringing in a complication that doesn't exist in the experience — the experience is very simple, very simple: it is truly pure. And anything one says is like adding something that lessens its purity and simplicity.

So, saying these things is good for oneself, it's good for someone who is in the same "state of heart," but for the public... (*Mother shakes her head*) it's doomed to incomprehension.

*The Mother: Conversation with a Disciple, Sept 17, 1966*

## Need for divine Simplicity

There is a particular aspect of the creation (a very modern aspect, maybe): a need to get out of disorder and confusion — of disharmony and confusion. A confusion, a disorder which assumes all forms, turns into struggles, pointless efforts and wasted energy. It depends on which level you stand on, but materially, in action, it means unnecessary complications, wasted energy and materials, waste of time, incomprehension, misunderstanding, confusion, disorder — what in ancient days they called deformation, *crookedness* in the Vedas (I don't know the French word for it, it's something crooked which, instead of shooting straight to the goal, weaves its way in sharp and unnecessary zigzags). It's one of the things farthest from the harmony of a purely divine action — which is something so simple.... It looks like child's play... and direct — direct, without those absurd and completely useless twists and turns. Well, it is clearly the same phenomenon: that disorder is a way to stimulate the need for pure and divine simplicity.

The body feels strongly, very strongly that everything could be so simple, so simple!

And for the being — that sort of individual aggregate — to be transformed, it needs in effect to grow simpler and simpler. All those complexities of Nature which man is now beginning to understand and study, which for the smallest thing are so complex (the smallest of our physical workings is the result of such a complex system that it's almost unthinkable... certainly it would be impossible for the human mind to think up and contrive all those things), are now being discovered by science. And it's quite plain to see that for the functioning to become divine, that is, to escape Disorder and Confusion, it must grow simpler and simpler.

*The Mother: Conversation with a Disciple, May 15, 1963*

## A rich all-embracing simplicity

In other words, Nature, or rather Nature in its effort towards expression, was compelled to have recourse to an unbelievable, almost endless complexity in order to reproduce the original Simplicity.

It brings us back to the same thing: it is that excess of complexity which makes possible a simplicity that isn't empty — a rich simplicity. An all-embracing simplicity, whereas without those complexities, simplicity is empty.

This has been my experience these last few days.

They are making discoveries like that. In anatomy, for instance, they are making discoveries for surgical treatments that are unbelievably intricate! It's the same for their division of Matter's constituents — a frightful intricacy! And all that is with the view and endeavor to express Oneness, the one Simplicity — the divine state.

Maybe it will go fast.... But the question boils down to a sufficient aspiration, sufficiently intense and effective to attract That which can transform all this: complication into Simplicity, cruelty into Love... and so forth.

It's no use complaining and saying it's a pity things are that way. They are the way they are. Why?... When things are no longer that way, we'll probably know why. Or to put it differently: if we knew why, they would no longer be that way.

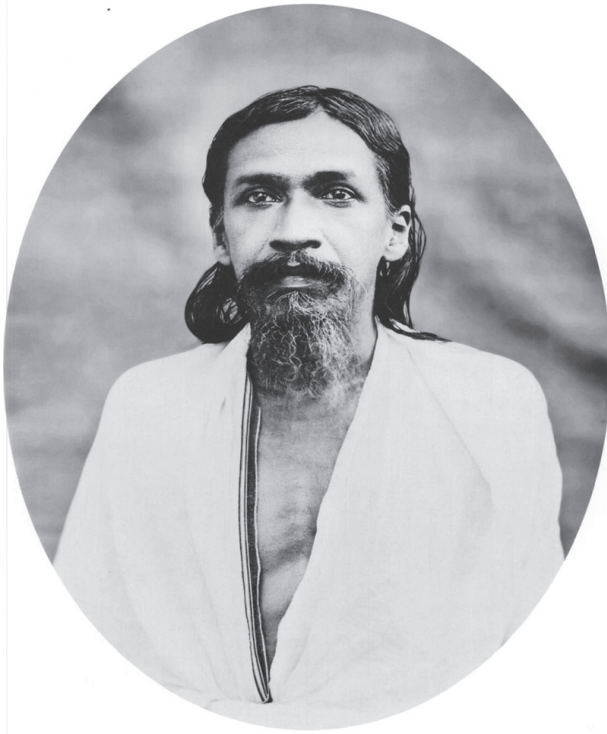
So speculations such as, "It would have been better if it had not existed," and so on, are all impractical — irrelevant, absolutely useless.

We should hasten to do what we have to do to put an end to it, that's all, that's the only practical thing.

For the body, it's very interesting. But it's a mountain, you see! A mountain of apparently tiny experiences, but in such large numbers that they become sizable.

*The Mother: Conversation with a Disciple, May 15, 1963*





*Machinery is necessary to modern humanity because of our incurable barbarism. If we must encase ourselves in a bewildering multitude of comforts and trappings, we must needs do without Art and its methods; for to dispense with simplicity and freedom is to dispense with beauty. The luxury of our ancestors was rich and even gorgeous, but never encumbered.*

CWSA 12: 474

**Sri Aurobindo**

## Simplicity and Complexity

### Sri Aurobindo wants us to be simple

A joyous spontaneity.

What's terrible is this organising mind. It's terrible! It has us so convinced that we can't do without it that it's very difficult to resist. Indeed, it has convinced all humanity. The whole so-called elite of humanity has been convinced that nothing worthwhile can be achieved without this mental organising power.

But Sri Aurobindo wants us to have the same simple joy as a blossoming rose: *Be simple, be simple, be simple*. And when I hear it or see it, it's like a rivulet of golden light, like a fragrant garden — all, all, all is open. *Be simple*.

So you see, mon petit...

These last two or three days I have been constantly seeing this for you. Then this morning it came for me, because the accumulation of work has become so tremendous that I would need ten times more time than I have merely to bring things up to date. So there I was, feeling a bit cornered; there was even a force wanting me to stop in the midst of my walk and relax, and I was resisting it with all my will — until I realised I was doing something foolish. It was the same thing, he said the same thing for me. I relaxed — and immediately everything was fine.

