

# REJECTION

## IN THE INTEGRAL YOGA

### PART II



*A compilation from the works of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother*

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Sri Aurobindo and the Mother**



*Sri Aurobindo Society*

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**AUROPUBLICATIONS**

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POWERFUL THOUGHTS, INSPIRING VISION

# **REJECTION**

## **In the Integral Yoga**

### **Part II**

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

...

rejection of the movements of the lower nature

— rejection of the mind's ideas, opinions, preferences,  
habits, constructions,

so that the true knowledge may find free room in a silent  
mind,

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

— rejection of the physical nature's stupidity, doubt,  
disbelief, obscurity, obstinacy, pettiness, laziness,  
unwillingness to change, tamas, so that the true stability  
of Light, Power, Ananda may establish itself in a body  
growing always more divine; ..." (CWSA 32: 6)

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## Foreword

All over the world, there is a growing interest in Spirituality and Yoga. There is a search for the true meaning and purpose of life, for deeper solutions to the problems which confront us all, and how we can contribute to the evolutionary change and progress.

In this search, more and more persons are turning to Sri Aurobindo and the Mother for guidance and enlightenment. But in their voluminous literature, they do not know where to find the answers they are looking for. In this regard the Mother has said,

“It is not by books that Sri Aurobindo ought to be studied but by subjects—what he has said on the Divine, on Unity, on religion, on evolution, on education, on self perfection, on supermind, etc., etc.” (CWM 12: 206)

On another occasion she said:

“If you want to know what Sri Aurobindo has said on a given subject, you must at least read all he has written on that subject. You will then see that he seems to have said the most contradictory things. But when one has read everything and understood a little, one sees that all the contradictions complement one another and are organised and unified in an integral synthesis.” (CWM 16: 309-310)

While there are several compilations which are now available, many sincere spiritual seekers have felt the need of Comprehensive Compilations from Sri Aurobindo and the Mother on specific subjects, where the contents are further organised into sub-topics, so that one can get all that one is looking for at one place.

These books are an effort to fulfill this need and thus help spiritual seekers in their journey and sadhana. We hope these compilations will help us to get a greater mental clarity about a subject so that we can channel our efforts in the right direction. For Sri Aurobindo has written:

“It is always better to make an effort in the right direction; even if one fails the effort bears some result and is never lost.” (CWSA 29: 87)

We will be glad to get suggestions and feedback from the readers.

Vijay

## **Preface**

In this compilation, 'Part II' we have dealt with a few aspects that need to be rejected. Each aspect is dealt with in details on how it needs to be rejected. While reading Part II one can keep in mind the general methods to reject given in Part I.

In order to facilitate clear understanding, the following methods have been utilised. The quotations have been classified into captioned sections. There are 13 sections written in Roman numerals (I, II, III, IV, V, etc). Under each section there are different sub sections indicated in English alphabetic letter A, B, C, D, etc, written as follows: I – A, I – B, I – C. Each quotation is numerically numbered 1, 2, 3, and written as I – A. 1., I – A. 2., etc.

The quotations in this compilation are taken from the volumes of The Complete Works of Sri Aurobindo (CWSA), Sri Aurobindo Birth Centenary Library (SABCL) and The Collected Works of The Mother (CWM). Each quotation is followed by the book title, volume number and the page number it has been taken from.

The section headings, and sub headings are given by the compiler to bring mental clarity on the selected subject. In Part III we plan to cover other areas which need to be rejected in sadhana.



I pray that this book may help the readers to make a very sincere effort to reject the obstacles in the Yoga and Her Grace will complete the process for each one of us.

Jamshed M. Mavalwalla.

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## **I – Rejection of the movements of the lower nature**

### **I – A. What is lower nature?**

I – A. 1. “The lower nature is the nature of the Ignorance, what we seek is to grow into the nature of the Truth.” (CWSA 28: 123)

I – A. 2. “The lower nature is called lower because it is unenlightened— it can’t be enlightened and changed by ignoring it, the higher has to be brought there.” (CWSA 28: 166)

I – A. 3. “Here in the Ignorance we are not aware of the Divine and we obey the lower nature.” (CWSA 28: 5)

I – A. 4. “The lower Prakriti is the ordinary consciousness of man with its ignorance, desires and bondage. I suppose you know that one has to transcend this ordinary consciousness of the lower Nature and arrive at a higher divine consciousness, if one wants to be free?” (CWSA 28: 43)

I – A. 5. “The lower Nature, Apra Prakriti, is this external objective and superficial subjective apparent Nature which manifests all these minds, lives and bodies.” (CWSA 28: 57)

I – A. 6. “Mind, life and body are the three powers of our lower nature. But they cannot be taken quite separately because the life acts as a link and gives its character to body and to a great extent to our mentality.” (SABCL 21: 619) (CWSA 24: 646-647)

## **I – B. What is lower vital?**

I – B. 1. "There are four parts of the vital being—first, the mental vital ... the emotional vital ... the central vital ... last, the lower vital which is occupied with small desires and feelings, such as make the greater part of daily life, e.g. food desire, sexual desire, small likings, dislikings, vanity, quarrels, love of praise, anger at blame, little wishes of all kinds—and a numberless host of other things. Their respective seats are (1) the region from the throat to the heart, (2) the heart (it is a double centre, belonging in front to the emotional and vital and behind to the psychic), (3) from the heart to the navel, (4) below the navel." (CWSA 28: 187)

I – B. 2. "... 3rd the lower vital (all the small egoistic movements of desire, enjoyment, lust, greed, jealousy, envy, vanity etc. etc.); ..." (CWSA 28: 167)

I – B. 3. "The lower vital as distinguished from the higher is concerned only with the small greeds, small desires, small passions etc. which make up the daily stuff of life for the ordinary sensational man—while the vital physical proper is the nervous being giving vital reflexes to contacts of things with the physical consciousness." (CWSA 28: 178)

I – B. 4. "From the navel downwards is the reign of the vital passions and sensations and all the small life-impulses that constitute the bulk of the ordinary human life and character. This is what we call the lower vital nature." (CWSA 28: 190)

I – B. 5. "Below the navel is the lower vital plane, which is ignorant and obscure, the seat of small desires, greeds, passions and enjoyments." (CWSA 28: 195)

## **I – C. What is the error of the lower vital?**

I – C. 1. "*Q: Sweet Mother, what does the error of the lower vital mean?*

A: You are asking what it is?

All desires, all impulses, all egoistical, obscure, ignorant, passionate, violent movements—in fact most of the movements one makes every day. This is the error of the lower vital. It wants to have everything for itself. It wants to be the master of the whole life, to govern everything. And when the mind is an accomplice—which happens ninety-nine and a half times out of a hundred—the mind says, "This indeed is called living one's life, a right to live one's life." It means the right to be an ignorant and stupid animal." (CWM 7: 69-70)

I – C. 2. "This physical mind is usually in a kind of alliance with the lower vital consciousness and its movements; when the lower vital manifests certain desires and impulses, this more material mind comes to its aid and justifies and supports them with specious explanations and reasonings and excuses. It is this layer of mind that is most open to suggestions from the vital world and most often invaded by its forces." (CWM 3: 61)

I – C. 3. "It is no part of the sadhana to accept the uglinesses of the lower nature on the ground that they

exist—if that is what is meant by realism. Our object is not to accept or enjoy these things but to get rid of them and create a life of spiritual beauty and perfection.” (CWSA 29: 64)

I – C. 4. “Q: *Sweet Mother, here it is written: "It is not enough that the psychic should respond and the higher mental accept or even the lower vital submit and the inner physical consciousness feel the influence." Does this mean that there is also a higher vital?*

A: Yes, the higher vital is usually much less difficult to surrender, for it is under the influence of the mind and at times even of the psychic; so it understands more easily. It is much easier to convert this than the lower vital which is essentially the vital of desires and impulses. So, you see, what he means is that the lower vital can submit, it agrees to obey, to do what it is asked, but it is not at all satisfied. It is not happy; sometimes it even suffers; it pushes its revolt down into itself through obedience, but it does not collaborate. And unless the vital collaborates with joy and true love, nothing can be done; the transformation cannot come.” (CWM 6: 204)

I – C. 5. “Here in the lower nature there are many things, but they are in a state of disharmony, so to follow them all together means disharmony, confusion, want of organisation, fight.” (CWSA 29: 144)

I – C. 6. "The more intense the experiences that come, the higher the forces that descend, the greater become the possibilities of deviation and error. For the very intensity and the very height of the force excites and aggrandises the movements of the lower nature and raises up in it all the opposing elements in their full force, but often in the disguise of truth, wearing a mask of plausible justification. There is needed a great patience, calm, sobriety, balance, an impersonal detachment and sincerity free from all taint of ego or personal human desire. There must be no attachment to any idea of one's own, to any experience, to any kind of imagination, mental building or vital demand; the light of discrimination must always play to detect these things, however fair or plausible they may seem. Otherwise the Truth will have no chance of establishing itself in its purity in the nature." (CWSA 29: 422-423)

I – C. 7. "The weakness in yourself of which you speak is there, as the persistency of these movements show, but it is not in the heart - your heart is all right - but in the lower vital nature. All your weaknesses are there; the rest of your being is quite strong enough for the spiritual life. But this inadequacy of the lower vital is not peculiar to you, it is present in almost every human being. This tendency to irrational sadness and despondency and these imaginations, fears and perverse reasonings – always repeating, if you will take careful notice, the same



movements, ideas and feelings and even the same language and phrases like a machine - is a characteristic working of the lower vital nature." (SABCL 24: 1351)

I – C. 8. "The difficulty in the lower vital being is that it is still wedded to its old self and in revolt against the Light; it has not only not surrendered either to a greater Truth or to myself and the Mother, but it has up to now no such will and hardly any idea even of what true surrender is. When the lower vital assumes this attitude it takes its stand upon a constant affirmation of the old personality and the past forms of the lower nature. Every time they are discouraged, it supports and brings them back and asserts its right to freedom, - the freedom to affirm and follow its own crude and egoistic ideas, desires, fancies, impulses or convenience whenever it chooses. It claims secretly or in so many words the right to follow its nature, - its human unregenerate nature, the right to be itself, - its natural original unchanged self with all the falsehood, ignorance and incoherence proper to this part of the being. And it claims or, if it does not claim in theory, it asserts in practice the right to express all this impure and inferior stuff in speech and act and behaviour. It defends, glosses over, paints in specious colours and tries to prolong indefinitely the past habitual ways of thinking, speaking and feeling and to eternalise what is distorted and misformed in the character. This it does sometimes by open self-assertion

and revolt, branding all that is done or said against it as error or oppression or injustice, sometimes behind a cover of self-deception or a mask of dissimulation, professing one thing and practicing another. Often it tries to persuade itself and to convince others that these things are the only right reason and right way of acting for itself or for all or even that they are part of the true movement of the yoga." (SABCL 24: 1306-1307)

I – C. 9. "When this lower vital being is allowed to influence the action, as happens when the sadhak in any way endorses its suggestions, its attitude, whether masked to himself or coming to the surface, dictates a considerable part of his speech and action and against it he makes no serious resistance. If he is frank with himself and straightforward to the Mother, he will begin to recognise the source and nature of the obstacle and will soon be on the direct road to correct and change it. But this, when under the adverse influence, he persistently refuses to be; he prefers to hide up these movements under any kind of concealment, denial, justification or excuse or other shelter." (SABCL 24: 1307)

I – C. 10. "A certain vanity and arrogance and self-assertive rajasic vehemence which in this smaller vital being are, for those who have a pronounced strength in these parts, the deformation of the vital force and habit of leading and

domination that certain qualities in the higher vital gave them. This is accompanied by an excessive amour-propre which creates the necessity of making a figure, maintaining by any means position and prestige, even of posturing before others, influencing, controlling or "helping" them, claiming the part of a superior sadhak, one with greater knowledge and with occult powers. The larger vital being itself has to give up its powers and capacities to the Divine Shakti from whom they come and must use them only as the Mother's instrument and according to her directions; if it intervenes with the claim of its ego and puts itself between her and the work or between her and other sadhaks, then whatever its natural power, it deviates from the true way, spoils the work, brings in adverse forces and wrong movements and does harm to those whom it imagines it is helping. When these things are transferred to the smallness of the lower vital nature and the external personality and take lower and pettier forms, they become still more false to the Truth, incongruous, grotesque, and at the same time can be viciously harmful, though in a smaller groove. There is no better way of calling in hostile forces into the general work or of vitiating and exposing to their influence one's own sadhana. On a smaller scale these defects of vanity, arrogance and rajasic violence are present in most human natures. They take other forms, but are then also a great obstacle to any true spiritual change." (SABCL 1307-1308)

I – C. 11. "Disobedience and indiscipline. This lower part of the being is always random, wayward, self-assertive and unwilling to accept the imposition on it of any order and discipline other than its own idea or impulse. Its defects even from the beginning stand in the way of the efforts of the higher vital to impose on the nature a truly regenerating tapasya. This habit of disobedience and disregard of discipline is so strong that it does not always need to be deliberate; the response to it seems to be immediate, irresistible and instinctive. Thus obedience to the Mother is repeatedly promised or professed, but the action done or the course followed is frequently the very opposite of the profession or promise. This constant indiscipline is a radical obstacle to the sadhana and the worst possible example to others." (SABCL 24: 1308)

I – C. 12. "Dissimulation and falsity of speech. This is an exceedingly injurious habit of the lower nature. Those who are not straight forward cannot profit by the Mother's help, for they themselves turn it away. Unless they change, they cannot hope for the descent of the supramental Light and Truth into the lower vital and physical nature; they remain stuck in their own self created mud and cannot progress. Often it is not mere exaggeration or a false use of the imagination embroidering on the actual truth that is marked in the sadhak, but also a positive denial and distortion as well as

a falsifying concealment of facts. This he does sometimes to cover up his disobedience or wrong or doubtful course of action, sometimes to keep up his position, at others to get his own way or indulge his preferred habits and desires. Very often, when one has this kind of vital habit, he clouds his own consciousness and does not altogether realise the falsity of what he is saying or doing; but in much that he says and does, it is quite impossible to extend to him even this inadequate excuse." (SABCL 24: 1308-1309)

I – C. 13. "A dangerous habit of constant self-justification. When this becomes strong in the sadhak, it is impossible to turn him in this part of his being to the right consciousness and action because at each step his whole preoccupation is to justify himself. His mind rushes at once to maintain his own idea, his own position or his own course of action. This he is ready to do by any kind of argument, sometimes the most clumsy and foolish or inconsistent with what he has been protesting the moment before, by any kind of mis-statement or any kind of device. This is a common misuse, but none the less a misuse of the thinking mind; but it takes in him exaggerated proportions and so long as he keeps to it, it will be impossible for him to see or live the Truth.

Whatever the difficulties of the nature, however long and painful the process of dealing with them, they cannot stand to the end against the Truth, if there is or if there comes in these parts the true spirit, attitude and

endeavour. But if a sadhak continues out of self-esteem and self-will or out of tamasic inertia to shut his eyes or harden his heart against the Light, so long as he does that, no one can help him. The consent of all the being is necessary for the divine change, and it is the completeness and fullness of the consent that constitutes the integral surrender. But the consent of the lower vital must not be only a mental profession or a passing emotional adhesion; it must translate itself into an abiding attitude and a persistent and consistent action." (SABCL 24: 1309)

I – C. 14. "The lower vital is not a part that listens to reason. There is no why to its action; it acts in a particular way because it has been accustomed to act in that way, and it goes on even if the doing brings a painful reaction." (SABCL 1328)

I – C. 15. "It is the lower (physical) vital that acts like that. This part of Nature does not act according to reason, it has no understanding of things. It acts only according to desire, impulse and habit. The mind and the heart and the higher vital have understood and put themselves on the side of the Peace and Force that are acting to transform the nature. But this still responds to the old forces when they touch it. It is a question of getting down the Peace and Force and Light into this part, so that whenever the outside forces of the lower Nature touch they will find that

force there and not the old response. It is a little difficult because of the long past habit, but it will come more and more as the Force descends into the body and pervades it in its descent." (SABCL 24: 1327-1328)

## **I – D. The three knots by which we are bound to our lower nature**

I – D. "Again our renunciation must obviously be an inward renunciation; especially and above all, a renunciation **of attachment** and **the craving of desire** in the senses and the heart, of self-will in the thought and action and **of egoism** in the centre of the consciousness. For these things are the three knots by which we are bound to our lower nature and if we can renounce these utterly, there is nothing else that can bind us. Therefore attachment and desire must be utterly cast out; there is nothing in the world to which we must be attached, not wealth nor poverty, nor joy nor suffering, nor life nor death, nor greatness nor littleness, nor vice nor virtue, nor friend, nor wife, nor children, nor country, nor our work and mission, nor heaven nor earth, nor all that is within them or beyond them." (CWSA 23: 329)



## **I – E. Yoga is done in order to change the nature**

I – E. 1. "Everybody knows this; those who do not want to change their way of doing things or their way of being always say, "Oh! What do you expect, it is human nature." This is what is called a "wilful indulgence". That is to say, instead of becoming conscious that these are weaknesses and difficulties on the way, one justifies these things, saying, "Oh! It can't be helped, it is human nature." One wants to continue to do what one is doing, without changing, one is full of a wilful indulgence of one's demands. For the lower nature of man always demands things; it says, "These are necessities, these are needs, I can't do without them." Then, the instincts—a sort of instinct for one's own satisfaction— and pretensions: the lower being claims that it has a considerable importance and must be given what is necessary for it, otherwise it won't be able to live; it asserts that it alone is important, and so on. It is all this which creates obstacles, all these obscure, ignorant movements, all these justifications of the old ways of being: those who fly into a temper and say, "What do you expect, it can't be helped", and everything one does saying, "Oh! It is human nature", everything one justifies saying, "What can be done, people are like that, there is nothing to be done about it."

It is the old idea that we are born with a particular nature and must get adjusted to it, for we cannot change it.

So Sri Aurobindo tells us that if one cannot change the nature it is not worth the trouble of doing yoga, for yoga is done precisely in order to change the nature, otherwise it has no meaning." (CWM 4: 331-332)

I – E. 2. "The descent of the peace is often one of the first major positive experiences of the sadhana. In this state of peace the normal thought-mind (*buddhi*) is apt to fall silent or abate most of its activity and, when it does, very often either this vital mind can rush in, if one is not on one's guard, or else a kind of mechanical physical or random subconscious mind can begin to come up and act; these are the chief disturbers of the silence. Or else the lower vital mind can try to disturb; that brings up the ego and passions and their play. All these are signs of elements that have to be got rid of, because if they remain and other of the higher powers begin to descend, Power and Force, Knowledge, Love or Ananda, those lower things may come across with the result that either the higher consciousness retires or its descent is covered up and the stimulation it gives is misused for the purposes of the lower nature. This is the reason why many sadhaks after having big experiences fall into the clutch of a magnified ego, upheavals, ambition, exaggerated sex or other vital passions or distortions. It is always well therefore if a complete purification of the vital can either precede or keep

pace with the positive experience— at least in natures in which the vital is strongly active.” (CWSA 28: 180-181)

I – E. 3. “If it {force} works to purify or open the system, or brings with it light or peace or prepares the change of the thought, ideas, feelings, character in the sense of a turning towards a higher consciousness, then it is the right {divine} force. If it is dark or obscure or perturbs the being with rajasic or egoistic suggestions or excites the lower nature, then it is an adverse Force” (CWSA 28: 463-464)

I – E. 4. “It was inevitable that in the course of the sadhana these inferior parts of the nature should be brought forward in order that like the rest of the being they may make the crucial choice and either accept or refuse transformation. My whole work depends upon this movement; it is the decisive ordeal of this yoga. For the physical consciousness and the material life cannot change if this {lower vital} does not change. Nothing that may have been done before, no inner illumination, experience, power of Ananda is of any eventual value, if this is not done. If the little external personality is to persist in retaining its obscure and limited, its petty and ignoble, its selfish and false and stupid human consciousness, this amounts to a flat negation of the work and the Sadhana.” (SABCL 24: 1305-1306)

I – E. 5. "All the parts of the human being are entitled to express and satisfy themselves in their own way at their own risk and peril, if he so chooses, as long as he leads the ordinary life. But to enter into a path of yoga whose whole object is to substitute for these human things the law and power of a greater Truth and the whole heart of whose method is surrender to the Divine Shakti, and yet to go on claiming this so-called freedom, which is no more than a subjection to certain ignorant cosmic Forces, is to indulge in a blind contradiction and to claim the right to lead a double life." (SABCL 24: 1310)

## **I – F. How to reject the movements of the lower nature**

I – F. 1. "Who is able to reject the lower nature fully? All one can do is to aspire and reject the lower impulses and call in the Divine to do the rest." (CWSA 29: 64)

I – F. 2. "Q: *The months are passing quickly and my weakness is increasing. How uneasy I feel! How disobedient, insincere, jealous, weak, covered with passion, ignorance and falsehood! I am unable to see my lower nature. O Mother, what shall I do?*

A: It is better not to look at it too much and to turn your attention to more interesting things. One becomes what one thinks: you should think of the strength, the uprightness, the sincerity you wish to become." March 1934 (CWM 17: 30)

I – F 3. "Q: *I would like to know something about silence. Is it more beneficial than concentrating on the lower nature?*

A: Concentrating on the lower nature is NEVER good; you should concentrate on what you want to develop, not on what you want to destroy." (CWM 17: 105)

I – F. 4. "It is no part of the sadhana to accept the uglinesses of the lower nature on the ground that they exist—if that is what is meant by realism. Our object is not to accept or enjoy these things but to get rid of them and create a life of spiritual beauty and perfection. So long as we accept these things, that cannot be done. To observe that these things are there and reject them, refusing to allow them to touch you, is one thing; to accept and acquiesce in them is quite another." (CWSA 29: 64)

I – F. 5. *"Q: How can there be any hope for me, seeing that there is no vigorous effort to purify the lower nature? Why do I think about others? What good will it do me? O Mother, I am fit for nothing! There is still no candid and sincere aspiration. O Mother! Give me some advice. I am an ignorant and obscure child. Guide me, show me the true path.*

A: You seem to be very conscious already of what ought and ought not to be done, but with you the difficulty begins with putting it into practice. You should ask, not for more knowledge, but for the strength and courage to apply sincerely and scrupulously the little you already know." 4 April 1934 (CWM 17: 30-31)

I – F. 6. *"Q: If one can distinguish all the day's movements by standing back from them like an observer, then I think*

*that one can soon rise above the lower nature. But in order to get the true discrimination, one must first have a consciousness that can distinguish falsehood from truth. I observe my movements, but I am still unable to make a clear distinction between darkness and light.*

A: Yes, this is true. But discrimination grows through exercise and control. In other words, you ask me if what you have observed is correct, and with the help of my answers you can rectify your observations." 17 May 1934 (CWM 17: 37)

I – F. 7. "Q: *At the moment there is not a single psychic element in my activity. O Mother, let nothing in me consent to lower activities.*

A: Yes, you must never yield to the lower nature, not only when it manifests in you but also when it manifests in others. Never listen to bad advice, never follow bad examples, never accept any other influence than that of the Divine, and your uneasiness will disappear." 30 October 1934 (CWM 17: 67)

I – F. 8. "Q: *O Mother, I feel too far away from You. I appeal to You: give me the strength to overcome the adverse powers and to conquer my lower nature and all that is tormenting me.*

A: I don't think there is anything for you to worry about. You are no further from me than you were before. It is still

the same parts of your being that refuse to participate in the divine life; previously you were not aware of them, but now, on the contrary, you are becoming more and more conscious of them, and consciousness is a real progress—it is the way towards mastery.” 15 July 1935 (CWM 17: 112)

I – F. 9. “Q: *So what must I do to make these lower parts participate in the divine life?*

A: You must educate them as one educates a child.” 16 July 1935 (CWM 17: 112)

I – F. 10. “Even if you are not apparently successful in your meditation, it is better to persist and to be more obstinate than the opposition of your lower nature.

I am quite satisfied with your way of doing the work and it is sure to help you to come nearer to me.

My love and blessings.” 13 September 1940 (CWM 17: 205)

I – F. 11. “If you do not accept certain movements, then naturally, when they find that they can’t manifest, gradually they diminish in force and stop occurring. If you refuse to express everything that is of a lower kind, little by little the very thing disappears, and the consciousness is emptied of lower things. It is by refusing to give expression—I mean not only in action but also in thought,



in feeling. When impulses, thoughts, emotions come, if you refuse to express them, if you push them aside and remain in a state of inner aspiration and calm, then gradually they lose their force and stop coming. So the consciousness is emptied of its lower movements.” (CWM 6: 329-330)

I – F. 12. “But even this intervention of a new dynamic principle and this powerful imposition may take long to succeed; for the lower parts of the being have their own rights and, if they are to be truly transformed, they must be made to consent to their own transformation.