Essentially, we live with too much tension, don't we?

There you have it, mon petit, my message for the week.

What to do about it? Oh, that will come. But it's true, we are always too tense — always. And I know that as long as we are controlled by that admirable mind, we feel that to relax means to fall into *tamas* and unconsciousness. All these old notions remain, prolonging themselves; and there's something like the residue of one of those marvelous censors, telling you: 'Be careful, *tamas*, *tamas*! Be careful, you are dozing off — very bad, very bad.' And it's idiotic, because *tamas* is neither joyous nor luminous, while this is an im-

mediate joy and light.

*The Mother: Conversation with a Disciple, Sept 16, 1961*

### **How things get complicated**

In the necessary and unavoidable everyday contact with people, there is a growing perception that whatever the circumstance (which in itself is so simple, simpler than a child, you know — a perfect simplicity), as soon as it comes into contact with the terrestrial human atmosphere, it becomes ever so complicated! And quite unnecessarily. It seems as if the normal human occupation is to complicate all that could be extremely simple. I see this day after day, for all the small events of every day, of each and every minute. With certain consciousnesses — as soon as it touches certain consciousnesses — it is twisted, sometimes into terrible knots. Then it takes a fantastic labor to undo it — the whole thing perfectly unnecessary!

These last few days, in fact, I have been observing it all and wondering, "Why are things this way?..." It must have been the means — probably the most effective means, I don't know — to emerge from inertia, from *tamas*. If everything worked in that Simplicity, that perfect Quietness, well, human consciousness would be in such a state that it would have simply fallen asleep. It would have reached the state... not even of an animal, perhaps of a slumbering plant!

That must be the reason.

But when you see it from the other side, it's so absurd — fantastically absurd! To such a point that the meaning of every single word you utter is immediately twisted — automatically, you can't say why. With something clear and obvious, which should have gone smoothly, without hurdles, you are immediately caught in a swirl of complications.

All, all, all activities, all of life is like that.

And then there are little nuances, little differences, which

naturally assume considerable proportions in those distorted consciousnesses: they say, "Oh, now everything is fine," and then, "Oh, now everything is going wrong," but that's not true! It's always the same thing, only with little nuances.

But the true everything is fine, the true thing as it is, is so simple! So simple, so quiet, so immediate, so direct that it's almost unthinkable for human thought, much less for human sensation. Voilà.

*The Mother: Conversation with a Disciple, May 29, 1963*

### **Ordinary human attitude**

It's a rather amusing sensation, a combination of sensation and feeling, that the ordinary human attitude towards things multiplies and magnifies the difficulties to fantastic proportions; while if they simply had the true attitude — a normal attitude, quite simple, uncomplicated — ahh, all life would be much easier. For the body feels the vibrations (those very vibrations which concentrate to form a body), it feels their nature and sees that its 'normal' reaction, a peaceful and confident reaction, makes things so much easier! But as soon as this agitation of anxiety, fear, discontent comes in, the reaction of a will that 'doesn't want any of it'... oh, right away it becomes like water boiling: pff! pff! pff! like a machine. While if the difficulty is accepted with confidence and simplicity, it's reduced to its minimum, and I mean purely materially, in the material vibration itself.

*The Mother: Conversation with a Disciple, February 25, 1961*

### **Simplicity and freedom**

The best one can do is not to have any prejudices or preconceived ideas or principles — oh, moral principles, fixed codes of conduct, "what must be done" and "what must not be done," and preconceived ideas with regard to morals, with regard to progress, and then all the social and mental conventions — there's no obstacle worse than that. I know people who wasted dozens of years

trying to overcome one of those mental constructions!

If one can be like this, open — truly open in a simplicity... you know, the simplicity of ignorance that knows it's ignorant... like this (*gesture, hands open*), ready to receive all that comes... then, perhaps, something will happen.

Naturally, the thirst for progress, the thirst to know, the thirst to transform yourself, and above all the thirst for Love and Truth — if you can keep that, then you go faster. Really a thirst, a need, you know, a need.... All the rest doesn't matter, what you need is that.

To cling to what you think you know, to cling to what you feel, to cling to what you like, to cling to your habits, to cling to your so-called needs, to cling to the world as it is, that's what binds you hand and foot. You must undo all that, one thing after the other. Undo all the bonds.

This has been said thousands of times, but people go on doing the same thing.... Even those who are, you know, very eloquent, who preach this to others, they cling — they cling to their own way of seeing, their own way of feeling, their own habit of progress, which to them is the only possible one.

No more bonds — free, free, free, free! Always ready to change everything, except one thing: to aspire. That thirst.

I quite understand: some people don't like the idea of a "Divine" because it immediately gets mixed up with all the European or Western conceptions (which are dreadful), and so it makes their lives a little bit more complicated — but we don't need that! The "something" we need, the Perfection we need, the Light we need, the Love we need, the Truth we need, the supreme Perfection we need — and that's all. The formulas... the fewer the formulas, the better. A need, a need, a need... that the Thing alone can satisfy, nothing else, no half measure. That alone. And then, move on! Move on! Your path will be your path, it doesn't matter; any path, any path whatever, even the follies of today's American youth can be a path, it doesn't matter. *The Mother: Conversation with a Disciple, October 7, 1964*

## Delight of being

The delight of existing.

There comes a time when one begins to be almost ready, when one can feel in everything, every object, in every movement, in every vibration, in all the things around — not only people and conscious beings, but things, objects; not only trees and plants and living things, but simply any object one uses, the things around one — this delight, this delight of being, of being just as one is, simply being. And one sees that all this vibrates like that. One touches a thing and feels this delight. But naturally, I say, one must have followed the discipline I spoke about at the beginning; otherwise, so long as one has a desire, a preference, an attachment or affinities and repulsions and all that, one cannot — one cannot.