This is difficult to bring about because the natural propensity of each part of us is to prefer its own self-law, its dharma, however inferior, to a superior law or dharma which it feels to be not its own; it clings to its own consciousness or unconsciousness, its own impulses and reactions, its own dynamisation of being, its own way of the delight of existence.

It clings to them all the more obstinately if that way be a contradiction of delight, a way of darkness and sorrow and pain and suffering; for that too has acquired its own perverse and opposite taste, *rasa*, its pleasure of darkness and sorrow, its sadistic or masochistic interest in pain and suffering.

Even if this part of our being seeks better things, it is often obliged to follow the worse because they are its

own, natural to its energy, natural to its substance.” (SABCL 19: 935-936) (CWSA 22: 970)

I – F. 13. “A complete and radical change can only be brought about by bringing in persistently the spiritual light and intimate experience of the spiritual truth, power, bliss into the recalcitrant elements until they too recognise that their own way of fulfilment lies there, that they are themselves a diminished power of the spirit and can recover by this new way of being their own truth and integral nature.

This illumination is constantly opposed by the Forces of the lower nature and still more by the adverse Forces that live and reign by the world’s imperfections and have laid down their formidable foundation on the black rock of the Inconscience.” (SABCL 19: 935-936) (CWSA 22: 970)

I – F. 14. “You will see, the more you strive to realise, you will discover in the nature—the lower nature, that is, the lower mind, the lower vital, the physical—how much pretension, sham and ambition there is.... One can use any... The desire to put on airs: all that must be eliminated, absolutely, radically, and replaced by a sincere flame of aspiration, of aspiration for the purity which makes us live only for what the Supreme Consciousness demands of us, which makes us able to do only what it wants, which makes us do only what it wants, when it wants.” (CWM 12: 425)

I – F. 15. "My dear little child,  
... I want to make you a strong and conscious man who is master of himself—that is, in control of his lower nature and capable of becoming a true Yogi if that be his aspiration. And the more this man realises his true being, the more he will become my very dear child.

That is why, now, when the will that is expressing itself is the will of the lower nature, I cannot satisfy all its whims, for that would be the worst thing I could do for you.

True love is the love that wants, to the exclusion of all else, the highest good for the loved one. This is the love that I have and want to have for you. Your mother." 6 April 1934 (CWM 16: 117)

I – F. 16. "The difficulty comes from oneself, from one's own nature, and one takes it along wherever one goes, whatever the conditions one may be in. There is but one way of getting out of it—it is to conquer the difficulty, overcome one's lower nature. And is this not easier here, with a concrete and tangible help, than all alone, without anyone to shed light on the path and guide the uncertain footsteps?" (CWM 16: 187)

I – F. 17. "One must never be afraid, and if the adverse forces try to lodge themselves in your lower nature, you have only to dislodge them, calling me to your help." (CWM 16: 185)

I – F. 18. *"Q: There is a paragraph: 'If you go down into your lower parts or ranges of nature, you must be always careful to keep a vigilant connection with the higher... levels of the consciousness,' etc. Then later: 'The safest way is to remain in the higher part of the consciousness and put a pressure from it on the lower to change.'"*

Yes, but this has no connection with what you were asking.

The safest way is precisely not to go down, it is to remain above and from there to put a pressure on what is below. But if you go down it is very difficult to keep the contact with what is above; so if one forgets one can do nothing, one becomes like the part into which one has gone down. So, as it is something very difficult to do, on the contrary, it is better to remain in one's higher consciousness and from there act upon the lower movements without going down into them." (CWM 7: 113)

I – F. 19. "Generally, the lower nature is always active. It is only when one has surrendered completely that it stops being active. When one is no longer in his lower consciousness, when one has made a total surrender, then the lower nature is no longer active. But so long as it is active, personal effort is necessary." (CWM 6: 220)

I – F. 20. "One cannot be sure of the immediate result, for the obstruction of the lower Nature or the pressure of the adverse forces can often act successfully for a time, even

for a long time, against the necessary change. One has then to persist, to put always the will on the side of the Divine, rejecting what has to be rejected, opening oneself to the true Light and the true Force, calling it down quietly, steadfastly, without tiring, without depression or impatience, until one feels the Divine Force at work and the obstacles beginning to give way." (CWSA 29: 85-86)

I – F. 21. "The only way to get rid of it is to meet it with a fixed resolution of the higher vital and the mind and the psychic being to combat, reject and master it. As you were determined to master the sex impulse and the desire of the palate, so you must determine to master this "irrational knot" of despondency and the lower vital nature. If you indulge it and regard it as a natural part of yourself with good causes for existence or if you busy yourself finding this or that justification when it comes, there is no reason why it should let go its unpleasant grip upon you. Be firm and courageous here, as you have learnt to be with other movements of your lower vital; you will then find less difficulty in your meditation and your general sadhana." (SABCL 24: 1351)

I – F. 22. "There is only one way of escape from this siege of the lower vital nature. It is the entire rejection of all egoistic vital demand, claim and desire and the replacement of the dissatisfied vital urge by the purity of

psychic aspiration. Not the satisfaction of these vital clamours nor, either, an ascetic retirement is the true solution, but the surrender of the vital being to the Divine and a single-minded consecration to the supreme Truth into which desire and demand cannot enter. For the nature of the supreme Truth is Light and Ananda, and where desire and demand are there can be no Ananda." (SABCL 24: 1312)

I – F. 23. "The lower vital in most human beings is full of grave defects and of movements that respond to hostile forces. A constant psychic opening, a persistent rejection of these influences, a separation of oneself from all hostile suggestions and the inflow of the calm, light, peace, purity of the Mother's power would eventually free the system from the siege.

What is needed is to be quiet and more and more quiet, to look on these influences as something not yourself which has intruded, to separate yourself from it and deny it and to abide in a quiet confidence in the Divine Power. "If your psychic being asks for the Divine and your mind is sincere and calls for liberation from the lower nature and from all hostile forces and if you can call the Mother's power into your heart and rely upon it more than on your own strength, this siege will in the end be driven away from you and strength and peace take its place." (SABCL 24: 1340)

I – F. 24. "You must keep the faith always that however the lower nature may rise or hostile forces attack, victory will be yours and the transformation is sure." (CWSA 29: 102)

I – F. 25. "It is quite true that "in our path the attitude is not one of forceful suppression, *nigraha*"; it is not coercion according to a mental rule or principle on an unpersuaded vital being. But that does not mean either that the vital has to go its own way and do according to its fancy. It is not coercion that is the way, but an inner change, in which the lower vital is led, enlightened and transformed by a higher consciousness which is detached from the objects of vital desire. But in order to let this grow an attitude has to be taken in which a decreasing importance has to be attached to the satisfaction of the claims of the lower vital, a certain mastery, *samyama*, being above any clamour of these things, limiting such things as food to their proper place. The lower vital has its place, it is not to be crushed or killed, but it has to be changed, "caught hold of by both ends", at the upper end a mastery and control, at the lower end a right use. The main thing is to get rid of attachment and desire; it is then that an entirely right use becomes possible. By what actual steps, in what order, through what process this mastery of the lower vital shall come depends on the nature, the stress of development, the actual movement of the Yoga." (CWSA 35: 474)

I – F. 26. "One rule for you I can lay down, "Do not do, say or think anything which you would want to conceal from the Mother." And that answers the objections that rose within you—from your vital, is it not?—against bringing "these petty things" to the Mother's notice. Why should you think that the Mother would be bothered by these things or regard them as petty? If all the life is to be Yoga, what is there that can be called petty or of no importance? Even if the Mother does not answer, to have brought any matter of your action and self-development before her in the right spirit means to have put it under her protection, in the light of the Truth, under the rays of the Power that is working for the transformation—for immediately those rays begin to play and to act on the thing brought to her notice. Anything within that advises you not to do it when the spirit in you moves you to do it, may very well be a device of the vital to avoid the ray of the Light and the working of the Force. It may also be observed that if you open yourself to the Mother by putting the movements of any part of you under her observation, that of itself creates a relation, a personal closeness with her other than that which her general, silent or not directly invited action maintains with all the sadhaks." (CWSA 35: 474-475)



## **I – G. The unregenerated lower vital movements have to be rejected, not the lower vital**

I – G. 1. "You speak of rejecting the lower vital, but it is only the unregenerated lower vital movements that can be got rid of; you cannot get rid of the lower vital itself, for it is a necessary part of the manifested nature, like the higher vital or the mind. It has to be changed in the power of the higher consciousness, not left to itself or dropped from you. (SABCL 24: 1367)

I – G. 2. "But why do you suppose that you alone are made of the lower nature? Every earthly being is so made. The higher nature is there but behind and above. It has to be brought forward from the inner being or brought down from above constantly and persistently till the lower is changed." (CWSA 28: 166)

I – G. 3. "Man so long as he is in the ignorance is subject to the lower Prakriti, but by spiritual evolution he becomes aware of the higher Nature and seeks to come into contact with it. He can ascend into it and it can descend into him—such an ascent and descent can transform the lower nature of mind, life and matter." (CWSA 28: 44)

## **I – H. Lower vital is an indispensable mediator between the inner being and the outer life**

I – H. 1. "As against them stands the lower vital which is concerned with the pettier movements of action and desire and stretches down into the vital physical where it supports the life of the more external activities and all physical sensations, hungers, cravings, satisfactions. The term lower must not be considered in a pejorative sense; it refers only to the position in the hierarchy of the planes. For although this part of the nature in earthly beings tends to be very obscure and is full of perversions,—lust, greed of all kinds, vanity, small ambitions, petty anger, envy, jealousy are its ordinary guests,— still there is another side to it which makes it an indispensable mediator between the inner being and the outer life." (CWSA 28: 188) (SABCL 22: 338-339)

## **I – I. Other Quotations on ‘Rejection of the movements of Lower Nature’**

I – I. 1. “To get into the higher and deeper consciousness which knows and lives consciously in the Divine, we have to get rid of the forces of the lower nature and open to the action of the Divine Shakti which will transform our consciousness into that of the Divine Nature.” (CWSA 28: 7-8)

I – I. 2. “The two different beings you feel are—one, the psychic being which draws you towards the Mother, the other the external being mostly vital which draws you outward and downwards towards the play of the lower nature. There is also in you behind the mind the being who observes, the witness Purusha, who can stand detached from the play of the nature, observing it and able to choose. It has to put itself always on the side of the psychic being and assent to and support its movements and to reject the downward and outward movement of the lower nature, which has to be subjected to the psychic and changed by its influence.” (CWSA 28: 120-121)

I – I. 3. “The supermind alone can transform the lower nature.” (CWSA 28: 133)

I – I. 4. "As to Asuras, not many of them have shown signs of repentance or possibility of conversion up to now. It is not surprising that they should be powerful in a world of Ignorance, for they have only to persuade people to follow the established bent of their lower nature, while the Divine calls always for a change of nature. It is not to be wondered at that the Asura has an easier task and more momentary success in his combinations. But that temporary success does not bind the future." (CWSA 28: 467)

I – I. 5. "The aim of Yoga is to transcend Karma. Karma means subjection to lower Nature; through Yoga the soul goes towards freedom." (CWSA 28: 520)

I – I. 6. "One can be free [from lower vital movements], but one cannot say that the freedom has been made absolutely complete or secure until the complete transformation takes place. For these things always remain in the environmental consciousness or even at a distance in the universal itself and take any opportunity to come in from there." (CWSA 28: 214)

I – I. 7. "At the same time, spirituality is something above the dualities, and what is most needed for it is a true upward aspiration. This may come to the rajasic man as well as to the sattwic. If it does, he can rise by it above his

failings and desires and passions, just as the other can rise beyond his virtues, to the Divine Purity and Light and Love. Necessarily this can only happen if he conquers his lower nature and throws it from him; for if he relapses into it, he is likely to fall from the path or at least to be, so long as the relapse lasts, held back by it from inner progress.” (CWSA 29: 42)

I – I. 8. “Tapasya is the concentration of the will to get the results of sadhana and to conquer the lower nature.” (CWSA 29: 215)

I – I. 9. “There is a period, more or less prolonged, of internal effort and struggle in which the individual will has to reject the darkness and distortions of the lower nature and to put itself resolutely or vehemently on the side of the divine Light.” (CWSA 23: 60)

I – I. 10. “In the lower nature man is an ego making a clean cut in conception between himself and all other existence; the ego is to him self, but all the rest not self, external to his being.” (CWSA 23: 640)

I – I. 11. “Q: *In a dream, I was gathering flowers in the garden of my house. Suddenly the gate opened and three ladies came in. One lady asked me for flowers. I answered her, "All the beautiful flowers will be sent to the Mother.*

*You can take the ones that are not beautiful." But these ladies disturbed me.*

A: This is probably the symbol of certain forces of the lower nature trying to seize hold of what is already given to the Divine." 30 June 1934 (CWM 17: 48-49)

## **II – Rejection of the mind's ideas and opinions in Yoga**

### **II – A. What are mental ideas and opinions?**

II – A. 1. "In the mental life ideas and ideals rule, ideas that are half lights wearing the garb of Truth, ideals formed by the mind as a result of a growing but still imperfect intuition and experience." (CWSA 23: 209)

II – A. 2. "Opinions are not knowledge, they are only sidelights on knowledge. Most often they are illegitimate extensions of an imperfect knowledge." (SABCL 3: 117) (CWSA 12: 35)

II – A. 3. "It is ignorance that has opinions.  
Knowledge *knows*." 26 May 1965 (CWM 16: 320)

II – A. 4. "All these are only OPINIONS and have no value at all from the Divine point of view—the Divine who does not have an opinion but a total vision of everything as a whole and of the goal to be achieved, which is the only thing that matters.

Everything mental is necessarily an opinion and expresses only an infinitesimal fraction of the Truth." 13 July 1966 (CWM 16: 337)

II – A. 5. “Q: *How is it that we lose a chance to widen our knowledge by prevailing in a debate?*”

A: A debate is never anything but a conflict of opinions; and opinions are nothing but very fragmentary aspects of the truth. Even if you were able to put together and synthesise all opinions on a given subject, you still would not achieve anything but a very imperfect expression of the truth.

If you prevail in a debate, it means that your opinion has prevailed over the opinion of another, not necessarily because yours was truer than his, but because you were better at wielding the arguments or because you were a more stubborn debater. And you come out of the discussion convinced that you are right in what you assert; and so you lose a chance to see a view of the question other than your own and to add an aspect of the truth to the one or the ones you already possess. You remain imprisoned in your own thought and refuse to widen it.” 17 March 1961 (CWM 10: 86)

II – A. 6. “In all opinions there is something true and something false. It is indeed a great and useful thing to be able to listen to the opinions of others without losing one’s temper.” (CWM 14: 200)

II – A. 7. “It is not, certainly, the superficial temperament or the character or habitual impulses that are meant, but



in the literal sense of the Sanskrit word our “own being”, our essential nature, the divine stuff of our souls. Whatever springs from this root or flows from these sources is profound, essential, right; the rest—opinions, impulses, habits, desires—may be merely surface formations or casual vagaries of the being or impositions from outside. They shift and change, but this remains constant.” (CWSA 23: 274)

II – A. 8. “Naturally, all these discussions (or exchanges of opinion) are purely mental and have no value from the viewpoint of the Truth. Each mind has its way of seeing and understanding things, and even if you could unite and bring together all these ways of seeing, you would still be very far from attaining the Truth. It is only when, in the silence of the mind, you can lift yourself above thought, that you are ready to know by identity.

From the viewpoint of outer discipline it is indispensable, when you have an opinion and express it, to remember that it is only an opinion, a way of seeing and feeling, and that other people’s opinions, and ways of seeing and feeling are as legitimate as your own, and that instead of opposing them you should *total them up* and try to find a more comprehensive synthesis.

On the whole the discussions are always pretty futile and seem to me to be a waste of time.” 5 June 1967 (CWM 14: 200)

II – A. 9. "An opinion is neither true nor false, but only serviceable for life or unserviceable; for it is a creation of Time and with time it loses its effect and value. Rise thou above opinion and seek wisdom everlasting.

"Use opinion for life, but let her not bind thy soul in her fetters." (SABCL 17: 92-93) (CWSA 12: 437)

II – A. 10. "Each idea (or system of ideas) is true in its own time and place. But if it tries to be exclusive or to persist even when its time is over, then it ceases to be true." (CWM 14: 197)

II – A. 11. "In the Ignorance mental opinions always oppose one another. In the Truth they are complementary aspects of a higher knowledge." (CWM 14: 199)

## **II – B. Why mental ideas and opinions are to be rejected in Yoga**

II – B. 1. "For our entire nature and its environment, all our personal and all our universal self, are full of habits and of influences that are opposed to our spiritual rebirth and work against the whole-heartedness of our endeavour. In a certain sense we are nothing but a complex mass of mental, nervous and physical habits held together by a few ruling ideas, desires and associations,—an amalgam of many small self-repeating forces with a few major vibrations. What we propose in our Yoga is nothing less than to break up the whole formation of our past and present which makes up the ordinary material and mental man and to create a new centre of vision and a new universe of activities in ourselves which shall constitute a divine humanity or a superhuman nature." (CWSA 23: 72)

II – B. 2. "It {all spiritual seeking} aims at a state of knowledge by which we can touch, enter or know by identity this Eternal, Infinite and Absolute, a consciousness other than our ordinary consciousness of ideas and forms and things, a Knowledge that is not what we call knowledge but something self-existent, everlasting, infinite." (CWSA 23: 287)

II – B. 3. "... just as mental ideas are excellent and indispensable things in their own field in the human stage. But our aim is to go beyond mental ideas into the light of the supramental Truth, which exists not by ideative thought but by direct vision and identity." (CWSA 29: 345)

II – B. 4. "Surrender means that, to give up our little mind and its mental ideas and preferences into a divine Light and a greater knowledge, our petty personal troubled blind stumbling will into a great calm tranquil luminous Will and Force, our little restless tormented feelings into a wide intense divine Love and Ananda, our small suffering personality into the one Person of which it is an obscure outcome. If one insists on one's own ideas and reasonings, the greater Light and Knowledge cannot come or else is marred and obstructed in the coming at every step by a lower interference; if one insists on one's own desires and fancies, that great luminous Will and Force cannot act in its own true power—for you ask it to be the servant of your desires; if one refuses to give up one's petty ways of feeling, eternal Love and supreme Ananda cannot descend or is mixed and is spilt from the effervescing crude emotional vessel. No amount of ordinary reasoning can get rid of that necessity of surmounting the lower in order that the higher may be there." (CWSA 28: 385)

II – B. 5. "There must be no attachment to any idea of one's own, to any experience, to any kind of imagination, mental building or vital demand; the light of discrimination must always play to detect these things, however fair or plausible they may seem. Otherwise the Truth will have no chance of establishing itself in its purity in the nature." (CWSA 29: 422-423)

II – B. 6. "The truth of the spirit is a truth of being and consciousness and not a truth of thought: mental ideas can only represent or formulate some facet, some mind translated principle or power of it or enumerate its aspects, but to know it one has to grow into it and be it; without that growing and being there can be no true spiritual knowledge." (CWSA 21: 920)

II – B. 7. "It would not seem to be possible, therefore, for the mind to anticipate or indicate what a supramental being shall be or how he shall act; for here mental ideas and formulations cannot decide anything or arrive at any precise definition or determination, because they are not near enough to the law and self-vision of supramental Nature." (CWSA 21: 1001)

II – B. 8. "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.” (CWM 12: 33)

II – B. 9. “It is possible to cultivate and extend the use of the intuitive mind in proportion as we rely less predominantly upon the reasoning intelligence. We may train our mentality not to seize, as it does now, upon every separate flash of intuitive illumination for its own inferior purposes, not to precipitate our thought at once into a crystallising intellectual action around it; we can train it to think in a stream of successive and connected intuitions, to pour light upon light in a brilliant and triumphant series. We shall succeed in this difficult change in proportion as we purify the interfering intelligence,—if we can reduce in it the element of material thought enslaved to the external appearances of things, the element of vital thought enslaved to the wishes, desires, impulses of the lower nature, the element of intellectual thought enslaved to our preferred, already settled or congenial ideas, conceptions, opinions, fixed operations of intelligence, if, having reduced to a minimum those elements, we can replace them by an intuitive vision and sense of things, an intuitive insight into appearances, an intuitive will, an intuitive ideation.” (CWSA 23: 480)

II – B. 10. "In the mental life ideas and ideals rule, ideas that are halflights wearing the garb of Truth, ideals formed by the mind as a result of a growing but still imperfect intuition and experience. Whenever the mental life prevails and the bodily diminishes its brute insistence, man the mental being feels pushed by the urge of mental Nature to mould in the sense of the idea or the ideal the life of the individual, and in the end even the vaguer more complex life of the society is forced to undergo this subtle process. In the spiritual life, or when a higher power than Mind has manifested and taken possession of the nature, these limited motive-forces recede, dwindle, tend to disappear. The spiritual or supramental Self, the Divine Being, the supreme and immanent Reality, must be alone the Lord within us and shape freely our final development according to the highest, widest, most integral expression possible of the law of our nature. ... Mental ideas, opinions, constructions are his no more; for his mind has fallen into silence, it is only a channel for the Light and Truth of the divine knowledge." (CWSA 23: 209)

II – B. 11. "A third cause of impurity has its source in the understanding itself and consists in an improper action of the will to know. That will is proper to the understanding, but here again choice and unequal reaching after knowledge clog and distort. They lead to a partiality and attachment which makes the intellect cling to certain ideas

and opinions with a more or less obstinate will to ignore the truth in other ideas and opinions, cling to certain fragments of a truth and shy against the admission of other parts which are yet necessary to its fullness, cling to certain predilections of knowledge and repel all knowledge that does not agree with the personal temperament of thought which has been acquired by the past of the thinker. The remedy lies in a perfect equality of the mind, in the cultivation of an entire intellectual rectitude and in the perfection of mental disinterestedness. The purified understanding as it will not lend itself to any desire or craving, so will not lend itself either to any predilection or distaste for any particular idea or truth, and will refuse to be attached even to those ideas of which it is the most certain or to lay on them such an undue stress as is likely to disturb the balance of truth and depreciate the values of other elements of a complete and perfect knowledge.” (CWSA 23: 314-315)

II – B. 12. “For surrender it is necessary not to insist on the mind’s opinions, ideas and preferences, the vital’s desires and impulses, the physical’s habitual actions, the life of the ego—all such insistence is contrary to surrender.” (CWSA 29: 76)

II – B. 13. “Surrender means to consecrate everything in oneself to the Divine, to offer all one is and has, not to



insist on one's ideas, desires, habits etc., but to allow the divine Truth to replace them by its knowledge, will and action everywhere." (CWSA 29: 67)

II – B. 14. "What is needed is a general plasticity of the mind, the vital, the physical consciousness, a readiness to give up all attachment to these things, to accept whatever the higher consciousness brings down with it however contrary to one's own received ideas, feelings, habits of nature. The greater the plasticity in any part of the nature, the less the resistance there." (CWSA 28: 190)

II – B. 15. "The Asram here is not precisely a place for "spiritual training" but for growing into a divine consciousness and divine life. Those who come here must have grown already so far that they are ready to give up all past mental ideas, fixed life-habits or life-tendencies and even the very mould of their physical consciousness and open only to the light of a greater Truth which, by their complete surrender to it, will transform the whole nature. This is very difficult, and it has been found by experience that those who come here unprepared break down after a time and can go no farther, because they cannot consent to get free from their past selves." 26 February 1930 (CWSA 35: 594)

II – B. 16. "It goes without saying that the more the instrument is open, receptive and plastic, the better are the results. The two obstacles that stand in the way of a smooth and harmonious working in and through the sadhaks are:

(1) the preconceived ideas and mental constructions which block the way to the influence and the working of the conscious force;

(2) the preferences and impulses of the vital which distort and falsify the expression.

Both these things are the natural output of the ego. Without the interference of these two elements my physical intervention would not be necessary." (CWSA 35: 676-677)

II – B. 17. "All mental ideas of the nature of things, are inconclusive considerations of our insufficient logical reason when it attempts in its limited light and ignorant self-sufficiency to weigh the logical probabilities of a universal order which after all its speculation and discovery must remain obscure to it still and an enigma." (CWSA 12" 163)

II – B. 18. "If the mental ideas governing the individual and social life took a settled form, became a cultural system of the mind, this system would after a time exhaust its possibilities and human life would settle down into a

groove, satisfied and non-evolutive, as happened in the Graeco-Roman world or in China or elsewhere where the mental intellect became the predominant power of life.” (CWSA 12: 416)

II – B. 19. “To be plastic towards the Divine means not to oppose Him with the rigidity of preconceived ideas and fixed principles. And this requires a great strength, for the more you are plastic to the divine will, the more you come in conflict with the human wills that are not in contact with the divine will.

Give your will entirely to the Divine and it will feel free from the imposition of any human will.” 19 September 1953 (CWM 14: 281)

II – B. 20. “Are you ready to submit yourself for such tests? Are you ready to change yourself completely? You will have to throw off your ideas, ideals, values, interests and opinions. Everything will have to be learnt anew. If you are ready for all this, then take a plunge; otherwise don’t try to step in.” (CWM 14: 44)

II – B. 21. “Q: *Mother, would you please define in a few words what you mean essentially by “free progress”?*

A: A progress guided by the soul and not subjected to habits, conventions or preconceived ideas.” (CWM 12: 171)

II – B. 22. **“What the soul sees and has experienced, that it knows; the rest is appearance, prejudice and opinion.**

This amounts to saying that all knowledge which is not the result of the soul’s vision or experience is without true value.

But the question immediately arises—it was, in fact, put to me—“How do we know what the soul sees?”

Obviously there is only one solution: to become conscious of one’s soul. And this completes the aphorism: unless one is conscious of one’s soul one does not have true knowledge. Therefore the first effort must be to find the soul within, to unite with it and allow it to govern one’s life. ...

But the usefulness of the aphorism we have just read is to make you understand that everything you think you know, everything you have learnt, anything that has come to you in your life through personal observation, deduction, comparison—all that is a very relative knowledge on which you cannot found a durable and truly effective way of life.

How many times have we repeated this: all that comes from the mind is wholly relative. The more the mind is educated and has applied itself to various disciplines, the more it becomes capable of proving that what it puts forward or what it says is true. One can prove the truth of anything by reasoning, but that does not make it true. It

remains an opinion, a prejudice, a knowledge based on appearances which are themselves more than dubious.

So there seems to be only one way out and that is to go in search of one's soul and to find it." (CWM 10: 23-24)

II – B. 23. "I consider that opinions are always dangerous and most often absolutely worthless." (CWM 10: 236)

II – B. 24. "So long as men remain in their present state of ignorance, their judgments and opinions are worthless in the face of Truth and should be considered as such." 20 January 1970 (CWM 10: 296)

II – B. 25. "Anyone who proclaims loudly his opinions on the present situation of the country, must understand that his opinions are of no value and cannot, in the least, help Mother India to come out of her difficulties. If you want to be useful, first control yourself and keep silent.

Silence! Silence! Silence!

It is only in silence that anything great can be done." 28 October 1962 (CWM 17: 216)

II – B. 26. "But to conclude, when you have the chance of getting information that's a little more trustworthy and reliable about the condition you are in, it is better not to ask the opinion of others, but only to refer all to the vision

of the guru. If you really want to progress, this is the surest path.” (CWM 8: 350)

II – B. 27. “What value have mental ideas about the Divine, ideas about what he should be, how he should act, how he should not act— they can only come in the way. Only the Divine Himself matters.” (CWSA 29: 56)

II – B. 28. “The point is that people take no trouble to see whether their intellect is giving them right thoughts, right conclusions, right views on things and persons, right indications about their conduct or course of action. They have their idea and accept it as truth or follow it simply because it is their idea. Even when they recognise that they have made mistakes of the mind, they do not consider it of any importance nor do they try to be more careful mentally than before. ... Men are supposed to follow their intellect, to have and assert their own ideas right or wrong without any control; the intellect, it is said, is man’s highest instrument and he must think and act according to its ideas. But this is not true; the intellect needs an inner light to guide, check and control it quite as much as the vital. There is something above the intellect which one has to discover and the intellect should be only an intermediary for the action of that source of true Knowledge.” 23 March 1937 (CWSA 32: 617-618)

II – B. 29. “But without realisation our mental belief cannot become a dynamic reality; it is still only a figure of knowledge, not a living truth, an idea, not yet a power.”  
(CWSA 23: 60)

## **II – C. Even in normal life mental ideas and opinions need to be rejected**

II – C. 1. "Unless you can rise above your personal ideas, opinions and preferences, you cannot become a good worker. As long as you have your personal preferences, you will not be able to do the exact thing needed." (CWM 14: 314)

II – C. 2. "To make progress you must throw aside all the old constructions, demolish all the preconceived ideas. Preconceived ideas are the innumerable habitual mental constructions in which you live, which are fixed and therefore have no plasticity and cannot progress. All this must be thrown aside. Then new ideas are born, active thought which is creative." (CWM 14: 346)

II – C. 3. "A person who considers only his own opinion becomes more and more narrow." (CWM 14: 267)

II – C. 4. "Our first business as original thinkers will be to accept nothing, to question everything. That means to get rid of all unexamined opinions old or new, all mere habitual sanskaras in the mind, to have no preconceived judgments." (CWSA 12: 41)



**II – C. 5. “- If thou wouldst not be the fool of Opinion, first see wherein thy thought is true, then study wherein its opposite and contradiction is true; last, discover the cause of these differences and the key of God’s harmony.**

**– An opinion is neither true nor false, but only serviceable for life or unserviceable; for it is a creation of Time and with time it loses its effect and value. Rise thou above opinion and seek wisdom everlasting.**

**– Use opinion for life, but let her not bind thy soul in her fetters.**

On Thoughts and Aphorisms

(After a silence)

I was trying to find out in what way opinions are serviceable.... Sri Aurobindo says that they are “serviceable” or “unserviceable”— in what way can an opinion be serviceable?

*They are helpful for a moment, in action.*

No, this is precisely what I deplore; people act according to their opinion, and that is worthless. I am constantly receiving letters from people who want or do not want to do something and tell me: “This is my opinion, this is true,

that is not true”, and always, more than ninety-nine times out of a hundred it is wrong, it is nonsense.

One feels very clearly—in fact, it is visible—that the opposite opinion has just as much value, that it is simply a question of attitude, nothing more. And naturally the ego’s preferences are always involved: you like it better like that and so you have the opinion that it is like that.

*But until one can act with the higher light, one needs to use opinions.*

It would be better to have some wisdom rather than an opinion, that is, to consider all the possibilities, all the aspects of the question and then try to be as unegoistic as possible and to see, for example, in the case of an action, which one can be of service to the greatest number of people or is the least destructive, the most constructive. Anyway, even from a standpoint that is not spiritual, but merely utilitarian and unselfish, it is better to act according to wisdom than according to one’s opinion.

*Yes, but what would be the right way to proceed when one doesn’t have the light, without involving one’s opinion or one’s ego?*

I think it is to consider all the aspects of the problem, to lay them before your consciousness as disinterestedly as possible and to see which one is the best—if this is possible

—or which one is the least harmful if there are unpleasant consequences.” (CWM 10: 233-235)

### **III – Rejection of the mind's preferences, habits and mental constructions in Yoga**

#### **III – A. What part of the being has preferences**

III – A. 1. "May this new year bring you the liberation and enlightenment of an ignorant and arrogant mind which thinks it can judge everything without even having the elements of the problems that it judges according to its own preferences and attachments." (CWM 14: 342)

III – A. 2. "You will notice then that the little black spot comes from the ego which is full of preferences; generally it does what it likes; the things it likes are called good and those it does not are called bad—this clouds your judgment. It is difficult to judge under these conditions. If you truly want to know, you must draw back a step and look, and you will know then that it is this small movement of the ego which is the cause of the uneasiness." (CWM 4: 88)

III – A. 3. "All who have visions usually deform them, *all*, almost *without exception*. I don't think there is one in a million who doesn't deform his vision, because the minute it touches the brain it touches the domain of preferences, desires, attachments, and this indeed is enough to give a colouring, a special look to what you have seen. Even if

you have seen correctly, you translate it wrongly in your consciousness." (CWM 6: 354)

### **III – B. Why preferences have to be rejected in Yoga**

III – B. 1. "In that ascent towards the heights, both virtues and duties—that is to say our mental prejudices and preferences—stand far more in our way than our exterior weaknesses and faults." (CWM 14: 113)

III – B. 2. "To be able to know the Truth you must be without preferences and without desires, and when you aspire for the Truth your mind must be silent." 8 July 1971 (CWM 13: 371)

III – B. 3. "It is only in perfect quietness and silence, free from all prejudices and preferences, that the consciousness can perceive the truth." 24 September 1953 (CWM 13: 50)

III – B. 4. "He, the divine worker, is free from all preference and all attachment; he has broken down the limits of his ego and is now only a perfectly pure and impersonal instrument of the supramental action upon earth." (CWM 12: 60)

III – B. 5. "Never forget that so long as you are capable of preference in your relations with life and men, you cannot be a pure and perfect instrument of the Divine." 28 April 1970 (CWM 10: 351)

III – B. 6. *{To the question how can one transform one's will into the divine Will? the Mother answers as below.}*

"A: Well, first you must want it. Afterwards you must have a great aspiration. And then you must continue to want it, and continue to aspire and not give way when difficulties come, and continue until you succeed. That's all. And then, a certain number of things are necessary, as for example not to be selfish, not to have a small narrow-mindedness, not to live with preferences, not to have desires, not to have mental opinions—many things. It is a fairly long process because you must change your ordinary nature. This is the first condition." (CWM 6: 460-461)

III – B. 7. "And the only solution, at every moment and in all cases, is (*gesture of self-giving*): "What Thou wilt", that is to say, the abolition of preference and desire. Even the preference for not suffering." (CWM 11: 222)

III – B. 8. "But when one wants to have a pure, correct information, to be in contact with the truth of things, and see in advance—not according to one's petty mental construction, but how things are decreed, in the place where they are decreed and the time when they are decreed—then that requires a *very great* mental purity, a *very great* vital equilibrium, an absence of desire, of preference. One must never want anything to be of one

kind or another, for this falsifies your vision immediately.” (CWM 6: 354)

III – B. 9. “To have the true intuition one must get rid of the mind’s self-will and the vital’s also, their preferences, fancies, fantasies, strong insistences, and eliminate the mental and vital ego’s pressure which sets the consciousness to work in the service of its own claims and desires. Otherwise these things will come in with force and claim to be intuitions, inspirations and the rest of it. Or if any intuitions come, they can be twisted and spoiled by the mixture of these forces of the Ignorance.” (CWSA 28: 162)

III – B. 10. “Intimacy with universal Nature: this intimacy is only possible for those whose consciousness is vast and who are without preference and without repulsion.” (CWM 15: 10)

III – B. 11. “One must be without preferences and without desire to know the Divine’s will.” (CWM 15: 257)

III – B. 12. “To understand the Divine we must have no more preferences.” (CWM 14: 25)

III – B. 13. “Above all preferences we want to be at the service of the Divine.” (CWM 14: 104)



III – B. 14. “To choose without preference and execute without desire is the great difficulty at the very root of the development of true consciousness and self-control. To choose in this sense means to see what is true and bring it into existence; and to choose thus, without the least personal bias for any thing, any person, action, circumstance, is exactly what is most difficult for an ordinary human being. Yet one must learn to act without any preference, free from all attractions and likings, taking one’s stand solely on the Truth which guides. And having chosen in accordance with the Truth the necessary action, one must carry it out without any desire.” (CWM 4: 1)

III – B. 15. “As long as you have a preference, a desire, an attraction, a liking, all these veil the Truth from you.” (CWM 4: 2)

III – B. 16. “This Yoga demands a total dedication of the life to the aspiration for the discovery and embodiment of the Divine Truth and to nothing else whatever. ... You must go inside yourself and enter into a complete dedication to the spiritual life. All clinging to mental preferences must fall away from you, all insistence on vital aims and interests and attachments must be put away, all egoistic clinging to family, friends, country must disappear if you want to succeed in Yoga. Whatever has to come as outgoing energy or action, must proceed from the Truth once

discovered and not from the lower mental or vital motives, from the Divine Will and not from personal choice or the preferences of the ego.” (CWSA 29: 15)

III – B. 17. “The greatest enemies of a perfect sincerity are preferences (either mental, vital or physical) and preconceived ideas. It is these obstacles that must be overcome.” (CWM 14: 71)

III – B. 18. “No attachments, desires or habits of the mind, heart, vital being or body should be clung to which come in the way of this one aspiration and one object of the life. One must be ready to renounce all these completely as soon as the demand comes from above and from the divine Shakti.” (CWSA 29: 44)

III – B. 19. “Passivity can be only to the Divine Force when it is felt at work, —there can be no passivity to other forces, for that would be dangerous in the extreme. Passivity does *not* mean a blank mind—it means allowing the Divine Force to work without interference of the mental preferences, vital desires or physical disinclinations.” (CWSA 29: 188)

### **III – C. Benefits of rejecting preferences in normal life**

III – C. 1. "He alone who is above likes and dislikes, desires and preferences can look at things with perfect impartiality, through senses that are in their functioning objective, like that of an extremely delicate and perfected machine, to which is added the clarity of a living consciousness." (CWM 4: 12)

III – C. 2. "Only one who is above all likes and dislikes, all desires and preferences, can regard all things with perfect impartiality; the purely objective perception of his senses becomes like that of an extremely delicate and faultless mechanism which benefits from the light of a living consciousness." (CWM 12: 264)

III – C. 3. "But if you want to know things as they really are, you must be *absolutely* like a mirror: silent, peaceful, immobile, impartial, without preferences and in a state of total receptivity. And if you are like that, you will begin to see that there are many things you are not aware of, but which are there, and which will start becoming active in you." (CWM 6: 137)

III – C. 4. "To forget oneself, one's own likings and preferences, is indispensable in order to be a true leader." (CWM 12: 356)

III – C. 5. *"Q: Mother, when is this possible? I often make mistakes; if I could know what is needful each time, it would be wonderful!"*

A: This can only happen when one has given up all personal preferences." 26 September 1934 (CWM 17: 174-175)

III – C. 6. "You must never forget that I disapprove of quarrels and always consider that both sides are equally wrong. To surmount one's feelings, preferences, dislikes and impulses, is an indispensable discipline here." 1 October 1943 (CWM 14: 262)

III – C. 7. "If anyone were capable of seeing the welfare of the work quite independent of his preferences and without turning everything into a personal question, then most of the difficulties would be solved." 313 (CWM 14: 313)

III – C. 8. "Be careful about the various reports of the workers—they are always biased. Each one speaks always with his preferences (likes and dislikes) and twists things. Blessings." (CWM 17: 274)

III – C. 9. "In work too there is an austerity. It consists in not having any preferences and in doing everything one does with interest." (CWM 12: 53)

III – C. 10. "The work is not going well because at Golconde there is an atmosphere of discord and disagreement which prevents the Force from working effectively. If each one made an effort to overcome his preferences and dislikes, the work would go much better." 22 January 1939 (CWM 17: 168)

III – C. 11. "There is nobody here, even among the best, who is ready to give up all his habits, conveniences and preferences to win the final victory, even if he has to break his neck on the way." (CWM 13: 180)

III – C. 12. "To be free from all preference and receive joyfully whatever comes from the Divine Will is not possible at first for any human being. What one should have at first is the constant idea that what the Divine wills is always for the best even when the mind does not see how it is so, to accept with resignation what one cannot yet accept with gladness and so to arrive at a calm equality which is not shaken even when on the surface there may be passing movements of a momentary reaction to outward happenings. If that is once firmly founded, the rest can come." (CWSA 29: 134)

III – C. 13. “For the desires are not the expression of needs but of preferences.” 19 September 1959 (CWM 16: 225)

III – C. 14. “Beyond all preferences and limitations, there is a ground of mutual understanding where all can meet and find their harmony: it is the aspiration for a divine consciousness.” (CWM 15: 187)

III – C. 15. “Tolerance is only the first step towards wisdom.

The need to tolerate indicates the presence of preferences.

He who lives in the Divine Consciousness regards all things with a perfect equanimity.” 9 August 1969 (CWM 14: 187)

III – C. 16. “Q: *Should preferences be neutralized or forgotten?*

One should not have them!

When the mind becomes silent, when it stops judging, pushing itself forward with its so-called knowledge,. One must refrain from judging, for the mind is only an instrument of action, not an instrument of true knowledge—true knowledge comes from elsewhere.

If one refrained from judging, one would arrive at an ever more precise knowledge of the Truth and nine-tenths of the world’s misery would disappear.

The great disorder in the world would to a large extent be neutralized if the mind could admit that it does not know.” (CWM 4: 3)

III – C. 17. “If the teacher who gives marks kept in mind that he was the representative of the divine truth, if he constantly took sufficient trouble to be in tune with the divine Will as much as this is possible for him, well, that could be very useful; for the ordinary teacher acts according to his personal preferences—what he does not like, what he likes, etc.—and he belongs to the general falsehood, but if at the time of giving marks, the teacher tries sincerely to put himself in harmony with a truth deeper than his small narrow consciousness, he may serve as an intermediary of this truth and, as such, help his students to become conscious of this truth within themselves.” (CWM 4: 92-93)

### III – D. Rejection of mind's habits in Yoga

III – D. 1. "Unless we break with the habits and beliefs of the past, there is little hope of advancing rapidly towards the future." 23 December 1967 (CWM 15: 72)

III – D. 2. "*Q: What do I need to develop most? And what do I need to reject most?*

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

Reject—the pull of the old human habits." 25 February 1970 (CWM 14: 67)

III – D. 3. "It is difficult to get rid of all habits. They must be faced with a steady determination." 19 July 1954 (CWM 14: 160)

III – D. 4. "All sincere effort to progress and get rid of dangerous habits is answered and supported by an active help from the Grace—but the effort must be *steady* and the aspiration must be *sincere*." (CWM 14: 161)

III – D. 5. "*Q: I don't quite understand what you mean by "There is nothing impossible about a prompt conversion; the difficult thing is to make it last." It gets converted for a moment and then falls back again?*



A: Yes. The mind suddenly sees clearly and is converted, but then it is attacked again by obscurity and falls back into its old habits." (CWM 17: 46)

III – D. 6. "Q: *Sweet Mother, I have formed the bad habit of nearly always being late everywhere.*

A: There is no habit that cannot be changed." 14 October 1963 (CWM 16: 291)

III – D. 7. "Sadhana is always difficult and everybody has conflicting elements in his nature and it is difficult to make the vital give up its ingrained habits.

That is no reason for giving up sadhana. One has to keep up the central aspiration which is always sincere and go on steadily in spite of temporary failures; and it is then inevitable that the change will come.

With my love and blessings." 3 May 1939 (CWM 14: 228)

### **III – E. Rejection of mental constructions in Yoga**

III – E. 1. "*What is it that makes the mental construction?* It is the mental ego which makes the construction and it clings to it desperately." (CWM 4: 200)

III – E. 2. "To make progress you must throw aside all the old constructions, demolish all the preconceived ideas. Preconceived ideas are the innumerable habitual mental constructions in which you live, which are fixed and therefore have no plasticity and cannot progress. All this must be thrown aside. Then new ideas are born, active thought which is creative." (CWM 14: 346)

III – E. 3. "Beyond words, beyond thoughts, the Supreme Presence makes itself felt and compels our wonder. Let us beware of all mental constructions that limit and distort. Let us strive to keep the contact pure." 12 April 1970 (CWM 10: 343)

III – E. 4. For example, if you want to progress mentally, you must break all your mental forms, all your mental constructions to be able to make new ones. (CWM 9: 47)

III – E. 5. "All the mental constructions one makes carry their own contradiction with them. One can try to overrule it or make it as harmless as possible, but it exists, it is

there, and at the slightest weakness or lack of vigilance or inadvertance, it enters, and destroys all the work. Mentally, one arrives at very few results, and they are always mixed. Something else is needed. One must pass from the mind into the domain of faith or of a higher consciousness, to be able to act with safety." (CWM 9: 126)

III – E. 6. "And it is only when one understands that *all* external things, all mental constructions, all material efforts are vain, futile, if they are not entirely consecrated to this Light and Force from above, to this Truth which is trying to express itself, that one is ready to make decisive progress." (CWM 9: 420)

III – E. 7. **"If thou wouldst have humanity advance, buffet all preconceived ideas. Thought thus smitten awakes and becomes creative. Otherwise it rests in a mechanical repetition and mistakes that for its right activity.** Thoughts and Glimpses, (SABCL16: 378)

...

Q: *What is the meaning of "thought awakes and becomes creative"?*

A: No, Sri Aurobindo says at the beginning of the sentence: "Thought *thus smitten* awakes..." What he says is that in order to progress one must break up old constructions, buffet, demolish all preconceived ideas. Preconceived ideas are the habitual mental constructions in which one lives,

and which are fixed, which become rigid fortresses and cannot progress because they are fixed. Nothing that is fixed can progress. So the advice is to break down, that is, destroy all preconceived ideas, all fixed mental constructions. And this is the true way to give birth to new ideas or to thought—active thought—thought which is creative.” CWM 8: 395-396)

III – E. 8. “Sri Aurobindo is speaking of the mental constructions, representations or conclusions of the intellect, of the suggestions and instigations of the Life-force, of the needs of the body. Now, all this, these half-lights or false lights can serve a little on the path, can help us a little, and only for a while. And all that is not this, all the rest, that is to say, all the countless thoughts and movements, sensations and feelings one has, well, all this is of no use at all. And worse than being quite useless, it detains us on the way, that’s all. It confuses us. That is to say, it creates an inner confusion and must be altogether ignored.” (CWM 8: 144)

III – E. 9. “And you have a whole mental construction in yourself, made of observations, studies, experiments; and the more you advance in age, the greater becomes the number of experiments and results of study and observation. You make for yourself a sort of mental structure in which you live. And unless you are powerfully

intelligent, with an opening to the higher worlds, you have an innate, spontaneous, unshakable conviction of the absolute worth of your observations, and even without your having to think, it acts automatically in your being: by a sort of habit this thing inevitably brings that particular result.” (CWM 8: 361-362)

III – E. 10. “Well, if you want to attain knowledge, the first thing, the first indispensable step is not to believe in the validity of those things. And if you observe yourself, you will realise that this belief in the validity of these observations and deductions is almost absolute in you. It expresses itself through all sorts of ideas which reasonably enough appear evident to you, yet are exactly the limitations which prevent you from reaching knowledge by identity.” (CWM 8: 362)

III – E. 11. “The supreme and final word of the Gita for the Yogin is that he should leave all conventional formulas of belief and action, all fixed and external rules of conduct, all constructions of the outward or surface Nature, *dharmas*, and take refuge in the Divine alone.” (CWSA 23: 274)

III – E. 12. “And for this to become a coordinated, coherent, logical thought, a long thorough work is necessary. And then, the best part of it is that when you have succeeded in making a beautiful, well-formed, very

strong, very powerful mental construction, the first thing you will be told is, "You must break this so that you can unite with the Divine!" (CWM 6: 259)

III – E. 13. "*Are all religions mental constructions?*

All religions were perhaps not that in their beginning, but they have certainly become that with time." (CWM 4: 257)

III – E. 14. "The indispensable basis for Yoga, which must be well established before you can walk freely on the path, is equanimity. Naturally, from that point of view, all disturbances are tests which you have to pass. But they are necessary too in order to break down the limits which your mental constructions have built around you and which prevent your opening to the Light and the Truth. The whole mental world in which you live is limited, even though you may not know or feel its limitations, and something must come and break down this building in which your mind has shut itself and liberate it." (CWM 3: 53)

III – E. 15. "*What is it "to work for the Future"?*

To begin with, not to stick to the old habits individual and national." (CWM 15: 181)

III – E. 16. "Nothing is inevitable. At every moment an intervention may come from a higher plane into the material one and alter the course of circumstances. But in

this particular case there is a conflict between a very powerful mental construction founded on medical opinion and your faith in the divine Grace.

The power of this medical suggestion lies in the fact that it insinuates itself into the subconscious and acts on the body from there, undetected even by the conscious mind unless it is in the habit of scouring the subconscious with the vigilance of a detective.

So there we are—I cannot promise you that your faith in the Grace will be intense and unshakable enough to overcome the harmful effect of these medical suggestions; and I feel that I have no right to tell you, “It is nothing,” when everything in your material consciousness is crying out, “Danger!”