And so long as one finds pleasures — pleasure, well, yes, vital or physical pleasure in a thing — one cannot feel this delight. For this delight is everywhere. This delight is something very subtle. One moves in the midst of things and it is as though they were all singing to you their delight. There comes a time when it becomes very familiar in the life around you. Of course, I must admit that it is a little more difficult to feel it in human beings, because there are all their mental and vital formations which come into the field of perception and disturb it. There is too much of this kind of egoistic asperity which gets mixed with things, so it is more difficult to contact the Delight there. But even in animals one feels it; it is already a little more difficult than in plants. But in plants, in flowers, it is so wonderful! They speak all their joy, they express it. And as I said, in all familiar objects, the things around you, which you use, there is a state of consciousness in which each one is happy to be, just as it is. So at that moment one knows one has touched true Delight. And it is not conditioned. I mean it does not depend upon... it depends on nothing. It does not depend on outer circumstances, does not depend on a more or less favourable state,

it does not depend on anything: it is a communion with the *raison d'être* of the universe.

And when this comes it fills all the cells of the body. It is not even a thing which is thought out — one does no reason, does not analyse, it is not that: it is a *state* in which one lives. And when the body shares in it, it is so fresh — so fresh, so spontaneous, so... it no longer turns back upon itself, there is no longer any sense of self-observation, of self-analysis or of analysing things. All that is like a canticle of joyous vibrations, but very, very quiet, without violence, without passion, nothing of all that. It is very subtle and very intense at the same time, and when it comes, it seems that the whole universe is a marvellous harmony. Even what is to the ordinary human consciousness ugly, unpleasant, appears marvellous.

*CWM 9: 22-23*

### **Making life perfect**

Virtue has always spent its time eliminating whatever it found bad in life, and if all the virtues of the various countries of the world had been put together, very few things would remain in existence.

Virtue claims to seek perfection, but perfection is a totality. So the two movements contradict each other. A virtue that eliminates, reduces, fixes limits, and a perfection that accepts everything, rejects nothing but puts each thing in its place, obviously cannot agree.

Taking life seriously generally consists of two movements: the first one is to give importance to things that probably have none, and the second is to want life to be reduced to a certain number of qualities that are considered pure and worthy of existence. In some people — for example, those Sri Aurobindo speaks about here, the “polite” or the puritans — this virtue becomes dry, arid, grey, aggressive and it finds fault everywhere, in everything that is joyful and free and happy.

The only way to make life perfect — I mean here, life on earth, of course — is to look at it from high enough to see it as a whole, not only in its present totality, but in the whole of the past, present and future: what it has been, what it is and what it will be — one must be able to see everything at once. Because that is the only way to put everything in its place. Nothing can be eliminated, nothing *should* be eliminated, but each thing must be in its place in total harmony with all the rest. And then all these things that seem so “bad”, so “reprehensible”, so “unacceptable” to the puritan mind, would become movements of delight and freedom in a totally divine life. And then nothing would prevent us from knowing, understanding, feeling and living this wonderful laughter of the Supreme who takes infinite delight in watching Himself live infinitely.

*CWM 10: 155-56*

### **Sun of divine laughter**

This delight, this wonderful laughter that dissolves every shadow, every pain, every suffering! You only have to go deep enough within yourself to find the inner Sun, to let yourself be flooded by it; and then there is nothing but a cascade of harmonious, luminous, sunlit laughter, which leaves no room for any shadow or pain.

In fact, even the greatest difficulties, even the greatest sorrows, even the greatest physical pain — if you can look at them from that standpoint, from there, you see the unreality of the difficulty, the unreality of the sorrow, the unreality of the pain — and there is nothing but a joyful and luminous vibration.

In fact, this is the most powerful way of dissolving difficulties, overcoming sorrows and removing pain. The first two are relatively easy — I say relatively — the last one is more difficult because we are in the habit of considering the body and its feelings to be extremely concrete, positive; but it is the same thing, it is simply be-



cause we have not learnt, we are not in the habit of regarding our body as something fluid, plastic, uncertain, malleable. We have not learnt to bring into it this luminous laughter that dissolves all darkness, all difficulty, all discord, all disharmony, everything that jars, that weeps and wails.

And this Sun, this Sun of divine laughter is at the centre of all things, the truth of all things: we must learn to see it, to feel it, to live it.

CWM 10: 156

### **Laugh with the Lord**

As soon as the atmosphere becomes grave you can be sure that something is wrong, that there is a troubling influence, an old habit trying to reassert itself, which should not be accepted. All this regret, all this remorse, the feeling of being unworthy, of being at fault — and then one step further and you have the sense of sin. Oh! To me it all seems to belong to another age, an age of darkness.

But everything that persists, that tries to cling and endure, all these prohibitions and this habit of cutting life in two — into small things and big things, the sacred and the profane.... “What!” say the people who profess to follow a spiritual life, “how can you make such little things, such insignificant things the object of spiritual experience?” And yet this is an experience that becomes more and more concrete and real, even materially; it’s not that there are “some things” where the Lord is and “some things” where He is not. The Lord is always there. He takes nothing seriously, everything amuses Him and He plays with you, if you know how to play. You do not know how to play, people do not know how to play. But how well He knows how to play! How well He plays! With everything, with the smallest things: you have some things to put on the table? Don’t feel that you have to think and arrange, no, let’s play: let’s put this one here and that one there,

and this one like that. And then another time it's different again....  
What a good game and such fun!

So, it is agreed, we shall try to learn how to laugh with the Lord.

CWM 10: 156-57

### **Be Simple, be Simple**

You know, we are surrounded by complications, but there is always a place where it all opens out simple and straight—this is a fact of my experience. You go around in circles, seeking, working at it, and you feel stuck; then something in the inner attitude gives way, and all of a sudden it opens out — quite simply.

I have had this experience very often. So I have asked Sri Aurobindo to give it to you.

And he says repeatedly, insistently: *Be simple, be simple. Say simply what you feel. Be simple, be simple*, insistently. These are only words, but as a matter of fact, when he spoke these words it was like a path of light opening up, and everything became very simple: 'Just take one step after another, that's all we have to do!'—that's how it seemed to me.