Rest assured that our help and our blessings are always with you.” 24 March 1937 (CWM 17: 187)

## **IV – So that the true knowledge may find free room in a silent mind**

“— rejection of the mind’s ideas, opinions, preferences, habits, constructions,  
so that the true knowledge may find free room in a silent mind, —” (CWSA 32: 6)

### **IV – A. What is true knowledge?**

**IV – A. 1.** “True knowledge is to know with the inner being, and when the inner being is touched by the light, then it arises to embrace that which is seen, it yearns to possess, it struggles to shape that in itself and itself to it, it labours to become one with the glory of its vision. Knowledge in this sense is an awakening to identity and, since the inner being realises itself by consciousness and delight, by love, by possession and oneness with whatever of itself it has seen, knowledge awakened must bring an overmastering impulse towards this true and only perfect realisation.” (CWSA 19: 325)

**IV – A. 2.** “Experience must always be the basis of true knowledge, but it must be experience illuminated by true perception, not experience dominated by surface impressions.” (CWSA 13: 61)



**IV – A. 3.** "... all true knowledge comes by going behind the superficialities and discovering the inner truth and the hidden law." (CWSA 13: 176)

**IV – A. 4.** "Knowledge can only come by conscious identity, for that is the only true knowledge,—existence aware of itself." (CWSA 21: 226)

**IV – A. 5.** "For Sri Aurobindo, true knowledge is precisely Knowledge by identity, and wisdom is the state one achieves when one is in this true knowledge. He says it here: Wisdom looks behind the veil of false appearances and sees the reality behind it." (CWM 10: 17)

**IV – A. 6.** "But it is precisely true Knowledge, Knowledge by identity and the wisdom which results from it that always see the point where all apparently contradictory things harmonise, complement each other, form a perfectly coherent, coordinated whole." (CWM 10: 18)

**IV – A. 7.** "True knowledge is beyond words, beyond systems, beyond languages; it is in a silent identity. It is in fact the only one which does not err." (CWM 7: 364)

**IV – A. 8.** "But the very first step towards self-knowledge as towards the true knowledge of phenomena is to get behind the apparent truth of things and find the real but

masked, essential and dynamic truth which their appearances cover." (CWSA 23: 214)

**IV – A. 9.** "Men are supposed to follow their intellect, to have and assert their own ideas right or wrong without any control; the intellect, it is said, is man's highest instrument and he must think and act according to its ideas. But this is not true; the intellect needs an inner light to guide, check and control it quite as much as the vital. **There is something above the intellect which one has to discover and the intellect should be only an intermediary for the action of that source of true Knowledge.**" 23 March 1937 (CWSA 32: 618)

**IV – A. 10.** "Mental knowledge is not true knowledge; **true knowledge is that which is based on the true sight, the sight of the Seer, of Surya, of the Kavi.** Mental thought is not knowledge, it is a golden lid placed over the face of the Truth, the Sight, the divine Ideation, the Truth-Consciousness. When that is removed, sight replaces mental thought, the all-embracing truth-ideation, Mahas, Veda, Drishti, replaces the fragmentary mental activity." ISHA UPANISHAD (CWSA 17: 90)

**IV – A. 11.** "The true knowledge is truth of existence, *satyam*, not mere truth of form or appearance." ISHA UPANISHAD (CWSA 17: 72)

**IV – A. 12.** “For knowledge is real and action in harmony with true knowledge only when they proceed naturally out of the conscious, illumined and self-possessing soul, in which being, knowledge and action are one movement.”  
ISHA UPANISHAD (CWSA 17: 81)

**IV – A. 13.** “The true knowledge is that of the highest, the inmost, the infinite.” (CWSA 18: 154) KENA UPANISHAD

**IV – A. 14.** “The indications must necessarily be very imperfect, for it is only some initial representations of an abstract and general character that can be arrived at by the method of metaphysical inquiry: **the true knowledge and description must be left to the language of the mystic and the figures, at once more vivid and more recondite, of a direct and concrete experience.**”  
(CWSA 22: 955)

**IV – A. 15.** “**Mental faith combats doubt and helps to open to the true knowledge; ...**” . (CWSA 29: 99)

**IV – A. 16.** “For that vast field of evidence and experience which now begins to reopen its gates to us, can only be safely entered when the intellect has been severely trained to a clear austerity; seized on by unripe minds, it lends itself to the most perilous distortions and misleading imaginations and actually in the past encrusted a real

nucleus of truth with such an accretion of perverting superstitions and irrationalising dogmas that **all advance in true knowledge was rendered impossible**. It became necessary for a time to make a clean sweep at once of the truth and its disguise in order that the road might be clear for a new departure and a surer advance. The rationalistic tendency of Materialism has done mankind this great service." (CWSA 21: 13)

**IV – A. 17.** "The highest power of reason, because its pure and characteristic power, is the disinterested seeking after true knowledge. **When knowledge is pursued for its own sake, then alone are we likely to arrive at true knowledge**. Afterwards we may utilise that knowledge for various ends; but if from the beginning we have only particular ends in view, then we limit our intellectual gain, limit our view of things, distort the truth because we cast it into the mould of some particular idea or utility and ignore or deny all that conflicts with that utility or that set idea." (CWSA 25: 106) The Human Cycle

**IV – A. 18.** "The intellect, in its true nature, is an instrument of expression and action. It is something like an intermediary between the true knowledge, whose seat is in the higher regions above the mind, and realisation here below." (CWM 3: 33)

**IV – A. 19.** "The perception of the exterior consciousness may deny the perception of the psychic. But the psychic has the true knowledge, an intuitive instinctive knowledge." (CWM 3: 152)

**IV – A. 20.** "True knowledge means awareness by identity: once you get in touch with the supramental world, you can say something about its descent, but not before." (CWM 3" 178)

**IV – A. 21.** "Calm are the thoughts, the words and the acts of one who has liberated himself by the true knowledge and has achieved a perfect tranquillity." (CWM 3: 223)

**IV – A. 22.** "There is one thing certain about the mind and its workings; it is that you can understand only what you already know in your own inner self. What strikes you in a book is what you have already experienced deep within you. Men find a book or a teaching very wonderful and often you hear them say, "That is exactly what I myself feel and know, but I could not bring it out or express it as well as it is expressed here." When men come across a book of true knowledge, each finds himself there, and at every new reading he discovers things that he did not see in it at first; it opens to him each time a new field of knowledge that had till then escaped him in it. But that is

because it reaches layers of knowledge that were waiting for expression in the subconscious in him; the expression has now been given by somebody else and much better than he could himself have done it. But, once expressed, he immediately recognises it and feels that it is the truth. The knowledge that seems to come to you from outside is only an occasion for bringing out the knowledge that is within you." (CWM 3: 51-52)

**IV – A. 23.** "But if you want to attain true knowledge, that is, spiritual knowledge, which can be obtained only through identification, you must go beyond this reason and enter a domain higher than the mind, where one is in direct contact with the Light either of the Overmind or the Supermind. And Sri Aurobindo says this, that so long as you are in the mental field, reason helps you, it is your helper, your guide; but if you want to have true knowledge by identity, reason becomes a limitation and a bar. That is not to say that you should lose it! But it must be subordinated to your movement of ascent. Sri Aurobindo does not tell you to become unreasonable, he says you must pass beyond reason into a higher Truth and Light." (CWM 8: 359)

**IV – A. 24.** "But any transformation in the being, on any plane, always has some repercussion on the lower planes. There is always an effect; even things which seem to be

purely intellectual certainly have some repercussion on the structure of the brain." (CWM 10: 143)

**IV – A. 25.** "One drop of true knowledge can create a revolution if it falls into a world of ignorance." 5 June 1970" (CWM 10: 360)

**IV – A. 26.** "It is no use reading books of guidance if one is not determined to live what they teach.Blessings." The Mother (CWM 10: 1)

**IV – A. 27.** "Sri Aurobindo is speaking here of knowledge by inspiration or revelation, when something suddenly descends and illumines the understanding. You suddenly have the impression that you know something for the first time, because it comes directly from the domain of Light, of true Knowledge, and it comes with all its innate power of truth—it illumines you. And when you have just received it, it seems indeed that nothing can resist that Light. And if you take care to allow it to act within you, it accomplishes all the transformation it can achieve in its own domain." (CWM 10: 141)

**IV – A. 28.** "*Yes, but for this knowledge to have a real power of transformation...*

Yes, it is the higher Knowledge, the Truth expressing itself, what Sri Aurobindo calls the true Knowledge, and it is this Knowledge that transforms all creation." (CWM 10: 142)

**IV – A. 29.** "Knowledge can only come by conscious identity, for that is the only true knowledge,—existence aware of itself." (SABCL 21: 226)

**IV – A. 30.** "When the gates of true knowledge are crossed, no words are left to express what is known." (CWM 14: 196)

**IV – A. 31.** "He who has crossed the gates of the true Knowledge has nothing more to say or to teach." (CWM 14: 197)



## **IV – B. Intellectual reasoning is not true knowledge**

**IV – B. 1.** “The knowledge which the senses and intellectual reasoning from the data of the senses can bring us, is not true knowledge; it is a science of appearances.” (CWSA 23: 301)

**IV – B. 2.** “No knowledge can be true knowledge which subjects itself to the senses or uses them otherwise than as first indices whose data have constantly to be corrected and overpassed.” (CWSA 23: 313)

**IV – B. 3.** “The true knowledge of things is denied to our reason, because that is not our spirit's greatest essential power but only an expedient, a transitional instrument meant to deal with the appearance of things and their phenomenal process.” (CWSA 12: 164)

**IV – B. 4.** “One must learn to distrust hasty conclusions from surface appearances— is not that the first condition of true knowledge? —and learn to see and know things from within.” (CWM 32: 489)

## **IV – C. True knowledge may find free room in a silent mind**

**IV – C. 1.** "A silent mind is the first step towards true knowledge and the experience of the Divine." (CWSA 29: 159)

**IV – C. 2.** "... —it is in the inner silence of the mind that true knowledge can come; for the ordinary activity of the mind only creates surface ideas and representations which are not true knowledge. ... therefore to throw oneself out too much in such speech wastes the energy and prevents the inward listening which brings the word of true knowledge. ...

Not only a truer knowledge, but a greater power comes to one in the quietude and silence of a mind that instead of bubbling on the surface can go into its own depths and listen for what comes from a higher consciousness." (CWSA 29: 159)

**IV – C. 3.** "In order to have true knowledge one must achieve mental silence." (CWM 13: 343)

**IV – C. 4.** "To know how to be silent is sometimes of priceless value.

Silence opens the door to true knowledge." 2 August 1970 (CWM 17: 366)

**IV – C. 5.** "When this secret peace is unveiled, a great calm settles on the being and there comes usually with it the perception and experience of the all-pervading silent Brahman, everything else at first seeming to be mere form and eidolon. On the basis of this calm everything else may be built up in the knowledge and experience no longer of the external phenomena of things but of the deeper truth of the divine manifestation." (CWSA 23: 324)

**IV – C. 6.** "The important point is to know that the mind is incapable of understanding the One Supreme—that is why all that is said and thought about it is a travesty and an approximation and is necessarily full of irreconcilable contradictions.

That is also why it has always been taught that mental silence is indispensable in order to have true knowledge." 31 August 1965 (CWM 12: 139)

**IV – C. 7.** "You should not confuse a calm mind with a silent mind. You can calm your mind and stop its ordinary activity, but it may still be open to ideas coming from outside and that too disturbs the calm. And for the mind to be completely silent, you must not only stop its own activity but shut out all that comes from other minds. This is not easy." (CWM 14: 347)

**IV – C. 8.** "It is only in mental silence that you can hear the voice without distorting it—be very peaceful." 29 May 1971(CWM 14: 349)

**IV – C. 9.** "Don't torment yourself, and keep your mind very quiet. True knowledge comes from beyond. Blessings." 13 September 1972 (CWM 14: 349)

**IV – C. 10.** "To obtain mental silence, one must learn to relax, to let oneself float on the waves of the universal force as a plank floats on water, *motionless* but *relaxed*. Effort is never silent." 23 December 1964 (CWM 16: 310)

**IV – C. 11.** "One—you all know about it undoubtedly—is of the time Sri Aurobindo began writing the *Arya*, in 1914. It was neither a mental knowledge nor even a mental creation which he transcribed: he silenced his mind and sat at the typewriter, and from above, from the higher planes, all that had to be written came down, all ready, and he had only to move his fingers on the typewriter and it was transcribed. It was in this state of mental silence which allows the knowledge— and even the expression—from above to pass through that he wrote the whole *Arya*, with its sixty-four printed pages a month. This is why, besides, he could do it, for if it had been a mental work of construction it would have been quite impossible." (CWM 8: 281)

**IV – C. 12.** "This kind of revelation can only occur in a silent mind—at least in a mind that is at rest, completely quiet and still, otherwise they do not come. Or if they come, you do not notice them, because of all the noise you are making. And of course, they help this quiet, this silence, this receptivity to become better and better established. ... There is a great difference between a silence that is dead, dull, unresponsive and the receptive silence of a quietened mind. That makes a great difference. But that is the result of these experiences. All the progress we make always results, quite naturally, from truths coming from above." (CWM 10: 143)

**IV – C. 13.** "But only if the mind is no less intense in its purity than its silence. For in an impure mind the silence will soon fill with misleading lights and false voices, the echo or sublimation of its own vain conceits and opinions or the response to its secret pride, vanity, ambition, lust, greed or desire. The Titans and the Demons will speak to it more readily than the divine Voices.

Silence is indispensable, but also there is needed wideness. If the mind is not silent, it cannot receive the lights and voices of the supernal Truth or receiving mixes with them its own flickering tongues and blind pretentious babble. Active, arrogant, noisy, it distorts and disfigures what it receives. If it is not wide, it cannot house the effective power and creative force of the Truth. Some light

may play there but it becomes narrow, confined and sterile. Or the force that is descending is cabined and thwarted and withdraws again from this rebellious foreign plane to its vast native heights. Or even if something comes down and remains, it is a pearl in the mire; for no change takes place in the nature or else there is formed only a thin intensity that points narrowly upward to the summits but can hold little and diffuse less upon the world around it." (CWSA 12: 256)

**IV – C. 14.** "There are only three ways by which it can make itself a channel or instrument of Truth.

Either it must fall silent in the Self and give room for a wider and greater consciousness;

or it must make itself passive to an inner Light and allow that Light to use it as a means of expression;

or else it must itself change from the questioning intellectual superficial mind it now is to an intuitive intelligence, a mind of vision fit for the direct perception of the divine Truth." (CWSA 28: 321)

## **IV – D. If we arrive at true knowledge then our life here can become divine and perfect**

**IV – D. 1.** “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 and this emergence become possible.” (CWSA 12: 178)

**IV – D. 2.** “True knowledge commences only when our consciousness can pass beyond its present normal limit in man: for then it becomes directly aware of its self and of the Power in the world and begins to have at least an initial knowledge by identity which is the sole true knowledge. Henceforward it knows and sees, no longer by the reason groping among external data, but by an ever increasing and always more luminous self-illuminating and all illuminating experience. In the end it will become a conscious part of the Divine revealing itself in the world; its life will be a power for the conscious evolution of that which is still unmanifested in the material universe.” (CWSA 12: 164)

**IV – D. 3.** “The only true knowledge – for all the rest is either false or only true in a limited field, half-true and

therefore, from the vision of the whole, false – is that which reads everything in the sense and light of the Divine.”  
(CWSA 12: 263)



## **V – Understanding the vital nature's desires**

### **V – A. What is desire?**

V – A. 1. "Q: *Sweet Mother,*  
*What is the difference between desire and aspiration, ...?*

A: Desire is a vital movement, aspiration is a psychic movement.

When one has had a true aspiration, unselfish and sincere, one cannot even ask the question anymore; for the vibration of aspiration, luminous and calm, has nothing to do with the vibration of desire, which is passionate, dark and often violent." (CWM 16: 411)

V – A. 2. "... desire is a movement of life in mind; ..." (CWSA 22: 798) (SABCL 19: 768)

V – A. 3. "In the divine sight, principles and desires are one and the same thing: principles are whims of the mind just as desires are whims of the vital." (CWM 14: 342)

V – A. 4. "... desire is the result of incompleteness, of insufficiency, of something that is not possessed or enjoyed and which the being seeks for possession or enjoyment." (CWSA 22: 800) (SABCL 19:770)

V – A. 5. "The first cause of impurity in the understanding is the intermixture of desire in the thinking functions, and desire itself is an impurity of the Will involved in the vital and emotional parts of our being." (CWSA 23: 313) (SABCL 21: 298)

V – A. 6. "... —for desire is a perversion of the spirit— ... Desire is the chief enemy of spiritual perfection." (CWSA 19: 582-583) (SABCL 13: 563-564)

V – A. 7. "Desire is only a mode of the emotional mind which by ignorance seeks its delight in the object of desire and not in the Brahman who expresses Himself in the object. By destroying that ignorance one can do action without entanglement in desire." Isha Upanishad: Analysis (CWSA 17: 20) (SABCL 12: 76)

V – A. 8. "This solution depends on the idea that desire is only an egoistic and vital deformation of the divine Ananda or delight of being from which the world is born; by extirpation of ego and desire Ananda again becomes the conscious principle of existence." Isha Upanishad (CWSA 17: 85-86) (SABCL 12: 136)

V – A. 9. "Desire is an impulse. It takes hold of you... it doesn't necessarily hold you with any conscious thought. It is an impulse which pushes you to get possession of

something. You can put your will at the service of your desire, but desire is not will." (CWM 6: 410)

V – A. 10. "Desire is the law of life and action and therefore of Karma." (CWSA 13: 370) (SABCL 16: 165)

V – A. 11. "... desire is limitation and insecurity in a hunger for pleasure and satisfaction ..." (CWSA 23: 330)

V – A. 12. "... for desire has a double knot, a lower knot in the prana, which is a craving in the instruments, and a very subtle knot in the soul itself with the buddhi as its first support or *pratistha*, which is the inmost origin of this mesh of our bondage. When we look from below, desire presents itself to us as a craving of the life force which subtilises in the emotions into a craving of the heart and is farther subtilised in the intelligence into a craving, preference, passion of the aesthetic, ethical, dynamic or rational turn of the buddhi. This desire is essential to the ordinary man; he cannot live or act as an individual without knotting up all his action into the service of some kind of lower or higher craving, preference or passion. But when we are able to look at desire from above, we see that what supports this instrumental desire is a will of the spirit. There is a will, *tapas*, *sakti*, by which the secret spirit imposes on its outer members all their action and draws from it an active delight of its being, an ananda, in which

they very obscurely and imperfectly, if at all consciously, partake." (CWSA 24: 675)

V – A. 13. "*What is the significance of the picture You sent me?*

This boar is the symbol of desires." 1933 (CWM 15: 38)

## **V – B. Nature of desire**

V – B. 1. “There is a way which consists in giving him all he wants; and naturally, the next minute he will want something else, because that’s the law, the law of desire: never to be satisfied.” (CWM 6: 412)

V – B. 2. “The root of desire is the vital craving to seize upon that which we feel we have not, it is the limited life’s instinct for possession and satisfaction. It creates the sense of want,—first the simpler vital craving of hunger, thirst, lust, then these psychical hungers, thirsts, lusts of the mind which are a much greater and more instant and pervading affliction of our being, the hunger which is infinite because it is the hunger of an infinite being, the thirst which is only temporarily lulled by satisfaction, but is in its nature insatiable.” (CWSA 24: 656)

V – B. 3. “But I think, generally speaking, with very few exceptions, that people live in perpetual desires. Only, they don’t express them, and sometimes they are ashamed also to acknowledge it to themselves. But it is there, this need of having something... you know, one sees something pretty, it is immediately translated into a desire for possession; and this is one of the things... it is absolutely childish. It is childish and indeed it is ridiculous, because at least ninety times out of a hundred, when the one who had

a desire for something possesses it, he doesn't even look at it any longer. It is very rarely that this thing continues to interest him once he has it, whatever the nature of the object." (CWM 6: 411-412)

V – B. 4. "An ordinary consciousness, altogether ordinary, dull like all ordinary consciousness — as soon as it sees something beautiful, whether it be an object or a person, hop! "I want it!" It is deplorable, you know. And into the bargain it doesn't even have the joy of the beauty, because it has the anguish of desire. It misses that and has nothing in exchange, because there is nothing pleasant in desiring anything. It only puts you in an unpleasant state, that's all." (CWM 7: 38)

V – B. 5. "Desire is the root of all sorrow, disappointment, affliction, for though it has a feverish joy of pursuit and satisfaction, yet because it is always a straining of the being, it carries into its pursuit and its getting a labour, hunger, struggle, a rapid subjection to fatigue, a sense of limitation, dissatisfaction and early disappointment with all its gains, a ceaseless morbid stimulation, trouble, disquiet, *asanti*." (CWSA 24: 656-657) (SABCL 21: 629-630)

V – B. 6. "*Who suffers? The vital? Is it because its desires are not satisfied?*

Most often — but it also manages to suffer when its desires are satisfied.” (CWM 17: 147)

V – B. 7. “...the leaping, smoke-stifled, soon fatigued and baffled flame of desire ...” (CWSA 23: 659) (SABCL 20: 632)

V – B. 8. “You do not seem to have a correct idea of the nature of vital desire. Vital desire grows by being indulged, it does not become satisfied. If your desire were indulged, it would begin to grow more and more and “ask for more and more. That has been our constant experience with the sadhaks and it confirms what has always been known about desire. Desire and envy have to be thrown out of the consciousness - there is no other way to deal with them.” (SABCL 24: 1402)

V – B. 9. “It is always the habit of the vital being to find out things by which it persuades the mind and justifies its desires; and circumstances usually shape themselves to justify it still further.” (SABCL 24: 1403)

V – B. 10. “... vital desires which linked you to the lower movements and invited the pressure of a hostile Force on your lower vital and your body ...” (SABCL 24: 1405)

V – B. 11. “It is sometimes said that in a man’s sleep his true nature is revealed. ...

All the desires that have been repressed without being dissolved— and this dissociation can only be obtained after much sound and wide-ranging analysis— seek satisfaction while the will is dormant. {in dreams}

And since desires are true dynamic centres of formation, they tend to organise, within and around us, the combination of circumstances that is most favourable to their satisfaction.

In this way the fruit of many efforts made by our conscious thought during the day can be destroyed in a few hours at night.” (CWM 2: 32-33)

“These dreams often enable us to perceive tendencies, inclinations, impulses, desires of which we were not conscious so long as our will to realise our ideal kept them concealed in some obscure recess of our being.

You will easily understand that rather than letting them live on unknown to us, it is better to bring them boldly and courageously to the light, so as to force them to leave us for ever.” (CWM 2: 34)



## **V – C. Where does desire come from?**

### *V – C. 1. "Where does desire come from?"*

The Buddha said that it comes from ignorance. It is more or less that. It is something in the being which fancies that it needs something else in order to be satisfied. And the proof that it is ignorance is that when one has satisfied it, one no longer cares for it, at least ninety-nine and a half times out of a hundred. I believe, right at its origin it is an obscure need for growth, as in the lowest forms of life love is changed into the need to swallow, absorb, become joined with another thing. This is the most primitive form of love in the lowest forms of life, it is to take and absorb. Well, the need to take is desire. So perhaps if we went back far enough into the last depths of the inconscience, we could say that the origin of desire is love. It is love in its obscurest and most unconscious form. It is a need to become joined with something, an attraction, a need to take, you see.

Take for instance... you see something which is — which seems to you or is — very beautiful, very harmonious, very pleasant; if you have the true consciousness, you experience this joy of seeing, of being in a conscious contact with something very beautiful, very harmonious, and then that's all. It stops there. You have the joy of it — that such a thing exists, you see. And this

is quite common among artists who have a sense of beauty. For example, an artist may see a beautiful creature and have the joy of observing the beauty, grace, harmony of movement and all that, and that's all. It stops there. He is perfectly happy, perfectly satisfied, because he has seen something beautiful." (CWM 7: 37-38)

V – C. 2. "But it is also said that the first expression of love in living beings is the desire to devour. One wants to absorb, desires to devour. There is one instance which would seem to prove that this is not altogether false—that is when the tiger catches its prey or the snake its victim, it happens that both the tiger's and the snake's victims give themselves up in a kind of delight of being eaten. An experience is narrated of a man who was in the bush with his friends and had lagged behind and was caught by a tiger, a man-eater. The others came back when they saw that he was missing. They saw the tracks. They ran after him, just in time to prevent the tiger's eating him. When he came to himself a little, they told him he must have had a frightful experience. He said: "No, just imagine, I don't know what happened to me, as soon as that tiger caught me and while it was dragging me along, I felt an intense love for it and a great desire to be eaten by it!"

This is quite true, it is not an invention. It is a true story." (CWM 5: 149)

V – C. 3. "All the ordinary vital movements are foreign to the true being and come from outside; they do not belong to the soul nor do they originate in it but are waves from the general Nature, Prakriti.