It's curious, all the complications seemed to be there (*Mother touches her temples*), very complicated and very difficult to adjust; and then when he said, Be simple — how strange — it was like a light coming from his eyes, as if one had suddenly emerged into a garden of light.

It gave that impression — like a garden bathed in light.

Such great insistence on the simple thing: say simply what you see or what you know — simple, simple. A simplicity... it was altogether the impression of a joyous garden.

*Be simple, be simple.*

The complications are there (*same gesture*), it is hard and complicated — and then a door opens: *Be simple*.

As if there were too much mental tension: something here at

the temples. (*silence*)

I have to face a similar difficulty, mind you, although it's on another level. There is such a tremendous accumulation of people to see, things to do, questions to be resolved — everything. The accumulation is so tightly packed — so compact! Too compact for the life — for the hours, the time, the forces — of an ordinary body. Yet behind it all, there is a sort of constant 'active immobility,' in the sense that the consciousness has the impression of being immobile, of being borne along on the stream of progress and evolution. But this immobility.... If I should try to do what I have to do, you know, everything I have to do, well... it becomes impossible, things clog up, it gets painful. And here his answer is the same: *Be simple, be simple.*

This morning when I was 'walking,' the program of the day and the work ahead of me was so formidable that I felt it to be impossible. And yet simultaneously there was this... immobile inner position in me; as soon as I stop my movement of formation and action, it becomes like a dance of joy: all the cells vibrating (there is a sort of vivacity, and an extraordinary music), all the cells vibrant with the joy of the Presence — the divine Presence. But when I see the outside world entering and attacking, well... this joy doesn't exactly disappear, but it retreats. And the result is that I always feel like sitting down and keeping still — when I can do that it is marvelous. But of course, all the suggestions from outside come in: suggestions of helplessness and old age, of wear and tear, of diminishing power, all that — and I know positively that it's false. But calm in the body is indispensable. Well, for me also Sri Aurobindo's answer is always the same: *Be simple, be simple, very simple.*

*The Mother: Conversation with a Disciple, September 16, 1961*



*Above all the complication of so-called human wisdom  
there is the luminous simplicity of the Divine Grace ready  
to act if we allow it to act.*

*Life could be quite simple and easy if man's mind did not  
introduce in it so many useless complications.*

*Once the mind has started its working, it hampers  
the action of the Grace.*

CWM 14: 344

**The Mother**

## Cultivating Simplicity

### Live without quarreling

One can live without quarrelling. It seems strange to say this because as things are, it would seem, on the contrary, that life is made for quarrelling in the sense that the main occupation of people who are together is to quarrel, overtly or covertly. You do not always come to words, you do not always come to blows — fortunately — but you are in a state of perpetual irritation within because you do not find around you the perfection that you would yourself wish to realise, and which you find rather difficult to realise — but you find it entirely natural that others should realise it.

“How can they be like that?...” You forget how difficult you find it in yourself not to be “like that”!

Try, you will see.

Look upon everything with a benevolent smile. Take all the things which irritate you as a lesson for yourself and your life will be more peaceful and more effective as well, for a great percentage of your energy certainly goes to waste in the irritation you feel when you do not find in others the perfection that you would like to realise in yourself.

You stop short at the perfection that others should realise and you are seldom conscious of the goal you should be pursuing yourself. If you are conscious of it, well then, begin with the work which is given to you, that is to say, realise what you have to do and do not concern yourself with what others do, because, after all, it is not your business. And the best way to the true attitude is simply to say, “All those around me, all the circumstances of my life, all the people near me, are a mirror held up to me by the Divine Consciousness to show me the progress I must make. Everything that shocks me in others means a work I have to do in myself.”

And perhaps if one carried true perfection in oneself, one would discover it more often in others.

*CWM 10: 22-23*

## **When one has a little time**

How often there is a kind of emptiness in the course of life, an unoccupied moment, a few minutes, sometimes more. And what do you do? Immediately you try to distract yourself, and you invent some foolishness or other to pass your time. That is a common fact. All men, from the youngest to the oldest, spend most of their time in trying not to be bored. Their pet aversion is boredom and the way to escape from boredom is to act foolishly.

Well, there is a better way than that — to remember.

When you have a little time, whether it is one hour or a few minutes, tell yourself, “At last, I have some time to concentrate, to collect myself, to relive the purpose of my life, to offer myself to the True and the Eternal.” If you took care to do this each time you are not harassed by outer circumstances, you would find out that you were advancing very quickly on the path. Instead of wasting your time in chattering, in doing useless things, reading things that lower the consciousness — to choose only the best cases, I am not speaking of other imbecilities which are much more serious — instead of trying to make yourself giddy, to make time, that is already so short, still shorter only to realise at the end of your life that you have lost three-quarters of your chance — then you want to put in double time, but that does not work — it is better to be moderate, balanced, patient, quiet, but never to lose an opportunity that is given to you, that is to say, to utilise for the true purpose the unoccupied moment before you.

When you have nothing to do, you become restless, you run about, you meet friends, you take a walk, to speak only of the best; I am not referring to things that are obviously not to be done. Instead of that, sit down quietly before the sky, before the sea or under trees, whatever is possible (here you have all of them) and try to realise one of these things — to understand why you live, to learn how you must live, to ponder over what you want to do and

what should be done, what is the best way of escaping from the ignorance and falsehood and pain in which you live.

*CWM 3: 250-51*

## **Happiness**

One of these verses is very beautiful. We could translate it like this: “Happy is he who possesses nothing, he will partake of the delight of the radiant gods.” To possess nothing does not at all mean not to make use of anything, not to have anything at one’s disposal. “Happy is he who possesses nothing”: he is someone who has no sense of possession, who can make use of things when they come to him, knowing that they are not his, that they belong to the Supreme, and who, for the same reason, does not regret it when things leave him; he finds it quite natural that the Lord who gave him these things should take them away from him for others to enjoy. Such a man finds equal joy in the use of things as in the absence of things. When you have them at your disposal, you receive them as a gift of Grace and when they leave you, when they have been taken away from you, you live in the joy of destitution. For it is the sense of ownership that makes you cling to things, makes you their slave, otherwise one could live in constant joy and in the ceaseless movement of things that come and go and pass, that bring with them both the sense of fullness when they are there and, when they go, the delight of detachment.

Delight! Delight means to live in the Truth, to live in communion with Eternity, with the true Life, the Light that never fails. Delight means to be free, free with the true Freedom, the Freedom of the constant, invariable union with the Divine Will.

Gods are those that are immortal, who are not bound to the vicissitudes of material life in all its narrowness, pettiness, unreality and falsehood.

Gods are those who are turned to the Light, who live in the Power and the Knowledge; that is what the Buddha means, he

does not mean the gods of religion. They are beings who have the divine nature, who may live in human bodies, but free from ignorance and falsehood.

When you no longer possess anything, you can become as vast as the universe.

*CWM 3: 253-54*

### **To be wise**

It always seems to me that the reasons usually given for becoming wise are poor reasons: “Don’t do this, it will bring you suffering; don’t do that, it will give birth to fear in you”... and the consciousness dries up more and more, it hardens, because it is afraid of grief, afraid of pain.

I think it would be better to say that there is a certain state of consciousness — which one can acquire by aspiration and a persistent inner effort — in which joy is unmixed and light shadowless, where all possibility of fear disappears. It is the state in which one does not live for oneself but where whatever one does, whatever one feels, all movements are an offering made to the Supreme, in an absolute trust, freeing oneself of all responsibility for oneself, handing over to Him all this burden which is no longer a burden.

It is an inexpressible joy not to have any responsibility for oneself, no longer to think of oneself. It is so dull and monotonous and insipid to be thinking of oneself, to be worrying about what to do and what not to do, what will be good for you and what will be bad for you, what to shun and what to pursue — oh, how wearisome it is! But when one lives like this, quite open, like a flower blossoming in the sun before the Supreme Consciousness, the Supreme Wisdom, the Supreme Light, the Supreme Love, which knows all, which can do all, which takes charge of you and you have no more worries — that is the ideal condition.

And why is it not done?

One does not think of it, one forgets to do it, the old habits come back. And above all, behind, hidden somewhere in the incon-



scient or even in the subconscious, there is this insidious doubt that whispers in your ear: “Oh! if you are not careful, some misfortune will happen to you. If you forget to watch over yourself, you do not know what may happen”— and you are so silly, so silly, so obscure, so stupid that you listen and you begin to pay attention to yourself and everything is ruined.

You have to begin all over again to infuse into your cells a little wisdom, a little common sense and learn once more not to worry.

*CWM 3: 256-57*

### **Speak only indispensable words**

I suggest that every one of you should try — oh! not for long, just for one hour a day — to say nothing but the absolutely indispensable words. Not one more, not one less.

Take one hour of your life, the one which is most convenient for you, and during that time observe yourself closely and say only the absolutely indispensable words.

At the outset, the first difficulty will be to know what is absolutely indispensable and what is not. It is already a study in itself and every day you will do better.

Next, you will see that so long as one says nothing, it is not difficult to remain absolutely silent, but as soon as you begin to speak, always or almost always you say two or three or ten or twenty useless words which it was not at all necessary to say.

*CWM 3: 259*

### **Be good for the sake of being good**

Yes, you must not cherish the illusion that if you want to follow the straight path, if you are modest, if you seek purity, if you are disinterested, if you want to lead a solitary existence and have a clear judgment, things will become easy.... It is quite the contrary! When you begin to advance towards inner and outer perfection, the difficulties start at the same time.

I have very often heard people saying, “Oh! now that I am trying to be good, everybody seems to be bad to me!” But this is precisely to teach you that one should not be good with an interested motive, one should not be good so that others will be good to you — one must be good for the sake of being good.

It is always the same lesson: one must do as well as one can, the best one can, but without expecting a result, without doing it with a view to the result. Just this attitude, to expect a reward for a good action — to become good because one thinks that this will make life easier — takes away all value from the good action.

You must be good for the love of goodness, you must be just for the love of justice, you must be pure for the love of purity and you must be disinterested for the love of disinterestedness; then you are sure to advance on the way.

*CWM 3: 264-65*

### **Freedom and bliss**

The Buddha said or has been made to say that when one is free from all desire, one necessarily enters into infinite bliss. This bliss may be a little dry and anyway it does not seem to me to be the quickest way.

If at the outset one were to seize the problem bodily, jump into it with courage and determination and, instead of undertaking a long, arduous, painful, disappointing hunt after desires, one gives oneself simply, totally, unconditionally, if one surrenders to the Supreme Reality, to the Supreme Will, to the Supreme Being, putting oneself entirely in His hands, in an upsurge of the whole being and all the elements of the being, without calculating, that would be the swiftest and the most radical way to get rid of the ego. People will say that it is difficult to do it, but at least a warmth is there, an ardour, an enthusiasm, a light, a beauty, an ardent and creative life.

It is true that without desire nothing much remains to sustain the ego and one has the impression that the consciousness be-

comes so hardened that if the ego crumbles into dust, then something of one's self also falls into dust and one is ready to enter into a Nirvana which is annihilation pure and simple.

But what we consider here as the true Nirvana is the disappearance of the ego into the splendour of the Supreme. And this way is what I call the positive way, the self-giving that is integral, total, perfect, without reserve, without bargaining. In the mere fact of not thinking of oneself, not existing for oneself, referring nothing to oneself, thinking only of what is supremely beautiful, luminous, delightful, powerful, compassionate and infinite, there is such a profound delight that nothing can be compared to it.

This is the only thing that deserves... that is worthy of being attempted. All the rest is only marking time.

The difference is between climbing a mountain by going round and round, slowly, laboriously, step by step, for hundreds of years, and spreading invisible wings and soaring straight to the summit.