The desires come from outside, enter the subconscious vital and rise to the surface. It is only when they rise to the surface and the mind becomes aware of them, that we become conscious of the desire. It seems to us to be our own because we feel it thus rising from the vital into the mind and do not know that it came from outside. What belongs to the vital, to the being, what makes it responsible is not the desire itself, but the habit of responding to the waves or the currents of suggestion that come into it from the universal Prakriti." (SABCL 24: 1397-1398)

V – C. 4. "And first of all he must give up his desires; for desire is the most obscure and the most obscuring movement of the lower nature. Desires are motions of weakness and ignorance and they keep you chained to your weakness and to your ignorance. Men have the impression that their desires are born within; they feel as if they come out of themselves or arise within themselves; but it is a false impression. Desires are waves of the vast sea of the obscure lower nature and they pass from one person to another. Men do not generate a desire in themselves, but are invaded by these waves; whoever is

open and without defence is caught in them and tossed about. Desire by engrossing and possessing him makes him incapable of any discrimination and gives him the impression that it is part of his nature to manifest it. In reality, it has nothing to do with his true nature. It is the same with all the lower impulses, jealousy or envy, hatred or violence. These too are movements that seize you, waves that overwhelm and invade; they deform, they do not belong to the true character or the true nature; they are no intrinsic or inseparable part of yourself, but come out of the sea of surrounding obscurity in which move the forces of the lower nature. These desires, these passions have no personality, there is nothing in them or their action that is peculiar to you; they manifest in the same way in everyone." (CWM 3: 117)

V – C. 5. "The divine Will is completely veiled by this host of things. So I have said here (*Mother takes her book*): "You must accept all things—and only those things—that come from the Divine. Because things can come from concealed desires. The desires work in the subconscious and attract things to you of which possibly you may not recognise the origin, but which do not come from the Divine but from disguised desires." (CWM 5: 18)

V – C. 6. "If you have a strong desire for something you cannot get, you project your desire outside yourself. It

goes off like a tiny personality separated from you and roams about in the world. It will take a little round, more or less large, and return to you, perhaps when you have forgotten it. ... It was a small formation and it has gone and done its work as it could.... It is impossible to have desires without their being realised, even if it be quite a tiny desire. The formation has done what it could; it took a lot of trouble, it has worked hard, and after years it returns. It is like a servant you have sent out and who has done his best. When he returns you tell him: "What have you done?"—"Why? But, sir, it was because you wanted it!" (CWM 5: 18)

## **V – D. The surface vital of man is full of desires**

V – D. 1. "The surface vital is narrow, ignorant, limited, full of obscure desires, passions, cravings, revolts, pleasures and pains, transient joys and griefs, exultations and depressions." (CWSA 28: 185)

V – D. 2. "The vital has to be carefully distinguished from mind, even though it has a mind element transfused into it; the vital is the Life nature made up of desires, sensations, feelings, passions, energies of action, will of desire, reactions of the desire soul in man and of all that play of possessive and other related instincts, anger, fear, greed, lust etc. that belong to this field of the nature." (CWSA 28: 168)

V – D. 3. "The vital on the other hand is a thing of desires, impulses, force-pushes, emotions, sensations, seekings after life fulfilment, possession and enjoyment; these are its function and its nature; —it is that part of us which seeks after life and its movements for their own sake and it does not want to leave hold of them even if they bring it suffering as well as or more than pleasure; it is even capable of luxuriating in tears and suffering as part of the drama of life." (CWSA 28: 175)

V – D. 4. "The place of desire is below the heart in the central vital (navel) and in the lower vital, but it invades the emotion and the vital mind." (CWSA 28: 194)

V – D. 5. "The vital physical on the other hand is the vehicle of the nervous responses of our physical nature; it is the field and instrument of the smaller sensations, desires, reactions of all kinds to the impacts of the outer physical and gross material life." (CWSA 28: 202-203)

V – D. 6. "Higher vital usually refers to the vital mind and emotive being as opposed to the middle vital which has its seat in the navel and is dynamic, sensational and passionate and the lower which is made up of the smaller movements of human life-desire and life-reactions." (CWSA 28: 86)

V – D. 7. "It is not possible to give a name to all the energies that act in the being. They are put into several classes. First are the mental thought energies (intelligence, dynamic mind, physical perceptive mind); the vital—1st emotional vital with all the emotional movements in it; 2nd the central vital (the larger desires, passions, ambitions, forces of work, possession, conquest); 3rd the lower vital (all the small egoistic movements of desire, enjoyment, lust, greed, jealousy, envy, vanity etc. etc.); 4th the physical energies concerned with the material life and its

functioning, needs, outer action, instrumental fulfilment of the other powers." (CWSA 28 167)

V – D. 8. "It cannot be explained accurately in a few words; but roughly thoughts are of the mind, emotions are of the heart, desires are of the vital. On the surface they are all mixed together, but behind they come from separate parts of the being." (CWSA 28: 167)

V – D. 9. "The vital is at once the place of desires and energies, impulses and passions, of cowardice, but also of heroism — to bridle it is to turn all this towards the divine Will and submit it to this Will." (CWM 16: 192)

V – D. 10. "*Sweet Mother,  
Is our vital formed solely of desires, selfish feelings, etc.,  
or is there something good in it too?*

Energy, strength, enthusiasm, artistic taste, boldness, forceful-ness are there too, if we know how to use them in the true way.

A vital converted and consecrated to the Divine Will be-comes a bold and forceful instrument that can overcome all obstacles. But it first has to be disciplined, and this it consents to only when the Divine is its master. Blessings." 11 December 1969 (CWM 16: 403)



V – D. 11. "The vital is the dynamism of action. It is the seat of the will, of impulses, desires, revolts, etc." (CWM 15: 302)

V – D. 12. "Vital: the part from which proceed desires and hunger and dynamic activities, having its physical basis round about the navel." (CWM 14: 39)

V – D. 13. "Vital purity: it begins with the abolition of desire." (CWM 14: 150)

V – D. 14. "Vital honesty: not to allow our sensations and desires to falsify our judgement and determine our action." (CWM 14: 201)

V – D. 15. "Here we must mention the discipline of the vital. The vital being in us is the seat of impulses and desires, of enthusiasm and violence, of dynamic energy and desperate depressions, of passions and revolts. It can set everything in motion, build and realise; but it can also destroy and mar everything. Thus it may be the most difficult part to discipline in the human being." (CWM 12: 6)

V – D. 16. "Now, one quickly realises that there is another quietude which is necessary, and even very urgently

needed — this is vital quietude, that is to say, the absence of desire.” (CWM 8: 329)

V – D. 17. “The vital as it is at present is said to be the cause of all the troubles and all the difficulties, the seat of the desires, passions, impulses, revolts, etc., etc. But if the vital is entirely surrendered to the psychic, it becomes a wonderful instrument, full of enthusiasm, power, force of realisation, impetus, courage.” (CWM 7: 44)

## **V – E. The rajasic nature is encumbered by its desires**

V – E. 1. "The sattwic nature has always been held to be the most apt and ready for the spiritual life, while the rajasic nature is encumbered by its desires and passions." (CWSA 29: 42)

V – E. 2. "The three forms of consciousness are the three sides of Nature represented by the three gunas—force of subconscious tamas, Inertia, which is the law of Matter, force of half-conscious desire, Kinesis, which is rajas, which is the law of Life, force of sattwic Prakasha, which is the law of Intelligence." (CWSA 28: 42)

## **V – F. Desire-soul - the vital being of desire – is not the true soul, the psychic being**

V – F. 1. "More often than not in ordinary parlance no clear distinction is made between mind and soul and often there is an even more **serious confusion**, for the vital being of desire—the **false soul or desire-soul—is intended by the words "soul"** and "psychic" and not the true soul, the psychic being." (CWSA 28: 103)

V – F. 2. "In most men the soul is hidden and covered over by the action of the external nature; they mistake the vital being for the soul, **because it is the vital which animates and moves the body**. But this vital being is a thing made up of desires and executive forces good and bad; it is the desire-soul, not the true thing. It is when the true soul (psyche) comes forward and begins first to influence and then govern the actions of the instrumental nature that man begins to overcome vital desire and grow towards a greater divine nature." (CWSA 28: 123)

V – F. 3. "The vital is the Pranamaya Purusha spoken of in the Taittiriya Upanishad—the being behind the Force of Life; in its outer form in the Ignorance it generates the desire soul which governs most men and which they mistake often for the real soul." (CWSA 28: 111)

V – F. 4. “The vital as the desire-soul and desire-nature controls the consciousness to a large extent in most men because men are governed by desire. ... The vital should be an instrument of the consciousness, not its ruler.”  
(CWSA 28: 111)

## **V – G. Most human beings prefer the slavery of desire**

V – G. 1. "But human nature is rebellious and finds it difficult to win freedom at the price of renouncing desire and ignorance and egoism.

Most human beings prefer the slavery of desire and ignorance and egoism to freedom without them." 13 October 1969 (CWM 10: 260)

V – G. 2. "The lower Prakriti is the ordinary consciousness of man with its ignorance, desires and bondage. I suppose you know that one has to transcend this ordinary consciousness of the lower Nature and arrive at a higher divine consciousness, if one wants to be free?" (CWSA 28: 43)

V – G. 3. "Most men are, like animals, driven by the forces of Nature: whatever desires come, they fulfil them, whatever emotions come they allow them to play, whatever physical wants they have, they try to satisfy. We say then that the activities and feelings of men are controlled by their Prakriti, and mostly by the vital and physical nature. The body is the instrument of the Prakriti or Nature - it obeys its own nature or it obeys the vital forces of desire, passion, etc. (SABCL 24: 1395)

V – G. 4. "When you have a desire you are governed by the thing you desire; it takes possession of your mind and your life, and you become a slave. If you have greed for food you are no longer the master of food, it is the food that masters you." 22 August 1932 (CWM 16: 113)

V – G. 5. "Desire and the satisfaction of impulse are therefore the first law of this world of sheer vital existence, this poise of relations between the soul and its nature in which the life-power plays with so much greater a freedom and capacity than in our physical living; it may be called the desire-world, for that is its principal characteristic." (CWSA 23: 452) (SABCL 20: 452)

V – G. 6. "The man when he acts, is supposed to be necessarily entangled in the desire behind the action, in subjection to the formal energy that drives the action and in the results of the action. These things are true in appearance, not in reality." Isha Upanishad: Analysis (CWSA 17: 20) (SABCL 12: 76)

V – G. 7. "Man seems indeed to be becoming more generally a reasoning animal than in any known past period of his history, but he has not by that become, except in one or two directions, much more of a reasonable mind and a harmonious spirit; for he still uses his reason much more commonly to justify strife and mutual contradiction

than to arrive at a wise agreement. And always his mind and reason are very much at the mercy of his vital desires and passions. Therefore we must suppose that even under the best circumstances the old method of development will assert itself and the old struggle be renewed in the attempt at human unification." (CWSA 25: 409-410)

V – G. 8. *"Are we here to do yoga or to remain utterly free to act according to our desires and ambitions?"*

The so-called freedom claimed by the vital is not any freedom at all, but a slavery to the lower desires and impulses." (CWM 17: 117)

V – G. 9. "Suppose you were living a life of desire, passion and impulse: you live with your vital being dominant in you; but if you live with spiritual effort, with great good will, the desire to do things well and an unselfishness, a will for progress, you live with the psychic being dominant in you. Then, when you are about to leave your body, all these beings start to disperse. ... For example, with regard to the vital being, all your different desires will be separated and each one run towards its own realisation, quite independently, for the physical being will no longer be there to hold them together. ...

But if you have lived in your vital with all its impulses, each impulse will try to realise itself here and there... For example, a miser who is concentrated upon his money,



when he dies, the part of the vital that was interested in his money will be stuck there and will continue to watch over the money so that nobody may take it. People do not see him, but he is there all the same, and is very unhappy if something happens to his precious money.” (CWM 5: 133-134)

## **V – H. Desire is useful only at the beginning of evolution to awaken consciousness from its torpor**

V – H. 1. *"When we have passed beyond enjoyings, then we shall have bliss. Desire was the helper; desire is the bar."*(SABCL 16: 377)

*Is this Bliss gained by Desire?*

No. Desire is useful only at the beginning of evolution to awaken consciousness from its torpor, but desire cannot lead one to Bliss — only self-giving can do that." 24 June 1935 (CWM 17: 106)

V – H. 2. "Sorrow, desire, suffering, ambition and every other similar reac-tion in the feelings and sensations have all contributed to make consciousness emerge from the inconscience and to awaken this consciousness to the will for progress." 14 January 1970 (CWM 10: 294-295)

V – H. 3. "It is the same principle expressed in all the activities or aspects of the being.... It is obvious that in order to come out of the state of the original inconscience desire was indispensable, for without desire there would have been no awakening to activity." (CWM 8: 367)

## **V – I. Desire is the root of all sorrow, disappointment, affliction, depression or revolt**

V – I. 1. "But when the mind is clouded by some impurity, —say, anger, jealousy or pride or some unreasonable desire,— you at once become ignorant and mistake and misunderstand everything." (CWSA 29: 49)

V – I. 2. "Desire is the root of all sorrow, disappointment, affliction, for though it has a feverish joy of pursuit and satisfaction, yet because it is always a straining of the being, it carries into its pursuit and its getting a labour, hunger, struggle, a rapid subjection to fatigue, a sense of limitation, dissatisfaction and early disappointment with all its gains, a ceaseless morbid stimulation, trouble, disquiet, *asanti*." (CWSA 24: 656-657) (SABCL 21: 629-630)

V – I. 3. "The intelligence coloured by desire is an impure intelligence and it distorts Truth; the will coloured by desire is an impure will and it puts a stamp of distortion, pain and imperfection upon the soul's activity. All immiscence of the emotions of the soul of desire is an impurity and similarly distorts both the knowledge and the action. All subjection of the buddhi to the sensations and impulses is an impurity." (CWSA 24: 669) (SABCL 21: 642)

V – I. 4. "Every desire which is not satisfied, every impulse which meets an obstacle, every unpleasant contact with outside things, very easily and very spontaneously creates depression or revolt, for that is the normal state of things — normal in life as it is today." (CWM 8: 191)

V – I. 5. "All these feelings — this uneasiness, this tiredness, these impressions of broken progress — come from the vital, which rebels because its desires and preferences are not satisfied. All that has no true reality." 2 April 1933 (CWM 16: 113-114)

V – I. 6. *"Ambition has been the undoing of many Yogis. That canker can hide long. Many people start on the Path without any sense of it. But when they get powers, their ambition rises up, all the more violently because it had not been thrown out in the beginning." Questions and Answers 1929 – 1931 (14 April 1929)*

*What do you call a "canker"?*

It is an image, as of a fine mango, very beautiful to look at, and when one opens it, there is a worm inside. That is because the fly laid an egg before the fruit was formed; outside there is no trace. Everything seems candid, disinterested. But within, right at the bottom, there is a great ambition, the desire to have an exceptional position,

to be respected by everybody... that is, the ego. This is the canker, it remains very quiet, but it is there. When the power comes, instead of realising that one is nothing, does not deserve anything and that all that one has to do is to remain as passive as possible, one deceives oneself, feels the need of others taking note of it also. It is this I call the canker. It eats up all that is inside and leaves the appearance intact." (CWM 5: 8)

V – I. 7. "The vital is meant to put in the drive, the realising force, the enthusiasm, the energy necessary for the idea formed by the mind to be transmitted to the body and realised in action. Well, so long as the vital limits itself to this activity, that is, sets all its energy, enthusiasm, strength to work in order to collaborate with the idea, it is very good. But if instead of that, all of a sudden, it is seized by a desire—and this happens to it quite often—and it uses all its qualities to realise, not the higher idea which wanted to manifest, but its own desire, then it steps beyond its zone of action, it gets perverted, it deforms everything and succeeds in creating catastrophes." (CWM 5: 100)

## V – J. Desire is contagious

V – J. 1. "*Sweet Mother, is desire contagious?*"

Ah, yes, very contagious, my child. It is even much more contagious than illness. If someone next to you has a desire, immediately it enters you; and in fact it is mainly in this way that it is caught. It passes from one to another... Terribly contagious, in such a powerful way that one is not even aware that it is a contagion. Suddenly one feels something springing up in oneself; someone has gently put it inside. Of course, one could say, "Why aren't people with desires quarantined?" Then we should have to quarantine everybody. (*Mother laughs*)" (CWM 7: 37)

V – J. 2. "*Will you please explain to me why I felt a trembling when Z was displeased?*"

Vital movements (desire, anger, fright, etc.) produce vibrations which spread through the atmosphere like waves of electricity and strike those who are open, sensitive or weak." 16 September 1933 (CWM 17: 16)

V – J. 3. "People who have desires add to the mental formation a kind of small envelope, a vital shell which gives it a still greater reality. These people are usually surrounded by a number of tiny entities which are their own formations, their own mental formations clothed with vital force, which come all the time to strike them to try to

make them realise materially the formations they have made.

You have perhaps read the books of Maurice Magre; ... he told me that he had always noticed — he was highly sensitive — he had always noticed that people who have sexual desires are surrounded by a kind of small swarm of entities who are somewhat viscous and rather ugly and which torment them constantly, awakening desire in them. He said he had seen this around certain people. It was like being surrounded by a swarm of mosquitoes, yes! But it is more gross, and much uglier still, and it is viscous, it is horrible, and it turns round and round the person and gives him no peace, and it awakens in him the desire that has formed these entities and they batten on it. It is their food. This is absolutely true. His observation was quite correct. His vision was very true. It *is* like that.

But everyone carries around himself the atmosphere of his own desires. So you don't at all require that people should tell you anything; you have only to look and you see around them exactly the state they are in. They may want to give themselves the airs of angels or saints but they can't deceive you, because that thing is there, turning around them. So, just imagine! (*Mother points to all those seated in front of her.*) You see what you are like, how many of you there, all of you here, and each one has his own little world in this way, of mental formations of which some are clothed in vital substance, and all these crawl

together, mix with each other, knock against each other. There is a struggle to see which is the strongest, which tries to realise itself, and all this creates an atmosphere indeed!..." (CWM 6: 279)



## **V – K. When there is death of desire the true vital being within us comes out**

V – K. 1. "It is when there is this death of desire and this calm equal wideness in the consciousness everywhere, that the true vital being within us comes out from the veil and reveals its own calm, intense and potent presence. For such is the true nature of the vital being, *pranamaya purusa*; it is a projection of the Divine Purusha into life,—tranquil, strong, luminous, many-energied, obedient to the Divine Will, egoless, yet or rather therefore capable of all action, achievement, highest or largest enterprise." (CWSA 23: 178) (SABCL 20: 167)

V – K. 2. "The true vital consciousness is one in which the vital makes full surrender, converts itself into an instrument of the Divine, making no demand, insisting on no desire, answering to the Mother's force and to no other, calm, unegoistic, giving an absolute loyalty and obedience, with no personal vanity or ambition, only willing to be a pure and perfect instrument, desiring nothing for itself but that the Truth may prevail within itself and everywhere and the Divine Victory take place and the Divine Work be done." (CWSA 28: 186)

V – K. 3. "*Why isn't my vital controlled by the vital Purusha?*

The vital Purusha awakens only when all the desires are mastered and the vital being is calm.” (CWM 17: 85)

## **V – L. Desire and true need**

**V – L. 1.** "Desire is a psychological movement, and it can attach itself to a "true need" as well as to things that are not true needs. One must approach even true needs without desire. If one does not get them, one must feel nothing." (SABCL 24: 1400)

**V – L. 2.** "It is very difficult to find the borderland between a true need and a desire (the yogic ideal, of course, is never to have any need, and therefore not to want anything), but this essay is written for all men of goodwill who try to know themselves and control themselves. And there we really face a problem which compels an extraordinary sincerity, for the very first way in which the vital meets life is through desire—and yet, there are necessities. But how to know if things are really necessary, not desired?... For that you must observe yourself very, very attentively, and if there is anything in you which produces something like a small intense vibration, then you may be sure that there lies a desire. For example, you say, "This food is necessary for me"—you believe, you imagine, you think that you need such and such a thing and you find the necessary means to obtain the thing. To know if it is a need or a desire, you must look at yourself very closely and ask yourself, "What will happen if I cannot get the thing?" Then if the immediate answer is, "Oh, it will be very bad",

you may be sure that it is a matter of desire. It is the same for everything. For every problem you draw back, look at yourself and ask, "Let us see, am I going to have the thing?" If at that moment something in you jumps up with joy, you may be certain there is a desire. On the other hand, if something tells you, "Oh, I am not going to get it", and you feel very depressed, then again it is a desire." (CWM 4: 50)

**V – L. 3.** "For the desires are not the expression of needs but of preferences." 19 September 1959 (CWM 16: 225)

**V – L. 4.** "If you want to be a true doer of divine works, your first aim must be to be totally free from all desire and self-regarding ego." The Mother, (SABCL 25: 15) (CWSA 32:12)

*Q: Sometimes we go to the bazaar to buy our things. Is that good?*

One cannot make general rules. This depends on the spirit in which you make your purchases. It is said that you should have no desires—if this is not a desire, it is all right. You understand, there is no movement, no action which in itself is good or bad; it depends absolutely on the spirit in which it is done. If, for instance, you are in a state of total indifference about what you have and what you do not

have (it is a condition a little difficult to realise, but after all, one can attain it—a state of detachment: “If I have it, I have it; if I don’t, I don’t”), there comes a moment when, if your state is quite sincere and you really need something (it must not be a fancy or a desire or a caprice but a true need), automatically the thing comes to you. Since I have been here— it is a long time, isn’t it?—I have known people who have never asked me for anything; I don’t even think (naturally there are always weaknesses in human nature), but I don’t even think they have had a violent desire for anything at all, but when it was a need, automatically it came to them. Suddenly the idea would come to me, “Ah! This must be given to so-and-so”, and if it was not directly through me, in some way, quite unexpectedly, the thing came to them. On the other hand, if one is preoccupied with one’s needs (I don’t want even to speak of desires, for that is quite another thing), but if one is preoccupied with one’s needs, if one thinks of them, tells oneself, “Truly I must have this”, it is not often that it comes to you; so you are obliged to do something to satisfy yourself and, if you have the means, to go and buy the thing. Now there are people who always take their desires for their needs, that... we do not speak of these, they form the great majority. They are convinced that without this or that one cannot live: “It is impossible, one can’t live without that.... I shall fall ill or something very unpleasant will happen to me or I shall not be able to do my work. It is impossible, if

I don't have this I can't do my work." So, the first step for these people is to try a small experiment (if they are sincere): "Well, I won't have this thing and we are going to see what happens." This is a very interesting experiment. And I can guarantee that 999 times out of a thousand, after a few days one asks oneself, "But why the devil did I think I had such a great need of this thing, I can do without it very well!" There you are. And like this, little by little, one makes progress." (CWM 4: 383-384)

**V – L. 5.** "... for those who are accustomed from their childhood to take all their desires for needs or necessities, and have rushed into them with passionate zeal, the road is much more difficult, because first they must acquire discernment and distinguish a desire from what it is not; and sometimes this is very difficult, it is so mixed up that it can hardly be perceived.

But after all, I believe one doesn't need much. Once, I remember, four of us had gone on a walking tour across the mountains of France. We had started from one town and had to reach another. It was about an eight or ten days' journey across the mountain. Naturally, each of us carried a bag slung across our back, for one needs a few things. But then, before starting we had a little discussion to find out what things we really needed, what was quite indispensable. And always we came to this: "Let us see, that thing we can manage in this way" and everything was

reduced to so little.... I knew a Danish painter who used to say, "Do you know, when I travel, I need only one thing, a tooth-brush." But somebody replied, "But no, if you don't have a brush, you can rub with your finger!" (CWM 4: 384-385)

## **V – M. How to help children with desires**

V – M. 1. *"Sweet Mother, why do some children have the habit of always asking for things? ... Material things, like sweets, everything they see..."*

Oh, because they are full of desires. They were probably formed with vibrations of desires, and as they have no control over themselves it is expressed freely. Older people are also full of desires, but usually they have a kind of... how do we call it?... they are a little shy of showing their desires or they feel a bit ashamed or perhaps are afraid they will be laughed at; so they don't show them. Well, they too are full of desires. Only children are more simple. When they want something they say so. They don't tell themselves that perhaps it would be wiser not to show this, because they don't yet have this kind of reasoning." (CWM 6: 411)

V – M. 2. "In fact, perhaps one should begin by shifting the movement to things which it is better to have from the true point of view, and which it is more difficult to obtain. If one could turn this impulsion of desire towards a... For example, when a child is full of desires, if one could give him a desire of a higher kind — instead of its being a desire for purely material objects, you understand, an altogether transitory satisfaction — if one could awaken in him the desire to know, the desire to learn, the desire to become a



remarkable person... in this way, begin with that. As these things are difficult to do, so, gradually, he will develop his will for these things. Or even, from the material point of view, the desire to do something difficult, as for example, construct a toy which is difficult to make — or give him a game of patience which requires a great deal of perseverance.”

If one can orient them — it requires much discernment, much patience, but it can be done — and if one can orient them towards something like this, to succeed in very difficult games or to work out something which requires much care and attention, and can push them in some line like this so that it exercises a persevering will in them, then this can have results: turn their attention away from certain things and towards others. This needs constant care and it seems to be a way that’s most — I can’t say the easiest, for it is certainly not easy — but the most effective way.” (CWM 6: 413)

V – M. 3. *"Sweet Mother, how can we help a child to come out of this habit of always asking?"*

There are many ways. But first of all you must know whether you will not just stop him from freely expressing what he thinks and feels. Because this is what people usually do. They scold, even sometimes punish him; and so the child forms the habit of concealing his desires. But he is not cured of them. And you see, if he is always told,

“No, you won’t have that”, then, simply, this state of mind gets settled in him: “Ah, when you are small, people don’t give you anything! You must wait till you are big. When I am big I shall have all that I want.” That’s how it is. But this does not cure them. It is very difficult to bring up a child.” (CWM 6: 412)

V – M. 4. “Some people cherish this idea all their life. When they are told that they should overcome their desires, they say, “The easiest way is to satisfy them.” This kind of logic seems impeccable. But the fact is that it is not the object desired that has to be changed, it is the impulse of desire, the movement of desire. And for this a great deal of knowledge is needed, and this is difficult for a very young child. It is difficult. Indeed, they don’t have the capacity for reasoning; one can’t explain things to them, because they don’t understand the reasons. So you see, when it is like that the parents usually tell the child, “Keep quiet, you are a nuisance!” In this way they get out of the difficulty. But this is no solution. It is very difficult. It asks for a sustained effort and an unshakable patience. Some people are like that all their life; they are like babies throughout their existence and it is impossible to make them see reason. As soon as one tells them that they are not reasonable and that one can’t all the time be giving them things to satisfy their desires, they simply think, “These people are

unpleasant. This person is not nice." That's all." (CWM 6: 412-413)

V – M. 5. "... one must educate the child with care and teach him to distinguish his desires from his needs." (CWM 12: 13)

V – M. 6. "To become conscious of the various movements in oneself and be aware of what one does and why one does it, is the indispensable starting-point. The child must be taught to observe, to note his reactions and impulses and their causes, to become a discerning witness of his desires, his movements of violence and passion, his instincts of possession and appropriation and domination and the background of vanity which supports them, together with their counterparts of weakness, discouragement, depression and despair." (CWM 12: 22)

V – M. 7. "It is said the eyes are the mirror of the soul; that is a popular way of speaking but if the eyes do not express to you the psychic, it is because it is very far behind, veiled by many things. Look carefully, then, into the eyes of little children, and you will see a kind of light—some describe it as candid—but so true, so true, which looks at the world with wonder. Well, this sense of wonder, it is the wonder of the psychic which sees the truth but does not understand much about the world, for it is too far from it. Children have this but as they learn more, become more

intelligent, more educated, this is effaced, and you see all sorts of things in their eyes: thoughts, desires, passions, wickedness—but this kind of little flame, so pure, is no longer there. And you may be sure it is the mind that has got in there, and the psychic has gone very far behind.

Even a child who does not have a sufficiently developed brain to understand, if you simply pass on to him a vibration of protection or affection or solicitude or consolation, you will see that he responds. But if you take a boy of fourteen, for example, who is at school, who has ordinary parents and has been ill-treated, his mind is very much in the forefront; there is something hard in him, the psychic being has gone behind. Such boys do not respond to the vibration. One would say they are made of wood or plaster." (CWM 4: 26-27)

## **V – N. The impulse of a desire makes you act**

V – N. 1. "Desire is at once the motive of our actions, our lever of accomplishment and the bane of our existence."  
(CWSA 23: 350-351) (SABCL 20: 335-336)

V – N. 2. "*Why is action a knot?*"

Because one is attached to action. The knot is the knot of the ego. You act because of desire. Sri Aurobindo says this, doesn't he? The ordinary way of acting is tied to desire in one form or another — a desire, a need — so that is the knot. If you act only to satisfy desire — a desire which you call a need or a necessity or anything else, but in truth, if you go to the very root of the thing, you see that it is the impulse of a desire which makes you act — well, if you act only under the effect of the impulse of desire, you will no longer be able to act when you eliminate the desire.

And this is the first answer people give you. When they are told, "Act without being attached to the result of action, have this consciousness that it is not you who are acting, it is the Divine who is acting", the reply which ninety-nine and a half per cent give is, "But if I feel like that, I don't move any longer! I don't do anything any more; it is always a need, a desire, a personal impulse which makes me act in one way or another." (CWM 8: 70)

V – N. 3. "But still there is an essential difficulty unsolved. Desire is the ordinary motive of all human actions, and if the soul is free from desire, then there is no farther rationale for action." (CWSA 19: 109) (SABCL 13: 102)

V – N. 4. "The difficulty is this, how, our nature being what it is and desire the common principle of its action, is it possible to institute a really desireless action? For what we call ordinarily disinterested action is not really desireless; it is simply a replacement of certain smaller personal interests by other larger desires which have only the appearance of being impersonal, virtue, country, mankind." (CWSA 19: 110) (SABCL 13: 103)

V – N. 5. "The principle of rajas has its strongest hold on the vital nature. It is the Life within us that is the strongest kinetic motor power, but the life-power in earthly beings is possessed by the force of desire, therefore rajas turns always to action and desire; desire is the strongest human and animal initiator of most kinesis and action, predominant to such an extent that many consider it the father of all action and even the originator of our being." (CWSA 24: 684-685) (SABCL 21: 657-658)

## **V – O. Action without desire is possible**

**V – O. 1.** "But how then shall we continue to act at all? For ordinarily the human being acts because he has a desire or feels a mental, vital or physical want or need; he is driven by the necessities of the body, by the lust of riches, honours or fame, or by a craving for the personal satisfactions of the mind or the heart or a craving for power or pleasure. Or he is seized and pushed about by a moral need or, at least, the need or the desire of making his ideas or his ideals or his will or his party or his country or his gods prevail in the world. If none of these desires nor any other must be the spring of our action, it would seem as if all incentive or motive power had been removed and action itself must necessarily cease. The Gita replies with its third great secret of the divine life. **All action must be done in a more and more Godward and finally a God-possessed consciousness; our works must be a sacrifice to the Divine and in the end a surrender of all our being,** mind, will, heart, sense, life and body to the One must make God-love and God-service our only motive. This transformation of the motive force and very character of works is indeed its master idea; it is the foundation of its unique synthesis of works, love and knowledge. In the end not desire, but the consciously felt will of the Eternal remains as the sole driver of our action

and the sole originator of its initiative.” (CWSA 23: 104)  
(SABCL 20: 96-97)

**V – O. 2.** “The outer being is also detached [*when a Yogi engages in detached action*]*—the whole being is without desire or attachment and still action is possible. Action without desire is possible, action without attachment is possible, action without ego is possible.*” (CWSA 28: 46)

**V – O. 3.** “It is a common error to suppose that action is impossible or at least meaningless without desire. If desire ceases, we are told, action also must cease. But this, like other too simply comprehensive generalisations, is more attractive to the cutting and defining mind than true.

The major part of the work done in the universe is accomplished without any interference of desire; it proceeds by the calm necessity and spontaneous law of Nature. Even man constantly does work of various kinds by a spontaneous impulse, intuition, instinct or acts in obedience to a natural necessity and law of forces without either mental planning or the urge of a conscious vital volition or emotional desire.

Often enough his act is contrary to his intention or his desire; it proceeds out of him in subjection to a need or compulsion, in submission to an impulse, in obedience to a force in him that pushes for self-expression or in conscious pursuance of a higher principle. Desire is an



additional lure to which Nature has given a great part in the life of animated beings in order to produce a certain kind of rajasic action necessary for her intermediate ends; but it is not her sole or even her chief engine. It has its great use while it endures: it helps us to rise out of inertia, it contradicts many tamasic forces which would otherwise inhibit action.” (CWSA 23: 266-267) (SABCL 20: 254-255)

**V – O. 4.** *“Sweet Mother,*

*Your answers last week were very succinct. Isn’t a perfected yogi identified with the Supreme Lord? Isn’t a desireless man a sincere sadhak?*

A: My answers are given in order to open your mind and to make you exceed, little by little, your present mental limits.

The Supreme Lord can give his Ananda to whomever He wants and as He wants.

A sadhak is one who has chosen a yogic discipline and practises it. There are desireless men who are not pursuing any yoga.

Widen your thought — it is very necessary!” 3 June 1964 (CWM 16: 296)

## **V – P. In Yoga how work is done without desire**

**V – P. 1.** “In a certain sense, when his Yoga has reached a certain culmination, works cease for a man; for he has no further personal necessity of works, no sense of works being done by him; but there is no need to flee from action or to take refuge in a blissful inertia. For now he acts as the Divine Existence acts without any binding necessity and without any compelling ignorance. Even in doing works *he* does not work at all; he undertakes no personal initiative. It is the Divine Shakti that works in him through his nature; his action develops through the spontaneity of a supreme Force by which his instruments are possessed, of which he is a part, with whose will his will is identical and his power is her power. The spirit within him contains, supports and watches this action; it presides over it in knowledge but is not glued or clamped to the work by attachment or need, is not bound by desire of its fruit, is not enslaved to any movement or impulse.” (CWSA 23: 265-266) (SABCL 20: 253-254)

**V – P. 2.** “We cannot become impersonal by obeying something outside ourselves, for we cannot so get outside ourselves; we can only do it by rising to the highest in ourselves, into our free Soul and Self which is the same and one in all and has therefore no personal interests, to the Divine in our being who possesses Himself

transcendent of cosmos and is therefore not bound by His cosmic works or His individual action. That is what the Gita teaches and desirelessness is only a means to this end, not an aim in itself. Yes, but how is it to be brought about? By doing all works with sacrifice as the only object, is the reply of the divine Teacher. "By doing works otherwise than for sacrifice, this world of men is in bondage to works; for sacrifice practice works, O son of Kunti, becoming free from all attachment." It is evident that all works and not merely sacrifice and social duties can be done in this spirit; any action may be done either from the ego-sense narrow or enlarged or for the sake of the Divine. All being and all action of Prakriti exist only for the sake of the Divine; from that it proceeds, by that it endures, to that it is directed. But so long as we are dominated by the ego-sense we cannot perceive or act in the spirit of this truth, but act for the satisfaction of the ego and in the spirit of the ego, otherwise than for sacrifice. Egoism is the knot of the bondage. By acting Godwards, without any thought of ego, we loosen this knot and finally arrive at freedom." (CWSA 19: 111) (SABCL 13: 104)

**V – P. 3.** "Desirelessness is the illimitable Spirit's superiority to the limiting attraction of the separate objects of desire in the world; ..." (CWSA 19: 189) (SABCL 13: 180)

**V – P. 4.** "The second sign {of the divine worker} is freedom from desire; for where there is not the personal egoism of the doer, desire becomes impossible; it is starved out, sinks for want of a support, dies of inanition. Outwardly the liberated man seems to undertake works of all kinds like other men, on a larger scale perhaps with a more powerful will and driving-force, for the might of the divine will works in his active nature; but from all his inceptions and undertakings the inferior concept and nether will of desire is entirely banished, *sarve samarambhah kamasankalpavarjitah*. He has abandoned all attachment to the fruits of his works, and where one does not work for the fruit, but solely as an impersonal instrument of the Master of works, desire can find no place,— not even the desire to serve successfully, for the fruit is the Lord's and determined by him and not by the personal will and effort, or to serve with credit and to the Master's satisfaction, for the real doer is the Lord himself and all glory belongs to a form of his Shakti missioned in the nature and not to the limited human personality. The human mind and soul of the liberated man does nothing, *nakincitkaroti*, even though through his nature he engages in action, it is the Nature, the executive Shakti, it is the conscious Goddess governed by the divine Inhabitant who does the work." (CWSA 19: 179) (SABCL 13: 170)

**V – P. 5.** "Such desireless action can have no decisiveness, no effectiveness, no efficient motive, no large or vigorous creative power? Not so; action done in Yoga is not only the highest but the wisest, the most potent and efficient even for the affairs of the world; for it is informed by the knowledge and will of the Master of works:" (CWSA 19: 103) (SABCL 13: 96)

**V – P. 6.** "He acts as others, but he has abandoned all desires and their longings. He attains to the great peace and is not bewildered by the shows of things; he has extinguished his individual ego in the One, lives in that unity and, fixed in that status at his end, ..." (CWSA 19" 104) (SABCL 13: 97)

**V – P. 7.** "The next verses create a ground for the reconciliation between the two extremes; the secret is not inaction as soon as one turns towards the higher truth, but desireless action both before and after it is reached. The liberated man has nothing to gain by action, but nothing also to gain by inaction, and it is not at all for any personal object that he has to make his choice. "Therefore without attachment perform ever the work that is to be done (done for the sake of the world, *lokasangraha*, as is made clear immediately afterward); for by doing work without attachment man attains to the highest. For it was even by works that Janaka and the rest attained to perfection." It

is true that works and sacrifice are a means of arriving at the highest good, *sreyah param avapsyatha*; but there are three kinds of works, that done without sacrifice for personal enjoyment which is entirely selfish and egoistic and misses the true law and aim and utility of life, *mogham partha sa jivati*, that done with desire, but with sacrifice and the enjoyment only as a result of sacrifice and therefore to that extent consecrated and sanctified, and that done without desire or attachment of any kind. It is the last which brings the soul of man to the highest, *param apnoti purusah*." (CWSA 19: 115) (SABCL 13: 108)

**V – P. 8.** "But the seeker who has advanced far on the way of works has passed beyond this intermediate stage in which desire is a helpful engine. Its push is no longer indispensable for his action, but is rather a terrible hindrance and source of stumbling, inefficiency and failure. Others are obliged to obey a personal choice or motive, but he has to learn to act with an impersonal or a universal mind or as a part or an instrument of an infinite Person. A calm indifference, a joyful impartiality or a blissful response to a divine Force, whatever its dictate, is the condition of his doing any effective work or undertaking any worthwhile action. Not desire, not attachment must drive him, but a Will that stirs in a divine peace, a Knowledge that moves from the transcendent Light, a glad Impulse that is

a force from the supreme Ananda." (CWSA 23: 266-267) (SABCL 20: 254-255)

**V – P. 9.** "He has abandoned all attachment to the fruits of his works, and where one does not work for the fruit, but solely as an impersonal instrument of the Master of works, desire can find no place,— not even the desire to serve successfully, for the fruit is the Lord's and determined by him and not by the personal will and effort, or to serve with credit and to the Master's satisfaction, for the real doer is the Lord himself and all glory belongs to a form of his Shakti missioned in the nature and not to the limited human personality. The human mind and soul of the liberated man does nothing, na kin cit karoti; even though through his nature he engages in action, it is the Nature, the executive Shakti, it is the conscious Goddess governed by the divine Inhabitant who does the work." (CWSA 19: 179) (SABCL 13: 170)

**V – P. 10.** "Desire, it is thought, is the real motive power of human living and to cast it out would be to stop the springs of life; satisfaction of desire is man's only enjoyment and to eliminate it would be to extinguish the impulse of life by a quietistic asceticism. But the real motive power of the life of the soul is Will; desire is only a deformation of will in the dominant bodily life and physical mind." (CWSA 24: 658) (SABCL 21: 631)

**V – P. 11.** “Desire is only a mode of the emotional mind which by ignorance seeks its delight in the object of desire and not in the Brahman who expresses Himself in the object. By destroying that ignorance one can do action without entanglement in desire.” (CWSA 17: 20) (SABCL 12: 76)



## **V – Q. Desire and Ego**

**V – Q. 1.** “In human life the cause of all difficulties, all discords, all moral sufferings, is the presence in everyone of the ego with its desires, its likes and dislikes.” (CWM 13: 164) (CWM 12: 355)

**V – Q. 2.** “Desire and the passions that arise from desire are the principal sign and knot of ego. It is desire that makes you go on saying I and mine and subjects you through a persistent egoism to satisfaction and dissatisfaction, liking and disliking, hope and despair, joy and grief, to your petty loves and hatreds, to wrath and passion, to your attachment to success and things pleasant and to the sorrow and suffering of failure and of things unpleasant. Desire brings always confusion of mind and limitation of the will, an egoistic and distorted view of things, a failure and clouding of knowledge. Desire and its preferences and violences are the first strong root of sin and error. There can be while you cherish desire no assured stainless tranquillity, no settled light, no calm pure knowledge.” (CWSA 19: 582) (SABCL 13: 563-564)

**V – Q. 3.** “But what are these master-knots —other and deeper twistings than the instrumental knots of the mind, heart, psychic life-force? We find them pointed out for us and insisted on with great force and a constant emphatic

repetition in the Gita; they are four, desire, ego, the dualities and the three gunas of Nature; for to be desireless, ego-less, equal of mind and soul and spirit and *nistraigunya*, is in the idea of the Gita to be free, *mukta*." (CWSA 24: 674-675) (SABCL 22: 647-648)

**V – Q. 4.** "The ego is quite different—it is a creation of Prakriti and part of Prakriti, which centralises the thoughts, desires, passions etc. of the nature and is involved in them entirely. The ego is not a real and eternal existence, but only a formation of Nature. It has to disappear by the coming of knowledge and be replaced by the true psychic and spiritual self." (CWSA 28: 107)

**V – Q. 5.** "But the desire to possess and enjoy is the master impulse of the Ego which knows itself obscurely to be the Lord, although owing to the limitations of its relativity, it is unable to realise its true existence. The result is discord with others and oneself, mental and physical suffering, the sense of weakness and inability, the sense of obscuration, the straining of energy in passion and in desire towards self-fulfilment, the recoil of energy exhausted or disappointed towards death and disintegration.

Desire is the badge of subjection with its attendant discord and suffering. That which is free, one and lord, does not desire, but inalienably contains, possesses and

enjoys." Isha Upanishad: Analysis (CWSA 17: 18) (SABCL 12: 75)

**V – Q. 6.** "Sri Aurobindo describes the state of one who is sunk in ignorance and desire and who judges everything from the point of view of his narrow and limited ego as that of "eternal fool". To be able to understand and feel things correctly one must have a universal vision and be conscious of the Divine Presence and Will in all things and in all circumstances." (CWM 10: 49)

**V – Q. 7.** "*Q: Sweet Mother, Sri Aurobindo speaks of a "central knot of desires" which must be cut. How can one do it, where should one start?*  
A: The central knot of desires is the sense of separate personality; it is the ego. With the disappearance of the ego, the desires disappear." 13 June 1960 (CWM 16: 244)

**V – Q. 8.** "Liberation comes by loss of ego and desire." (CWSA 28: 48)

**V – Q. 9.** In evolution desire and ego has to go  
"Some of them are no longer true on a higher plane; e.g. desire and ego are truths of the mental, vital and physical Ignorance—a man there without ego or desire would be a tamasic automaton. As we rise higher, ego and desire

appear no longer as truths, they are falsehoods disfiguring the true person and the true will.” (CWSA 28: 145)

## **V – R. Desire and Equality**

**V – R. 1.** "Equality ... means self-mastery over the vital movements, anger and sensitiveness and pride as well as desire and the rest,..." (CWSA 29: 130)

**V – R. 2.** "Samata does not mean the absence of ego, but the absence of desire and attachment." (CWSA 29: 133)

**V – R. 3.** "A perfect spiritual equality is the one true and infallible sign of the cessation of desire,— to be equal-souled to all things, unmoved by joy and sorrow, the pleasant and the unpleasant, success or failure, to look with an equal eye on high and low, friend and enemy, the virtuous and the sinner, to see in all beings the manifold manifestation of the One and in all things the multitudinous play or the slow masked evolution of the embodied Spirit." (CWSA 23: 177) (SABCL 20: 166-167)

**V – R. 4.** "One must approach even true needs without desire. If one does not get them, one must feel nothing. As for the inconveniences, you should take them as a training in *samata*. To be able to bear inconveniences is one of the most elementary necessities if one wants to enter into the true spirit of yoga." (SABCL 24: 1400)

**V – R. 5.** "Slay then desire; put away attachment to the possession and enjoyment of the outwardness of things. ... Learn to bear and reject all the rush of the passions and to remain securely seated in your inner self even while they rage in your members, until at last they cease to affect any part of your nature. ... Let there be a calm indifference to these things and to all the objects of desire in all your nature. Look on them with the silent and tranquil regard of an impersonal spirit.

"The result will be an absolute equality and the power of unshakable calm that the universal spirit maintains in front of its creations, facing ever the manifold action of Nature." (CWSA 19: 582-583) (SABCL 13: 563-564)

**V – R. 6.** "Equality is the sign and also for the aspirant the test. Where there is inequality in the soul, there there is in evidence some unequal play of the modes of Nature, motion of desire, play of personal will, feeling and action, activity of joy and grief or that disturbed and disturbing delight which is not true spiritual bliss but a mental satisfaction bringing in its train inevitably a counterpart or recoil of mental dissatisfaction." (CWSA 19: 189) (SABCL 13" 180)

## **VI – Rejection of vital nature's desires in Yoga**

### **VI – A. To attain the Divine one must overcome desire**

**VI – A. 1.** "At the same time it is also taught in the Gita that this world is a world of obscurity and ignorance and to attain to the Divine one must overcome certain forces of Nature, such as Desire, which the Gita calls the enemy difficult to overcome." (CWSA 28: 462)

**VI – A. 2.** (Message for the first anniversary of Auroville)  
"Freedom is possible only in union with the Divine.

To unite with the Divine one must have conquered in oneself the very possibility of desire." 28 February 1969  
(CWM 13: 200)

**VI – A. 3.** "One lives in Auroville in order to be free from moral and social conventions; but this freedom must not be a new slavery to the ego, to its desires and ambitions.