*CWM 3: 268-69*

## **Living alone**

It has been noticed that most people who live alone in the forest become friendly with all the animals and plants around them; but it is not at all the fact of being all alone that gives you the power of entering into an inner contemplation and living in communion with the Supreme Truth. Perhaps it is easier, when by force of circumstance you have nothing else to do, but I am not convinced of it. One can always invent occupations and it seems to me, according to my experience of life, that if one succeeds in subduing one's nature in the midst of difficulties, if one endeavours to be all alone within oneself with the eternal Presence, while keeping the same surroundings which the Grace has given us, the realisation which one obtains then is infinitely more true, more profound, more lasting.

To run away from difficulties in order to conquer them is not

a solution. It is very attractive. In those who seek the spiritual life, there is something which says, "Oh! to sit down under a tree, all alone, to remain in meditation, not to have the temptation to speak or act, how fine it must be!" It is because there is a very strong formation in this direction, but it is very illusory.

The best meditations are those that one has all of a sudden, because they take possession of you as an imperative necessity. You have no choice but to concentrate, to meditate, to look beyond the appearances. And it is not necessarily in the solitude of the forest that it seizes you, it happens when something in you is ready, when the time has come, when the true need is there, when the Grace is with you.

It seems to me that humanity has made some progress and the true victory must be won in life itself.

You must know how to live alone with the Eternal and Infinite in the midst of all circumstances. You must know how to be free, with the Supreme as your companion, in the midst of all occupations. That is indeed the true victory.

*CWM 3: 276*

### **Advancing on the Path**

If you are worried, grieved or even discouraged by the malicious stupidities that men say about you, you will not advance far on the way. And such things come to you, not because you are unlucky or because your lot is not a happy one, but because, on the contrary, the divine Consciousness and the divine Grace take your resolution seriously and allow the circumstances to become a touchstone on your way, to see whether your resolution is sincere and whether you are strong enough to face the difficulties.

Therefore, if anyone sneers at you or says something that is not very charitable, the first thing you should do is to look within yourself for whatever weakness or imperfection has allowed such a thing to happen and not to be disconsolate, indignant or ag-

grieved, because people do not appreciate you at what you think to be your true value; on the contrary, you must be thankful to the divine Grace for having pointed out to you the weakness or imperfection or deformation that you must correct.

Therefore, instead of being unhappy, you can be fully satisfied and derive advantage, a great advantage from the harm that was intended against you.

*CUM 3: 282*

### **Stepping back**

Most of you live on the surface of your being, exposed to the touch of external influences. You live almost projected, as it were, outside your own body, and when you meet some unpleasant being similarly projected you get upset. The whole trouble arises out of your not being accustomed to stepping back. You must always step back into yourself — learn to go deep within — step back and you will be safe. Do not lend yourself to the superficial forces which move in the outside world. Even if you are in a hurry to do something, step back for a while and you will discover to your surprise how much sooner and with what greater success your work can be done. If someone is angry with you, do not be caught in his vibrations but simply step back and his anger, finding no support or response, will vanish. Always keep your peace, resist all temptation to lose it. Never decide anything without stepping back, never speak a word without stepping back, never throw yourself into action without stepping back. All that belongs to the ordinary world is impermanent and fugitive, so there is nothing in it worth getting upset about. What is lasting, eternal, immortal and infinite — that indeed is worth having, worth conquering, worth possessing. It is Divine Light, Divine Love, Divine Life — it is also Supreme Peace, Perfect Joy and All-Mastery upon earth with the Complete Manifestation as the crowning. When you get the sense of the relativity of things, then whatever happens you can

step back and look; you can remain quiet and call on the Divine Force and wait for an answer. Then you will know exactly what to do. Remember, therefore, that you cannot receive the answer before you are very peaceful. Practise that inner peace, make at least a small beginning and go on in your practice until it becomes a habit with you.

CWM 3: 160

### **True attitude**

The true attitude is neither to be an ascetic nor to indulge in desire. The true attitude is to take in all simplicity what I give, to be perfectly satisfied with it and neither to ask for more nor to refuse what is given. This is the true example to give, the one that can help the others towards a better understanding of their duties as sadhaks.

CWM 14: 47

### **We have to be patient**

You can't imagine how, as you go forward and as all that Consciousness, in fact, grows more and more alive, true and constant, how at first you feel you are a rotten bundle of insincerity, hypocrisy, lack of faith, doubt, stupidity. Because as (how can I explain?... ) as the balance changes between the parts of the being and as the luminous part increases, the rest grows more and more inadequate and intolerable. Then you are really utterly disgusted (there was a time when it used to hurt me, long ago — not so long ago, but anyway long enough, a few years ago), and more and more there is the movement (a very spontaneous and simple movement, very complete): "I can't do anything about it. It's impossible, I can't, it's such a colossal work that it's impossible — Lord, do it for me." And when you do this with the simplicity of a child (*gesture of offering*), really like this, you know, really convinced that you cannot do it, "It's not possible, I'll never be able to

do it — do it for me," it's wonderful!... Oh, He does it, mon petit, you're dumbfounded afterwards: "How come!..." There are lots of things that... prrt! vanish and never come back again — finished. After a time, you wonder, "How can that be?! It was there...." Just like that, prrt! in a second.

But as long as there is personal effort, it's... oof! it's like the man who rolls his barrel uphill, and down it rolls again every minute.

But it must be spontaneous, not as a calculation, it mustn't be done with the idea, "It's going to work." It must truly be done with the sense of your complete helplessness and of the very formidable dimension of the task that... "Oh, please do it Yourself; I can't — it's not possible."

Of course, very philosophical or learned people will pity you, but personally I don't care! I don't care. I am not a philosopher, I am not a scholar, I am not a savant, and I declare it very loudly: neither a philosopher nor a scholar nor a savant. And no pretension. Nor a littérateur, nor an artist — I am nothing at all. I am truly convinced of this. And it's absolutely unimportant — that's perfection for human beings.

There is no greater joy than to know that you can do nothing and are absolutely helpless, that you're not the one who does, and that what little is done — little or big, it doesn't matter — is done by the Lord; and the responsibility is fully His. That makes you happy. With that, you are happy.