The fulfilment of one's desires bars the way to the inner discovery which can only be achieved in the peace and transparency of perfect disinterestedness." (CWM 13: 207-208)

**VI – A. 4.** "You have apparently a call and may be fit for Yoga; but there are different paths and each has a different

aim and end before it. It is common to all the paths to conquer the desires, to put aside the ordinary relations of life, and to try to pass from uncertainty to everlasting certitude." (CWSA 29: 19)

**VI – A. 5.** "What the sadhak has to seek is the full opening to the Divine, the psychic change of his consciousness, the spiritual change. Of that change of consciousness, selflessness, desirelessness, humility, bhakti, surrender, calm, equality, peace, quiet, sincerity are necessary constituents." (CWSA 29: 22)

**VI – A. 6.** "The goal of Yoga is always hard to reach, but this one is more difficult than any other, and it is only for those who have the call, the capacity, the willingness to face everything and every risk, even the risk of failure, and the will to progress towards an entire selflessness, desirelessness and surrender." (CWSA 29: 27)

**VI – A. 7.** "Yes, so long as there are desires, no true intimacy can be established." 15 June 1932 (CWM 16: 16)

**VI – A. 8.** "To be entirely sincere means to desire the divine Truth only, to surrender yourself more and more to the Divine Mother, to reject all personal demand and desire other than this one aspiration, to offer every action in life



to the Divine and do it as the work given without bringing in the ego. This is the basis of the divine life.” (CWSA 29: 51)

**VI – A. 9.** “But 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)

**VI – A. 10.** “The only work that spiritually purifies is that which is done without personal motives, without desire for fame or public recognition or worldly greatness, without insistence on one’s own mental motives or vital lusts and demands or physical preferences, without vanity or crude self-assertion or claim for position or prestige, done for the sake of the Divine alone and at the command of the Divine.” (CWSA 29: 232)

**VI – A. 11.** “Work here and work done in the world are of course not the same thing. The work there is not in any way a divine work in special—it is ordinary work in the

world. But still one must take it as a training and do it in the spirit of karmayoga— what matters there is not the nature of the work in itself but the spirit in which it is done. It must be in the spirit of the Gita, without desire, with detachment, without repulsion, but doing it as perfectly as possible, not for the sake of the family or promotion or to please the superiors, but simply because it is the thing that has been given in the hand to do. It is a field of inner training, nothing more. One has to learn in it three things, equality, desirelessness, dedication.” (CWSA 29: 240)

**VI – A. 12.** “The Gita is constantly justifying works as a means of spiritual salvation and enjoining a Yoga of works as well as of Bhakti and Knowledge. Krishna, however, superimposes a higher law also that work must be done without desire, without attachment to any fruit or reward, without any egoistic attitude or motive, as an offering or sacrifice to the Divine.” (CWSA 29: 249)

**VI – A. 13.** “So, for everyone — except for those who are born free, and this is obviously very rare — for everyone this state of reason, of effort, desire, individualisation and solid physical balance in accordance with the ordinary mode of living is indispensable to begin with, until the time one becomes a conscious being, when one must give up all these things in order to become a spiritual being.” (CWM 8: 368)

## **VI – B. Yoga consists of conquest of desires**

**VI – B. 1** “We are here to give up all desires and turn towards the Divine and to become conscious of the Divine. The Divine we seek is not remote and inaccessible. He is at the core of His own creation and what He wants us to do is to find Him, and by our personal transformation to become capable of knowing Him, of uniting with Him and, in the end, of manifesting Him consciously.” (CWM 13: 347)

**VI – B. 2** “In the practice of Yoga, what you aim at can only come by the opening of the being to the Mother’s force and the persistent rejection of all egoism and demand and desire, all motives except the aspiration for the Divine Truth.” (CWSA 29: 108)

**VI – B. 3** “The ordinary life consists in work for personal aim and satisfaction of desire under some mental or moral control, touched sometimes by a mental ideal. The Gita’s Yoga consists in the offering of one’s work as a sacrifice to the Divine, the conquest of desire, egoless and desireless action, bhakti for the Divine, an entering into the cosmic consciousness, the sense of unity with all creatures, oneness with the Divine.” (CWSA 29: 238)

**VI – B. 4** “If you want to be a true doer of divine works, your first aim must be to be totally free from all desire and self-regarding ego.” (CWSA 32: 12)

**VI – B. 5** “There can be no Karmayoga without the will to get rid of ego, rajas and desire, which are the seals of ignorance.” (CWSA 29: 217)

“The first step in Karmayoga of this kind is to diminish and finally get rid of the ego-centric position in works, the lower vital reactions and the principle of desire. He must certainly go on on this road until he reaches something like its end.” (CWSA 29: 235)

**VI – B. 6** “The way to realise is through a quiet mind and a vital free from desires. To reject the desires and demands of the vital and to quiet the excessive activity of the mind, so that a true consciousness and spiritual perception and knowledge may take the place of the mind’s activity, are the requisite conditions of the Yoga.” (CWSA 29: 44)

**VI – B. 7** “It is certainly not easy to get rid of this mixture of desire entirely—not easy for anyone; but when one has the will to do it, this also can be effected by the help of the sustaining Force.” (CWSA 29: 61)

**VI – B. 8** “Your mind is too full of demands and desires. If you want to be able to practise the Yoga here, you must throw them from you and learn quietude, desirelessness, simplicity and surrender. It is these you must get first; other things can come afterwards—for this is the only true foundation of the sadhana.” (CWSA 29: 139)

**VI – B. 9** “Desire, attachment, slavery to the attractions of the external sense are the chief obstacles to this movement—so in either way they have to be got rid of. But it is quite possible to see the Supreme before the attraction of external sense is gone— only one cannot live securely in It if there is desire and external attachment because that is always taking one away from the inner poise.” (CWSA 29: 384)

**VI – B. 10** “To get rid of desire is the one firm indispensable purification of the psychical prana,—for so we can replace the soul of desire with its pervading immiscence in all our instruments by a mental soul of calm delight and its clear and limpid possession of ourselves and world and Nature which is the crystal basis of the mental life and its perfection.” (CWSA 24: 657) (SABCL 21: 629-630)

**VI – B. 11** “Whoever sincerely enters the path of works, must leave behind him the stage in which need and desire

are the first law of our acts.” (CWSA 23: 209) (SABCL 20: 198)

**VI – B. 12** “It has been best formulated in the already expressed doctrine of the Gita by which a complete renouncement of desire for the fruits as the motive of action, a complete annulment of desire itself, the complete achievement of a perfect equality are put forward as the normal status of a spiritual being.” (CWSA 23: 177) (SABCL 20: 166)

**VI – B. 13** “Equality, renunciation of all desire for the fruit of our works, action done as a sacrifice to the supreme Lord of our nature and of all nature,—these are the three first Godward approaches in the Gita’s way of Karmayoga.” (CWSA 23: 105) (SABCL 20: 97)

**VI – B. 14** “In the field of action desire takes many forms, but the most powerful of all is the vital self’s craving or seeking after the fruit of our works. The fruit we covet may be a reward of internal pleasure; it may be the accomplishment of some preferred idea or some cherished will or the satisfaction of the egoistic emotions, or else the pride of success of our highest hopes and ambitions. Or it may be an external reward, a recompense entirely material, —wealth, position, honour, victory, good fortune or any other fulfilment of vital or physical desire. But all

alike are lures by which egoism holds us. Always these satisfactions delude us with the sense of mastery and the idea of freedom, while really we are harnessed and guided or ridden and whipped by some gross or subtle, some noble or ignoble, figure of the blind Desire that drives the world. Therefore the first rule of action laid down by the Gita is to do the work that should be done without any desire for the fruit, *niskama karma*." (CWSA 23: 102)

**VI – B. 15** "It would certainly be very easy if all that one had to do were to follow one's desires; but to be governed by one's desires is not yoga.

Need and want are not the same thing. The fact that they could go on without it for so long shows that it was not a need." (SABCL 24: 1400)

**VI – B. 16** "Whether ascetic or non-ascetic, the yogi, the sadhak must become free from vital desire and spiritually master of the movements of his nature – and for that he must be free from ego and desire and duality. I have always made that quite clear – that indulgence of desire is no more part of this yoga than it is of Sannyasa. One must be able to use and handle physical things and physical life, but from the spiritual consciousness, not from the level of the vital ego." (SABCL 24: 1401)

**VI – B. 17** “Thus the Gita founds its teaching of the necessity of desireless works, *niskama karma*, and unites the subjective practice of the Sankhyas—rejecting their merely physical rule—with the practice of Yoga.” (CWSA 19: 109) (SABCL 13: 102)

**VI – B. 18** “One begins to be a man only when one aspires to a higher and truer life and when one accepts a discipline of transformation. For this one must start by mastering one’s lower nature and its desires.” 9 March 1972 (CWM 14: 46)

**VI – B. 19** “In life, one must choose between a disordered and useless life of desires and that of an ascent into the light of aspiration and mastery of one’s lower nature.” 16 June 1971(CWM 14: 256)

**VI – B. 20** “Liberty does not mean to follow one’s desires but, on the contrary, to be free from them.” 27 August 1971 (CWM 13: 213)

**VI – B. 21** “We want to be free from all moral and social conventions. But that is where we have to be very careful! One must not liberate oneself from these things by sinking below them into licence and the blind satisfaction of desires; one must liberate oneself from these conventions by rising above them and by eliminating desires, and



replace moral rules by obedience to the Divine.” (CWM 13: 335)

**VI – B. 22** “We want to grow in consciousness; we do not want to descend into the pit of desires.” (CWM 13: 345)

**VI – B. 23** “To be able to know the Truth you must be without preferences and without desires, and when you aspire for the Truth your mind must be silent.” 8 July 1971 (CWM 13: 371)

**VI – B. 24** “The true freedom is to be free from desire.” (CWM 13: 380)

**VI – B. 25** “So, if one wants to be safe on the path, it seems to me that to seek for peace, for perfect calm, perfect equality, for a widening of the consciousness, a vaster understanding and liberation from all desire, all preference, all attachment, is certainly an indispensable preliminary condition.

It is the guarantee of both inner and outer equipoise.

And then on this equilibrium, on this foundation which must be *very solid*, one may build whatever one wants. But to begin with, the foundation must be there, unshakable.” (CWM 8: 328)

**VI – B. 26** “There is the way of spiritual self-mastery and the way of spiritual self-giving and surrender to the Divine, abandoning ego and desire even in the midst of action or of any kind of work or all kinds of work demanded from us by the Divine. If it were not so, there would not have been great spiritual men like Janaka or Vidura in India and even there would have been no Krishna or else Krishna would have been not the Lord of Brindavan and Mathura and Dwarka or a prince and warrior or the charioteer of Kurukshetra, but only one more great anchorite. The Indian scriptures and Indian tradition, in the Mahabharata and elsewhere, make room both for the spirituality of the renunciation of life and for the spiritual life of action.” (CWSA 29: 250)

**VI – B. 27** “If desire is not mastered, how can there be any straight walking on the straight path?” (SABCL 24: 1396)

**VI – B. 28** “It is not yoga to give free play to the natural instincts and desires. Yoga demands mastery over the nature, not subjection to the nature.” (SABCL 24: 1396)

**VI – B. 29** “If she finds herself in men’s hearts surrounded with selfishness and hatred and jealousy and malignance and envy and strife, if treachery and greed and ingratitude are mixed in the sacred chalice, if grossness of passion and

unrefined desire degrade devotion, in such hearts the gracious and beautiful Goddess will not linger." (CWSA 32: 21)

**VI – B. 30** "*What does "inner tapasya" mean, exactly?*

Inner tapasya? It means the tapasya for the character, and for changing the psychological movements of the being, precisely to conquer the desires, conquer the passions, overcome egoism, get rid of fears. This is the inner tapasya.

Outer tapasya is all the ascetic or hathayogic methods; to make use of physical means for one's yoga is an outer tapasya. But inner tapasya consists of attending to one's character and trying to change it." (CWM 6: 409-410)

**VI – B. 31.** "This movement of desire must and ought to continue until the individual has grown sufficiently so that he can now at last become master of himself and by increasing union with the Infinite possessor of his universe." (SABCL 18: 195) (CWSA 21: 207)

## **VI – C. Why desire has to be rejected in Yoga**

**VI – C. 1** “But the spiritual life demands that you should reject desire altogether. Its law is that you must cast aside all movements that draw you away from the Divine. You must reject them, not because they are bad in themselves,—for they may be good for another man or in another sphere,—but because they belong to the impulses or forces that, being unillumined and ignorant, stand in the way of your approach to the Divine. All desires, whether good or bad, come within this description; for desire itself arises from an unillumined vital being and its ignorance. On the other hand you must accept all movements that bring you into contact with the Divine. But you accept them, not because they are good in themselves, but because they bring you to the Divine. Accept then all that takes you to the Divine. Reject all that takes you away from it, but do not say that this is good and that is bad or try to impose your outlook on others; for, what you term bad may be the very thing that is good for your neighbour who is not trying to realise the Divine Life.” (CWM 3: 118-119)

**VI – C. 2** “Yoga in its process of purification will lay bare and throw up all hidden impulses and desires in you. And you must learn not to hide things nor leave them aside, you have to face them and conquer and remould them. The first effect of Yoga, however, is to take away the

mental control, and the hungers that lie dormant are suddenly set free, they rush up and invade the being. So long as this mental control has not been replaced by the Divine control, there is a period of transition when your sincerity and surrender will be put to the test. ...

The impulses and desires that come up by the pressure of Yoga should be faced in a spirit of detachment and serenity, as something foreign to yourself or belonging to the outside world. They should be offered to the Divine, so that the Divine may take them up and transmute them.

If you have once opened yourself to the Divine, if the power of the Divine has once come down into you and yet you try to keep to the old forces, you prepare troubles and difficulties and dangers for yourself. You must be vigilant and see that you do not use the Divine as a cloak for the satisfaction of your desires. There are many self-appointed Masters, who do nothing but that. And then when you are off the straight path and when you have a little knowledge and not much power, it happens that you are seized by beings or entities of a certain type, you become blind instruments in their hands and are devoured by them in the end. Wherever there is pretence, there is danger; you cannot deceive God. Do you come to God saying, "I want union with you" and in your heart meaning "I want powers and enjoyments"? Beware! You are heading straight towards the brink of the precipice. And yet it is so easy to avoid all catastrophe. Become like a child, give yourself up

to the Mother, let her carry you, and there is no more danger for you." (CWM 3: 5-6)

**VI – C. 3** *"The Mother says that the first effect of Yoga is to take away the mental control so that the ideas and desires which were so long checked become surprisingly prominent and create difficulties. {Sri Aurobindo Answers} They were not prominent because they were getting some satisfaction or at least the vital generally was getting indulged in one way or another. When they are no longer indulged then they become obstreperous. But they are not new forces created by the Yoga—they were there all the time.*

What is meant by the mental control being removed is that the mental simply kept them in check but could not remove them. So in Yoga the mental has to be replaced by the psychic or spiritual self-control which could do what the vital cannot, only many Sadhaks do not make this exchange in time and withdraw the mental control merely." (CWM 3: 303)

**VI – C. 4** *"He alone who is above likes and dislikes, desires and preferences can look at things with perfect impartiality, through senses that are in their functioning objective, like that of an extremely delicate and perfected machine, to which is added the clarity of a living consciousness." (CWM 4: 12)*

## **VI – D. Those who want to satisfy all their desires belong to a subhumanity and have no place in Auroville and the Ashram**

**VI – D. 1** "Auroville has been created for a superhumanity, for those who want to surmount their ego and renounce all desire, to prepare themselves for receiving the supermind. They alone are true Aurovilians.

Those who want to obey their ego and satisfy all their desires belong to a subhumanity and have no place here. They must return to the world which is their true place." 18 December 1972 (CWM 13: 218)

(Message for the recipients of the essential material items distributed by Auroville Prosperity)

**VI – D. 2** "Auroville is meant not for the satisfaction of desires but for the growth of the true consciousness." 16 June 1968 (CWM 13: 196)

**VI – D. 3** "It is not for comfort and satisfaction of desires that one comes to Auroville; it is for the growth of consciousness and consecration to the Truth that has to be realised.

Unselfishness is the first need to participate in the creation of Auroville." 5 November 1968 (CWM 13: 197)

**VI – D. 4** “Every good Aurovilian should strive to free himself from all desires, all preferences and all repulsions.

Equality in the face of all circumstances is the chief aim to be attained in order to live in Auroville.” (CWM 13: 202)

**VI – D. 5** “When and if Auroville becomes the example of a higher life, having conquered all desires and opened itself to higher forces, then we will be able to go everywhere. When the Aurovilians become lights moving in the world, they will be welcome. There!” (CWM 13: 345)

**VI – D. 6** “There are many human beings who need to roll in the mire in order to feel the necessity to cleanse themselves.

If the desire is too persistent for you to have the strength to overcome it, ask the people you know to find you a post (this is usually not too difficult for the young people going out from the Ashram) and go and face the ordinary life until you learn the true value of the life you would have left.

One must have heroism to be a precursor {forerunner}; for, generally, men have faith only in what is already accomplished, evident, visible, and recognised even by the most skeptical.” (CWM 13: 142-143)



**VI – D. 7** “Apart from the fact that the Ashram is not meant for those who seek the satisfaction of their vital or sentimental desires, but for those who aspire to perfect their consecration to the Divine, I have to warn you that here you must do only what can be done publicly because nothing can remain hidden.” 25 April 1958 (CWM 13: 116)

**VI – D. 8** “Never forget that, as much outside as in the Ashram, if you want to lead a happy life, you must be the master of your lower nature and control your desires and vital impulses; otherwise there is no end to the miseries and the troubles.” 20 September 1960 (CWM 14: 255)

**VI – D. 9** “One begins to be a man only when one aspires to a higher and truer life and accepts a discipline of transformation.

For this one must begin by mastering one’s lower nature and one’s desires.” 8 March 1972 (CWM 12: 155)

**VI – D. 10** “To master oneself means to do what one has decided to do, to do nothing but that, not to listen to or follow impulses, desires or fancies.” (CWM 12: 166)

**VI – D. 11** “It is only those who have come for sadhana and really do sadhana who can be happy and satisfied here. The others have constant trouble because their desires are not satisfied.” 2 October 1959 (CWM 13: 127)

**VI – D. 12** The time of egoistic greed is over

“It is a great mistake to believe that I would agree to the unselfish movement of some people only to satisfy the demands of those who remain selfish and full of desires. The time of egoistic greed is over; each one will have to share in the effort towards economy.” 22 June 1940 (CWM 13: 151)

## **VI – E. The problems desires cause in Yoga**

### **1. Prevents from meeting the Divine**

**VI – E. 1a.** “All things are the Divine because the Divine is there, but hidden not manifest; when the mind goes out to things, it is not with the sense of the Divine in them, but for the appearances only which conceal the Divine. It is necessary therefore for you as a sadhak to turn entirely to the Mother in whom the Divine is manifest and not run after the appearances, the desire of which or the interest in which prevents you from meeting the Divine. Once the being is consecrated, then it can see the Divine everywhere—and then it can include all things in the one consciousness without a separate interest or desire.” (CWSA 28: 6)

**VI – E. 1b.** “In the ordinary nature we live in the Ignorance and do not know the Divine. The forces of the ordinary nature are undivine forces because they weave a veil of ego and desire and unconsciousness which conceals the Divine from us.” (CWSA 28: 7)

**VI – E. 1c.** “It is the desire and rebellion that prevent your vital from feeling the Presence, but the fact that you do not feel it is no proof that it is not there.” 8 May 1935 (CWM 17: 94)

**VI – E. 1d.** “You wanted to satisfy your ego and its desires and you have moved away from your soul. Rediscover your soul and you will rediscover me — I have not changed place.” 7 November 1947 (CWM 17: 171-172)

## **2. Turns the Mother’s light into misleadings or errors**

**VI – E. 2a.** “The personal realisation of the Divine may be sometimes with Form, sometimes without Form. ... Sometimes it is in the heart that the Presence with the form is seen, sometimes in any of the other centres, sometimes above and guiding from there; sometimes it is seen outside and in front as if an embodied Person. ... But one must be very sure of the purity of one’s adoration and seeking — for the disadvantage of this kind of embodied relation is that other Forces can imitate the Form or counterfeit the voice and the guidance and this gets more force if it is associated with a constructed image which is not the true thing. Several have been misled in this way because pride, vanity or desire was strong in them and robbed them of the finer psychic perception that is not mental and can at once turn the Mother’s light on such misleadings or errors.” (CWSA 28: 135-136)

**VI – E. 2b** “If it is the same part of the vital that was on the right side and has now turned against the Mother, the

explanation is very obvious. It gave its adhesion formerly because it thought that by its adhesion it could make her satisfy its desires; finding its desires not indulged, it turns against her. That is the usual vital movement in ordinary man and in ordinary life, and it has no true place in Yoga.” (CWSA 32: 46)

### **3. Luminous Will and Force cannot act**

**VI – E. 3** “If one insists on one’s own ideas and reasonings, the greater Light and Knowledge cannot come or else is marred and obstructed in the coming at every step by a lower interference; if one insists on one’s own desires and fancies, that great luminous Will and Force cannot act in its own true power—for you ask it to be the servant of your desires; if one refuses to give up one’s petty ways of feeling, eternal Love and supreme Ananda cannot descend or is mixed and is spilt from the effervescing crude emotional vessel. No amount of ordinary reasoning can get rid of that necessity of surmounting the lower in order that the higher may be there.” (CWSA 28: 385)

### **4. Prevents rising to higher consciousness**

**VI – E. 4** “When we have passed beyond enjoyings, then we shall have Bliss. Desire was the helper; Desire is the bar.” (SABCL 16: 377)

It is the same principle expressed in all the activities or aspects of the being.... It is obvious that in order to come out of the state of the original inconscience desire was indispensable, for without desire there would have been no awakening to activity. But once you are *born* into consciousness, this very desire which helped you to come out of the inconscience prevents you from liberating yourself from the bonds of matter and rising to a higher consciousness." (CWM 8: 367)

## **5. Will bring unyogic qualities**

**VI – E. 5a** "If there is desire there will be attachment, demand, craving, loss of equanimity, sorrow at not getting, all that is unyogic." (CWSA 29: 61)

**VI – E. 5b** "There is no doubt the mixture of desire in what you do, even in your endeavour of sadhana, that is the difficulty. The desire brings a movement of impatient effort and a reaction of disappointment and revolt when difficulty is felt and the immediate result is not there and other confusing and disturbing feelings." (CWSA 29: 60)

**VI – E. 5c** "... for there are only two things that create insecurity —doubt and desire." (CWSA 29: 97)

**VI – E. 5d** “Whoever clings to the desires and weaknesses of the flesh, the cravings and passions of the vital in its turbulent ignorance, the dictates of his personal mind unsilenced and unillumined by a greater knowledge, cannot find the true inner law and is heaping obstacles in the way of the divine fulfilment. Whoever is able to detect and renounce those obscuring agencies and to discern and follow the true Guide within and without will discover the spiritual law and reach the goal of the Yoga.” (CWSA 23: 186)

**VI – E. 5e** “Desire, even the best, turns always to limitation and obscuration, to some eager exclusive choice and pressure, to some insistent exclusion of what should not be excluded and impatient revolt against the divine denials and withholdings. It generates anger and grief and passion and obstinacy, and these bring about the soul’s loss of its divine memory or steadfast consciousness of itself and its self knowledge and its equal vision of the truth of things. Therefore desire and its brood are incompatible with skill in works and their persistence is the sign of an imperfect Yoga.” (CWSA 13: 124) (SABCL 16: 296)

**VI – E. 5f** “There can be no right being—for desire is a perversion of the spirit—and no firm foundation for right thought, action and feeling. Desire, if permitted to remain under whatever colour, is a perpetual menace even to the

wisest and can at any moment subtly or violently cast down the mind from even its firmest and most surely acquired foundation. Desire is the chief enemy of spiritual perfection.” (CWSA 19: 582-583) (SABCL 13: 563-564)

## **VI – E. 5g** *“How far I have strayed from You!*

Your vital is discontented because I have not given it the compliments it desired. But your psychic is always with me; it is happy that I am making you conscious of what needs to be changed in you, and it insists that I should do so in spite of the vital’s discontent.” 6 July 1938 (CWM 17: 167)

## **“VI – E. 5h**

*Q: Sweet Mother,*

*I still cannot make a clear distinction between a desire and a need for the work. So this is the method I have adopted: When I think I need something (anything), I wait. If the inconvenience caused by not having this thing comes up again or increases, I ask for it.*

*A: Then the desire gets exacerbated and the request is made with a kind of sour rage.” (CWM 16: 28)*

## **6. Seizes the descending force**



**VI – E. 6a** “This descent, this working is not without its possibility of calamitous fall and danger. If the human mind or the vital desire seizes hold on the descending force and tries to use it according to its own limited and erring ideas or awed and egoistic impulses,—and this is inevitable in some degree until this lower mortal has learned something of the way of that greater immortal nature, —stumblings and deviations, hard and seemingly insuperable obstacles and wounds and suffering cannot be escaped and even death or utter downfall are not impossible. Only when the conscious integral surrender to the Divine has been learned by mind and life and body, can the way of the Yoga become easy, straight, swift and safe.” (CWSA 12: 170)

**VI – E. 6b** “*Will You explain to me how it happens that we misuse Your help, or don’t even use it at all?*”

People receive the force and power that I give and use it to satisfy their own desires instead of using it to serve the Divine.” 2 July 1936 (CWM 17: 134)

**VI – E. 6c** “Since I am speaking to you about it, I would like to recommend something to you. In your desire for progress and your aspiration for realisation, take great care not to attempt to pull the forces towards you. Give yourself, open yourself with as much disinterestedness as you can attain through a constant self-forgetfulness,

increase your receptivity to the utmost, but *never* try to *pull* the Force towards you, for wanting to pull is already a dangerous egoism. You may aspire, you may open yourself, you may give yourself, but never seek to take. When things go wrong, people blame the Force, but it is not the Force that is responsible: it is ambition, egoism, ignorance and the weakness of the vessel." (CWM 9: 241-242)

**VI – E. 6d** "*Desire... leads to pulling down the force*": what does this mean?

You see, one has an aspiration for Light, for Knowledge, for all kinds of things. Now, if a desire is mixed with your aspiration, instead of simply aspiring and awaiting the answer, you begin to pull, as one draws things when one desires them — you draw them to yourself. So instead of waiting for the Force and Light and Consciousness and Truth to answer your aspiration, you pull them down like that, towards yourself with a very egoistical movement, as though you were pulling a rope or something, and so anything at all can come in answer. Instead of its being, for example, a true light, it can be a false light which takes brilliant appearances to deceive you; instead of its being a true force, it can be an adverse force of the vital which wants to take possession of you. It means that when one has an aspiration, it is better that no desires get mixed up

in it, because desires always spoil everything." (CWM 6: 409)

**VI – E. 6e** *"Here it is written: "No snatching or clutching at realisation." What does that mean — "snatching and clutching at realisation", Sweet Mother?*

... That means one must not try to do it, because it does not obey this kind of movement. These people try to progress through violence. They have no patience, they have no persistence; and when a desire arises in them they must realise it immediately. Now, they want to have something — let us say a change in their character or a change in the circumstances or a set of things — and then, they want it at once; and as this usually does not happen all at once, they pull it down from above. This is what he calls "clutching". They seize it, pull it towards themselves. But in this way one has neither the real thing nor the true movement; one mixes violence with one's aspiration and this always produces some confusion somewhere, and moreover one cannot have the true thing, one can only have an imitation of the true thing; because this is not how it comes, not by pulling it as though one were pulling it by the tail; it will not come. Clutching! One clutches the rope when one wants to climb up. That's how it is when one pulls! That's exactly the movement one should not have once one holds the rope. That's all." (CWM 6: 420-421)

## **7. Desires falsify experience**

**VI – E. 7a** “There is experience. For a simple heart, a sincere and honest nature, a nature which knows that its experience is sincere, that it is not a falsification of desire or of mental ambition, but a spontaneous movement which comes from the soul — the experience is absolutely convincing. It loses its power of conviction when the desire to have an experience, or the ambition to think oneself very superior, becomes mixed with it. If you have that in you, then beware, because desires and ambitions falsify experience.” (CWM 10: 32)

**VI – E. 7b** “And so what is noteworthy is that the vibration, what one might call the quality of the vibration that comes from the Lord, is constructive — it builds and it is peaceful and luminous; while the other vibration of desire, or any similar vibration, complicates, destroys, confuses and twists things — confuses and distorts them, twists them. And this takes away the light; it produces a greyness, which can be intensified by violent movements into very dark shadows.” (CWM 10: 176-177)

**VI – E. 7c** “The mind and vital have a very bad habit: when one has succeeded through aspiration in having an experience, being in contact with the divine force, immediately they rush forward to make it their own

property, you see, like that (*gesture*), as a cat jumps on a mouse. And then they catch it and say, "It is for me." And then the mind turns it into all kinds of speculations and affirmations and constructions and takes great pride in it, and the vital uses the power to fulfil its own desires.