*The Mother: Conversation with a Disciple, August 11, 1964*

## **To be humble**

True humility consists in knowing that the Supreme Consciousness, the Supreme Will alone exists and that the I is not.

To be humble means for the mind, the vital and the body never to forget that *without the Divine* they know nothing, are nothing and can do nothing; without the Divine they are nothing

but ignorance, chaos and impotence. The Divine alone is Truth, Life, Power, Love, Felicity.

Therefore the mind, the vital, and the body must learn and feel, once and for all, that they are wholly incapable of understanding and judging the Divine, not only in his essence but also in his action and manifestation.

This is the only true humility and with it come quiet and peace.

This is also the surest shield against all hostile attack. Indeed, in the human being it is always the door of pride at which the Adversary knocks, for it is this door which opens to let him enter.

Whatever is your personal value or even your individual realisation, the first quality required in yoga is *humility*.

A true and sincere humility is our safeguard — it is the surest way to the indispensable dissolution of the ego.

Humility and sincerity are the best safeguards. Without them each step is a danger; with them the victory is certain.

*CWM 14: 152-53*

### **To cast of one's ego**

The whole creation, the whole universal manifestation appears at best like a very bad joke if it only comes to this. Why begin at all if it is only to get out of it! What is the use of having struggled so much, suffered so much, of having created something which, at least in its external appearance, is so tragic and dramatic, if it is simply to teach you how to get out of it — it would have been better not to begin at all.

But if one goes to the very depth of things, if, stripped not only of all egoism but also of the ego, one gives oneself totally, without reserve, so completely and disinterestedly that one becomes capable of understanding the plan of the Lord, then one knows that it is *not* a bad joke, *not* a tortuous path by which you return, a little battered, to the starting-point; on the contrary, it is to teach the entire creation the delight of being, the beauty of be-



ing, the greatness of being, the majesty of a sublime life, and the perpetual growth, perpetually progressive, of that delight, that beauty, that greatness. Then everything has a meaning, then one no longer regrets having struggled and suffered, one has only the enthusiasm to realise the divine goal, and one plunges headlong into the realisation with the *certitude* of the goal and victory.

But to know that, one must stop being egoistic, being a separate person turned in on oneself and cut off from the supreme origin. That is what must be done: to cast off one's ego. Then one can know the true goal — and this is the only way!

To cast off one's ego, to let it fall off like a useless garment.

The result is worth the efforts that must be made. And then, one is not all alone on the way. One is helped, if one has trust.

If you have had even a second's contact with the Grace — that marvellous Grace which carries you along, speeds you on the path, even makes you forget that you have to hurry — if you have had only a second's contact with that, then you can strive not to forget. And with the candour of a child, the simplicity of a child for whom there are no complications, give yourself to that Grace and let it do everything.

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

That is the best way.

CWM 9: 426-27

### **Sign of true advancement**

Not necessarily. It is not necessarily someone who has some experience who is most advanced. He lacks an element of simplicity, modesty, and the plasticity that comes from the fact that one is not yet totally developed. As one grows, something crystal-

lises in the head; it gets more and more fixed and unless you try very hard you finish by becoming fossilised. This is what usually happens to people, particularly those who have tried for some realisation and succeeded in it or those who have come to believe they have reached the goal. In any case, it was their personal goal. They have reached it, they have attained. It is done, they remain there; they settle there, they say "that's it." And they do no more any more. So, after that they may live ten years more, or twenty or thirty, they will not budge. They are there, they will stay there. Such people lack all the suppleness of stuff that's necessary for going further and progressing. They are stuck. They are very good objects to be put in a museum, but not for doing work. They are like samples to show what can be done but they are not the stuff to do more. For me personally, I admit I prefer for my work someone who knows very little, has not laboured too much, but who has a great aspiration, much goodwill and who feels in himself this flame, this need for progressing. He may know very little, may have realised still less, but if he has that within him, it is good stuff with which one can go very far, much further. For one must know the way (it is the same thing here as with your library), one must know the way to go. Well, usually in life when you climb a mountain or go to an unknown land, you look for a man who has been there, who is a guide, and you ask him to direct you. It is the same thing. If you follow the guide, you can go much quicker than someone else who has made much effort, found his own way and is usually quite proud of himself and, in any case, has the feeling of having come to the end, reached the goal he aimed at, finally arrived — and he stops, settles down. And he does not move any more.

CWM 5: 285

**The Mother**



"What is the Divine?"  
— a smiling and luminous Immensity.

*The Mother: Conversation with a Disciple, June 14, 1967*

# Learn to be Quiet

## Remain silent

*Sweet Mother, To what extent should one be wary of personal decisions and judgments? Is it the will or the need in one's surroundings that determines what one should do? But neither the one nor the other should determine it. Should one remain passive?*

No, obey only the divine will.

*How can one know what you want in every detail of practical daily life?*

Learn to be quiet (make your mind quiet) and listen in the silence.

*CWM 19: 20*

From the point of view of individual development and for those who are still at the beginning of the path, to know how to remain silent before what one does not understand is one of the things which would help most in the progress — to know how to remain silent, not only externally, without uttering a word, but also to know how to be silent within, so that the mind does not assert its ignorance with its usual presumptuousness, does not try to understand with an instrument that is incapable of understanding, that it may know its own weakness and open simply, quietly, waiting until the time has come for it to receive the light, because only the Light, the true Light, can give it understanding. It is not all that it has learnt nor all that it has observed nor all its so-called experience of life, it is something else which is completely beyond it. And until this something else — which is the expression of the Grace — manifests within it, if, very quietly, very modestly the mind remains silent and does not try to understand and, above all, to judge, things would go *much* faster.

The noise made by all the words, all the ideas in your head is

so deafening that it prevents you from hearing the truth when it wants to manifest.

To learn to be quiet and silent... When you have a problem to solve, instead of turning over in your head all the possibilities, all the consequences, all the possible things one should or should not do, if you remain quiet with an aspiration for goodwill, if possible a need for goodwill, the solution comes very quickly. And as you are silent you are able to hear it.

When you are caught in a difficulty, try this method: instead of becoming agitated, turning over all the ideas and actively seeking solutions, of worrying, fretting, running here and there inside your head — I don't mean externally, for externally you probably have enough common sense not to do that! but inside, in your head — *remain quiet*. And according to your nature, with ardour or peace, with intensity or widening or with all these together, implore the Light and wait for it to come.

In this way the path would be considerably shortened.

*CWM 9: 422-23*

**The Mother**

### **Do not overstrain**

Yes, it is a mistake to overstrain as there is a reaction afterwards. If there is energy, all must not be spent, some must be stored up so as to increase the permanent strength of the system.

Overstraining brings inertia up. Everybody has inertia in his nature: the question is of its greater or lesser operation.

When you feel tired, don't overstrain yourself but rest — doing only your ordinary work; restlessly doing something or other all the time is not the way to cure it. To be quiet without and within is what is needed when there is this sense of fatigue. There is always a strength near you which you can call in and it will remove these things, but you must learn to be quiet in order to receive it.

*CWSA 29: 274*

## Receiving the Divine Power

To be able to receive the Divine Power and let it act through you in the things of the outward life, there are three necessary conditions:

1) Quietude, equality — not to be disturbed by anything that happens, to keep the mind still and firm, seeing the play of forces, but itself tranquil.

2) Absolute faith — faith that what is for the best will happen, but also that if one can make oneself a true instrument, the fruit will be that which one's will guided by the Divine Light sees as the thing to be done — *kartavyam karma*.

3) Receptivity — the power to receive the Divine Force and to feel its presence and the presence of the Mother in it and allow it to work, guiding one's sight and will and action. If this power and presence can be felt and this plasticity made the habit of the consciousness in action, — but plasticity to the Divine Force alone without bringing in any foreign element, — the eventual result is sure.

CWSA 29: 266

## In times of confusion

When there is the confusion or wrong condition, then you have to call down the quiet, to try to get back to the true position, not listening to the wrong thoughts but rejecting them. If you cannot do that at once, still remain as quiet as possible and aspire and offer yourself. The Divine Force can always do more than the personal effort; so the one thing is to get quiet and call it down or back to the front — for it is always there behind or above you.

CWSA 29: 272

It is the last reaction of the physical consciousness [*feeling dull, weak, confused*] that must be got rid of — in its place there must

be at such times peace constant so that you do not get restless or feel troubled. It is not possible to be always in the best condition of consciousness or sadhana — there are times when the physical needs to be merely quiet, the aspiration becomes quiescent, there is no sense of the Divine, no forward movement. Properly taken, these periods become periods of rest and assimilation but for that the consciousness must learn to be quiet, not to be troubled or thrown back into a bad or uneasy condition — it must remain at repose until the movement is resumed in a quiet peace. Or at least the greater part of the consciousness must feel like that — not even in these periods dull, weak or confused. This feeling seems to be gaining on you, but the physical consciousness or at least a part of it is still uneasy during such intervals. It must go on receiving more of the light and peace till this can no longer happen.

CWSA 31: 373-74

Sri Aurobindo



### Quiet Mind

*The best way to learn.*

*(Significance and explanation of the flower given by the Mother)*

Botanical name: Nerium oleander (white)

## Sutras for Life

There's no need to be in a hurry — no need to be in a hurry, no need to be impatient; there's no use. No use in being impatient, it only makes the heart go sour — perfectly useless.

When the time has come, it will have come; when the Lord wants it, He will want it: it will be, and that's that. We always worry too much — or rather, all our worries are an onion skin over His work.

*The Mother: Conversation with a Disciple, August 11, 1964*

We ought to be in a constant state of aspiration, but when we cannot aspire let us pray with the simplicity of a child.

*CWM 15: 208*

Humility: adorable in its simplicity.

\*

The greater beings are always the most simple and modest.

\*

Correct self-evaluation: simple and modest,  
does not try to push itself forward.

\*

Modesty is satisfied with its own charm and does not  
draw attention to itself.

\*

The more we advance on the Path, the more modest we become and the more we see that we have done nothing in comparison to what remains to be done.

\*

We must learn that whatever our efforts, whatever our struggles, whatever even our victories, compared with the path still to be traversed what we have already travelled is nothing.

\*

Do not think yourself big or small, very important or very un-



important; for we are nothing in ourselves. We must only live to become what the Divine wills of us.

CWM 14: 151-52

## Simplicity

There is a great beauty in simplicity.

\*

Spirituality is supreme simplicity.

\*

True spirituality is it *very* simple.

\*

To express Harmony, of all things Simplicity is the best.

CWM 14: 150-52

Never worry.

Do with sincerity all you do and leave the results to the Divine's care.

\*

Don't foresee difficulties — it does not help to surmount them and helps them to come.

It is better not to worry about progress, because worrying only hinders the advance. It is better to open in all trust and simplicity to the divine help and to have faith in the Victory.

Live in the consciousness of the Eternal and you will have no more worry.

CWM 14: 222-23

**The Mother**

*Let us live each day without anxiety. Why worry beforehand about something that will probably never happen?*

\*

*Anxiety is a lack of confidence in the Divine's Grace, the unmistakable sign that the consecration is not complete and perfect.*

CWM 14: 222-23

**The Mother**



*Let the Truth be your master and your guide.*

*We aspire for the Truth and its triumph in our being and our activities.*

*Let the aspiration for the Truth be the dynamism of our efforts.*

*O Truth! We want to be guided by Thee. May Thy reign come upon earth.*

*CWM 12: 113*

**The Mother**

*Our Gratitude and consecration to the  
Mother and Sri Aurobindo*

**Sri Aurobindo Society, Nairobi Centre, Kenya**



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Vol. 53, No.12 Regd.:SSP/PY/42/2024-2026

ISSN 0972-0782

WPP No. TN/PMG/(CCR)/WPP-471/24-2026

**Date of Publication: 01.07.2024 (Monthly)**

RNI No. 22334/71

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Who will come with me? Who will climb with me?  
Wade through the brook and tramp through the snow?*  
~Sri Aurobindo



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