So, in order to avoid this it is said that they must be clear, quiet, peaceful, and must not rush at the force which is trying to manifest and make of it a tool for their personal use. For the mind to be clear it must be silent — at least to a certain extent, and for the vital to be clear it must give up its desires, have no desires and impulses and passions. This indeed is the essential condition. Later, if one goes into details, neither of them should have any preferences, attachments, any particular way of being or particular set of ideas." (CWM 6: 396-397)

## **8. The Ananda is obliged to draw back**

**VI – E. 8** "It is again the old vain imagination prompted by an uprising of the dissatisfied desires of the vital nature. Evidently, the wrong attitude of desire must have been waiting for its opportunity and it gave the opportunity also for the old vital to rise and indulge in its accustomed movements. It is also evident that it was the pressure of the desire coming up from below that removed the Ananda. The psychic Ananda and the desire of the complaining and clamouring vital cannot go together; if

desire comes up, the Ananda is obliged to draw back — unless you reject the desire in time and refuse to make any compromise with it. Especially when the Mother was giving you wideness and peace and intense Ananda, it was irrational in the extreme to give room to an external desire and sacrifice all that for its sake.” (SABCL 24: 1406)

## **9. Sweep off the reason**

**VI – E. 9a** “There is also the sheer force of Desire in man which is the vital’s principal support and strong enough to sweep off the reason as the Gita says, “like a boat in stormy waters”, *navamivambhasi*.” (CWSA 28: 175)

**VI – E. 9b** “To waste one’s time seeking the satisfaction of one’s petty desires is sheer folly. True happiness is possible only when one has found the Divine.” 19 February 1972 (CWM 16: 437)

## **10. Obsessive desire can lead to imbalance**

**VI – E. 10** “And naturally, he who changes a desire into an obsession would be sure to go straight towards imbalance.” (CWM 4: 345)

## **11. Causes fatigue, exhaustion**

**VI – E. 11a** “It [*the cause of fatigue*] is probably some desire or vital preference— likes and dislikes in the vital. All work given you must be felt as the Mother’s and done with joy, opening yourself for the Mother’s force to work through you.” (CWSA 29: 273)

**VI – E. 11b** “Desire often leads either to excess of effort, meaning often much labour and a limited fruit, with strain, exhaustion and in case of difficulty or failure despondence, disbelief or revolt; or else it leads to pulling down the force.” (CWSA 29: 275)

## **12. Can bring depression**

**VI – E. 12a** “*Z told me that she felt a great depression after pranam and wept bitterly. She would like to know the cause of this movement.*

She must have come to me with some desire, and her desire, sensing that it would not be satisfied, made her sad and depressed. It is more or less what happens to you too.”  
23 May 1935 (CWM 17: 97-98)

**VI – E. 12b** “I think that one part of your consciousness does in fact perceive the divine Will quite clearly; but when you try to carry out this will integrally, your vital, thwarted in its desires and impulses, becomes depressed and

refuses to cooperate, and that brings all progress to a halt.”  
9 August 1935 (CWM 17: 115)

**VI – E. 12c** “My dear child, I am only too willing to help you out of this absurd unhappiness, but I am afraid that it comes only from thwarted desires — and in that case you must first renounce those desires and ambitions. But you can be sure that my help is always with you.” 30 May 1935 (CWM 17: 100)

### **13. Persistence in error to know the truth comes from desire**

**VI – E. 13** “My experience is like this: whenever you sincerely want to know the truth, you do know it. There is *always* something to point out the error to you, to make you recognise the truth. ...

Even in small details, the very smallest—not to speak of the big things of life, the big decisions that one has to take—even in the smallest things, whenever the aspiration for the truth and the will to be true are wholly sincere, the indication always comes. And precisely, with the method of the Buddhist discipline, if you follow up within yourself the causes of your way of being, you always find out that persistence in error comes from desire. It is because you have the preference, the desire to feel, to act, to think in a



particular way, that you make the mistake. It is not simply because you do not know what is true." (CWM 3: 192)

## **VI – F. When desires are not satisfied, the Divine Grace wants us to progress through experience**

**VI – F. 1** “It is certain that for someone who has desires, when his desires are not satisfied, it is a sign that the Divine Grace is with him and wants, through experience, to make him progress rapidly, by teaching him that a willing and spontaneous surrender to the Divine Will is a much surer way to be happy in peace and light than the satisfaction of any desire.” 17 October 1969 (CWM 10: 261)

**VI – F. 2** “You must not judge things from an outer success or a semblance of defeat. We may say — and generally this is what almost always happens — we could say that the Divine gives what one desires, and of all lessons this is the best! For, if your desire is inconscient, obscure, egoistic, you increase the unconsciousness, the darkness and egoism within yourself; that is to say, this takes you farther and farther away from the truth, from consciousness and happiness. It takes you far away from the Divine. And for the Divine, naturally, only one thing is true — the divine Consciousness, the divine Union. And each time you put material things in front, you become more and more materialistic and go farther and farther away from full success.

But for the Truth that other success is a terrible defeat.... You have exchanged truth for falsehood!" (CWM 6: 238-239)

## **VI – G. Control by reason and will is partial**

**VI – G. 1** "But man has also a mind and, as he develops, he learns to control his vital and physical nature by his reason and by his will. This control is very partial: for the reason is often deluded by vital desires and the ignorance of the physical and it puts itself on their side and tries to justify by its ideas, reasonings or arguments their mistakes and wrong movements. Even if the reason keeps free and tells the vital or the body, "Do not do this", yet the vital and the body often follow their own movement in spite of the prohibition –man's mental will is not strong enough to compel them." (SABCL 24: 1395)

**VI – G.2** *"All the desires that have been repressed without being dissolved ... try to seek satisfaction while the will is asleep.*

*"And as desires are veritable dynamic centres of formation, they tend to organise in and around us an assemblage of circumstances most favourable to their satisfaction."*

**VI – G.3** "In another lesson we spoke of the power of mental formation: the mind shapes entities which have a more or less independent life and try to manifest themselves. Here I do not speak of thought but of desire. Desire belongs to the vital domain but at the core of this desire there is always a thought, and the desire becomes

all the more active and dynamic when it holds in itself this power of mental formation and the power of vital realisation. The vital is the centre of dynamism of the being, of active energy, and the two combined make something very strong which has a considerable tendency towards realizing itself. Besides, everything in the universe tends towards manifestation, and things which are prevented from manifesting lose, by that very fact, their force and capacity. Most of the methods aiming at self-control have indeed made use of repression, of the suppression of movements with the idea that if one continues this suppression long enough, one succeeds in killing the element that is not wanted. This would be quite true if it were a question only of the physical world, but behind the physical world there is the subconscious world and behind the subconscious world there lies the immensity of the Inconscient. And what you do not know is this that unless you destroy within you the desire itself, that is, the seed of the formation, this formation which you are preventing from manifesting is so to say repressed in the subconscious—driven down and repressed right at the bottom—and if you go and search in the subconscious you will find that it is waiting there to do its work. That is why so many people who have for years and years been able to control an unwanted movement are suddenly taken by surprise when this movement rushes up from below with all the greater force the longer it has been repressed. Hence

dreams are of great use because this movement of repression exists no longer, the conscious will not being there (for it falls asleep or goes elsewhere) and the desire repressed below leaps up and manifests itself in the form of dreams, so much so that you come to know a good many things about your own nature; that is why it is said that man can discover in sleep and dreams his true nature; it is not his true nature, his deeper nature, which is his psychic nature, but the spontaneous, uncontrolled nature." (CWM 4: 58-59)

**VI – G.4** "The vital being responds to the ordinary life waves in the animal; man responds to them but has the power of mental control. He has also as the mental Purusha is awake in him the power to choose whether he shall have desire or train his being to surmount it. Finally, there is the possibility of bringing down a higher nature which will not be subject to desire but act on another vital principle." (CWSA 28: 44)

**VI – G.5** "In her lower vital activities it is desire that Nature takes as her most powerful leverage; but the distinct character of man is that he is a mental being, not a merely vital creature. As he can use his thinking mind and will to restrain and correct his life impulses, ..." (CWSA 23: 79) (SABCL 20: 73)

**VI – G.6** “Studies strengthen the mind and turn its concentration away from the impulses and desires of the vital. Concentrating on study is one of the most powerful ways of controlling the mind and the vital; that is why it is so important to study.” 28 January 1935 (CWM 17: 78)

**VI – G.7** “*Q: This desire to live in an intellectual atmosphere — doesn’t it show that my mind can govern the vital?*

A: No, it only shows that in your consciousness the mind takes a bigger place than the vital. What I call the domination of the mind over the vital is when the latter takes no initiative, accepts no impulse which has not been first sanctioned by the mind, when no desire, no passion arises unless the mind thinks it good; and if an impulse of desire, passion or violence comes from outside, it is enough that the mind intervenes for it to be immediately controlled.” (CWM 16: 193)

**VI – G.8** “These habits of the physical-vital are almost automatic in their action and it takes either a very strong will or a persistent effort of self-discipline to get out this automatic, almost reflex action. You should not therefore be discouraged by the difficulty, but go on with the necessary perseverance of the will to press it out of existence.” (SABCL 24: 1408)

## VI – G.9 Self-Control

"A wild horse can be tamed but one never puts a bridle on a tiger. Why is that? Because in the tiger there is a wicked, cruel and incorrigible force, so that we cannot expect anything good from him and have to destroy him to prevent him from doing harm.

But the wild horse, on the other hand, however unmanageable and skittish he may be to begin with, can be controlled with a little effort and patience. In time he learns to obey and even to love us, and in the end he will of his own accord offer his mouth to the bit that is given to him.

In men too there are rebellious and unmanageable desires and impulses, but these things are rarely uncontrollable like the tiger. They are more often like the wild horse: to be broken in they need a bridle; and the best bridle is the one you put on the my ourself, the one called self-control." (CWM 2: 173)

*Q. "Do You think I should stop reading Gujarati literature?*

It all depends on the effect that this literature has on your imagination. If it fills your head with undesirable ideas and your vital with desires, **it is certainly better to stop reading this kind of books.**" 2 November 1934 (CWM 17: 69)



## **VI – H. Ascetic methods cure nothing**

**VI – H. 1** *“Mother, for self-mastery are not the ascetic methods useful sometimes?”*

No! You cure nothing. You only give yourself the illusion that you have progressed, but you cure nothing. The proof is that if you stop your ascetic methods, the thing is even stronger than before; it comes back with a vengeance. It depends upon what you call ascetic methods. If it is not to indulge in satisfying all your desires, this indeed is not asceticism, it is common sense. It is something else. Ascetic methods are things like repeated fasting, compelling yourself to endure the cold... in fact, to torture your body a little. This indeed gives you only a spiritual pride, nothing more. It masters nothing at all. It is infinitely easier. People do it because it is very easy, it is simple. Just because the pride is quite satisfied and the vanity can get puffed up, it becomes very easy. One makes a great demonstration of one's ascetic virtues, and so considers oneself an extremely important personage, and that helps one to endure many things.

It is much more difficult to master one's impulses quietly, composedly, and to prevent them from showing themselves — much more! — without taking ascetic measures. It is much more difficult not to be attached to the things you possess than to possess nothing. This is something that has been known for centuries. It requires

a much greater quality not to be attached to the things one possesses than to be without any possessions or to reduce one's possessions to a strict minimum. It is much more difficult. It is a much higher degree of moral worth. Simply this attitude: when a thing comes to you, to take it, use it; when for one reason or another it goes away, to let it go and not regret it. Not to refuse it when it comes, to know how to adapt yourself and not to regret it when it goes." (CWM 6: 428-429)

**VI – H. 2** "It is much more difficult to live soberly and without desire than to deprive the body of its indispensable nourishment and cleanliness and boast proudly of one's abstinence." (CWM 12: 50)

**VI – H. 3** "There is in books a lot of talk about renunciation—that you must renounce possessions, renounce attachments, renounce desires. But I have come to the conclusion that so long as you have to renounce anything you are not on this path; for, so long as you are not thoroughly disgusted with things as they are, and have to make an effort to reject them, you are not ready for the supramental realisation. If the constructions of the Overmind—the world which it has built and the existing order which it supports—still satisfy you, you cannot hope to partake of that realisation. Only when you find such a world disgusting, unbearable and unacceptable, are you fit

for the change of consciousness. That is why I do not give any importance to the idea of renunciation. To renounce means that you are to give up what you value, that you have to discard what you think is worth keeping. What, on the contrary, you must feel is that this world is ugly, stupid, brutal and full of intolerable suffering; and once you feel in this way, all the physical, all the material consciousness which does not want it to be that, will want it to change, crying, "I will have something else—something that is true, beautiful, full of delight and knowledge and consciousness!"(CWM 3: 128)

## **VI – I. How to reject vital nature's desires**

### **1. Follow the rules laid down by the spiritual guide**

**VI – I. 1** "If you do not follow the rules laid down by the spiritual guide or obey one who is leading you to the Divine, then what or whom are you to follow? Only the ideas of the individual mind and the desires of the vital: but these things never lead to siddhi in Yoga. The rules are laid down in order to guard against certain influences and their dangers and to keep a right atmosphere in the Asram favourable to spiritual development; the obedience is necessary so as to get away from one's own mind and vital and learn to follow the Truth." (CWSA 29: 191)

### **2. Education, culture, refinement of the senses**

**VI – I. 2** "In a general way, education, culture, refinement of the senses are the means of curing movements of crude instinct and desire and passion. To obliterate them is not curing them; instead they should be cultivated, intellectualised, refined. That is the surest way of curing them. To give them their maximum growth in view of the progress and development of consciousness, so that one may attain to a sense of harmony and exactitude of

perception is a part of culture and education for the human being.” (CWM 12: 120-121)

### **3. Putting out as a foreign element**

**VI – I. 3a** “The rejection of desire is essentially the rejection of the element of craving, putting that out from the consciousness itself as a foreign element not belonging to the true self and the inner nature.” (SABCL 24: 1398)

**VI – I. 3b** “When one lives in the true consciousness one feels the desires outside oneself, entering from outside, from the universal lower Prakriti, into the mind and the vital parts. In the ordinary human condition this is not felt; men become aware of the desire only when it is there, when it has come inside and found a lodging or a habitual harbourage and so they think it is their own and a part of themselves. The first condition for getting rid of desire is, therefore, to become conscious with the true consciousness; for then it becomes much easier to dismiss it than when one has to struggle with it as if it were a constituent part of oneself to be thrown out from the being. It is easier to cast off an accretion {accumulation} than to excise what is felt as a parcel of our substance.” (SABCL 24: 1398)

**VI – I. 3c** “Desire takes a long time to get rid of entirely. But, if you can once get it out of the nature and realise it as a force coming from outside and putting its claws into the vital and physical, it will be easier to get rid of the invader. You are too accustomed to feel it as part of yourself or planted in you —that makes it more difficult for you to deal with its movements and dismiss its ancient control over you.” (SABCL 24: 1399)

#### **4. Refusal to indulge the suggestions of desire**

**VI – I. 4a** “But refusal to indulge the suggestions of desire is also a part of the rejection; to abstain from the action suggested, if it is not the right action, must be included in the yogic discipline.” (SABCL 24: 1398)

Q. “*Sweet Mother,*

*One householder reader of our Kannada journal has asked the following two questions which I am unable to answer. Would Mother kindly help?*

*(1) What is to be done to reduce (if not eliminate) the desire for food? (2) What is to be done to reduce (if not eliminate) the desire for sex?*

One answer to both: busy yourself with something more interesting — otherwise there are hundreds of ways from the most material to the most spiritual.”

## **5. Cannot be acquired by giving up work**

**VI – I. 5** “As for freedom from ego or desire, that is the general law of all Yoga, but it cannot be acquired by merely giving up work. The majority of Sannyasins are not at all free from desire or ego.” (CWSA 29: 188-189)

## **6. To push them out, on the surface and get the inner parts quiet and clear**

**VI – I. 6** “No one can easily get rid of desires. What has first to be done is to exteriorize them, to push them out, on the surface and get the inner parts quiet and clear. Afterwards they can be thrown out and replaced by the true thing; a happy and luminous will one with the Divine's.” (SABCL 24: 1399)

## **7. Accompanied by detachment**

**VI – I. 7a** “Not necessarily suppression, if the refusal of food [to a desire] is accompanied by detachment in the major part of the being. The difference between suppression (*nigraha*) and self-control (*samyama*) is that one says “I cannot help desiring but I will not satisfy my

desire", while the other says "I refuse the desire as well as the satisfaction of the desire". (SABCL 24: 1402-1403)

**VI – I. 7b** "It is the small habits of the lower vital being which gather all their strength to resist correction and try to occupy the consciousness. When they come you must learn to detach your inner consciousness from them entirely so that even when they strongly come they will not be able to occupy the consciousness or get any assent." (SABCL 24: 1408)

**VI – I. 7c** "Each wave of desire as it comes must be observed, as quietly and with as much unmoved detachment as you would observe something going on outside you, and allowed to pass, rejected from the consciousness, and the true movement, the true consciousness steadily put in its place." (SABCL 24: 1465-1466)

**VI – I. 7d** "The thought and will have to stand back detached from desire, troubling emotion, distracting or mastering impulse and to act in their own right until they can discover a greater guide, a Will, Tapas or divine Shakti which will take the place of desire and mental will and impulse, an Ananda or pure delight of the spirit and an illumined spiritual knowledge which will express



themselves in the action of that Shakti.” (CWSA 24: 669)  
(SABCL 21: 642)

## **8. It is the desire you have to part with and not the objects of the desire**

**VI – I. 8** “You are not asked to give up your house and wealth, your wife, your children, your friends. What you have to give up is your selfish desire for them and your habit of regarding them as your possessions and chattels who are yours merely in order to give you pleasure. You are not asked to throw away the objects of your desire, but to give them up in your heart. It is the desire you have to part with and not the objects of the desire. The abandonment demanded of you is therefore a spiritual abandonment; the power to enjoy your material possessions in such spirit of detachment that you will not be overjoyed by gain, nor cast down by loss, is the test of its reality,—not the mere flight from their presence, which is simply a flight from temptation. The Karmayogin has to remain in the world & conquer it; he is not allowed to flee from the scene of conflict and shun the battle. His part in life is the part of the hero,—the one quality he must possess, is the lion like courage that will dare to meet its spiritual enemies in their own country and citadel and tread them down under its heel. A spiritual abandonment then,—for the body only matters as the case of the spirit; it is the

spirit on which the Karmayogin must concentrate his effort. To purify the body is well, only because it makes it easier to purify the spirit; in itself it is of no importance; but if the soul is pure, the body cannot be touched by uncleanness. If the spirit itself is not stained by desire, the material enjoyment of the objects of desire cannot stain it. For if my spirit does not lust after new wealth or cling to the wealth I have, then my use of riches must necessarily be selfless and without blame; and having parted with them in spirit and given them into the treasury of God, I can then truly enjoy their possession. That enjoyment is clear, deep and calm; fate cannot break it, robbers cannot take it away, enemies cannot overwhelm it. All other joy of possession is chequered and broken with fear, sorrow, trouble and passion,—the passion for its increase, the trouble of keeping it unimpaired, the sorrow for its diminution, the fear of its utter loss. Passionless enjoyment alone is pure & unmixed delight. If indeed you choose to abandon riches physically as well as in spirit, that too is well, provided you take care that you are not cherishing the thought of them in your mind." (CWSA 17: 190-191)

## **9. First get rid of the major desires then subtler desires**

**VI – I. 9** "Certainly it is not easy to get rid of all desires, it sometimes needs a whole lifetime. But to tell the truth, it

seems to be a very negative way, although at a certain stage of development, it is a discipline which it is very useful, even indispensable to practise, if one does not want to deceive oneself. Because at first you begin by getting rid of the major desires, those that are most obvious and trouble you so much that you cannot even have any illusions about them; then come subtler desires that take the form of things that have to be done, that are necessary, even at times of commands from within, and it requires time and much sincerity to discover and overcome them; at last it seems as if you had done away with these wretched desires in the material world, in external things, in the world of feelings, in the emotions and sentiments, in the mental world as regards ideas, and then you find them again in the spiritual world, and there they are far more dangerous, more subtle, more penetrating and much more invisible and covered by such a saintly appearance that one dare not call them desires.

And when one has succeeded in overcoming all that, in discovering, dislodging and getting rid of them, even then one has done only the negative side of the work.” (CWM 3: 267-268)

## **10. Surrender desires into the hands of the Lord**

**VI – I. 10 a.** “For whatever desires still trouble his being, he must, if he accepts the high aim of Yoga, put them away

from him into the hands of the Lord within us. The supreme Power will deal with them for the good of the sadhaka and for the good of all.” (CWSA 23: 209-210) (SABCL 20: 198-199)

**VI – I. 10 b.** “If at the outset one were to seize the problem bodily, jump into it with courage and determination and, instead of under taking 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 warm this there, an ardour, an enthusiasm, a light, a beauty, an ardent and creative life. ...

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. ...

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: 268-269)

**11. A desire which knows that it will never be satisfied at once vanishes**

**VI – I. 11 a.** "A desire which knows that it will never be satisfied at once vanishes." (CWM 14: 254)

"If you want to become conscious of my presence in you and to be delivered from hostile attacks, you must renounce any attempt to satisfy your desires. Only when the vital has lost all hope of seeing its desires satisfied does it consent to be spiritualised." (CWM 14: 254)

**12. Desire may recur in order to exhaust or teach in his most unteachable parts**

**VI – I. 12** "In effect, we find that once this surrender is done,—always provided the rejection is sincere,—egoistic indulgence of desire may for some time recur under the continued impulse of past nature but only in order to exhaust its acquired momentum and to teach the embodied being in his most un teachable part, his nervous, vital, emotional nature, by the reactions of desire, by its grief and unrest bitterly contrasted with calm periods of the

higher peace or marvellous movements of divine Ananda, that egoistic desire is not a law for the soul that seeks liberation or aspires to its own original god-nature. Afterwards the element of desire in those impulses will be thrown away or persistently eliminated by a constant denying and transforming pressure.” (CWSA 23: 210) (SABCL 20: 198-199)

### **13. Concentrate on the passion for the Divine**

**VI – I. 13 a** “This craving life-force or desire-soul in us has to be accepted at first, but only in order that it may be transformed. Even from the very beginning it has to be taught to renounce all other desires and concentrate itself on the passion for the Divine. This capital point gained, it has to be taught to desire, not for its own separate sake, but for God in the world and for the Divine in ourselves; it has to fix itself upon no personal spiritual gain, though of all possible spiritual gains we are sure, but on the great work to be done in us and others, on the high coming manifestation which is to be the glorious fulfilment of the Divine in the world, on the Truth that has to be sought and lived and enthroned for ever.” (CWSA 23: 84) (SABCL 20: 77-78)

**VI – I. 13 b** “It is true that the mere suppression or holding down of desire is not enough, not by itself truly effective, but that does not mean that desires are to be indulged; it means that desires have not merely to be suppressed, but to be rejected from the nature. In place of desire there must be a single-minded aspiration towards the Divine.” (SABCL 24: 1401-1402)

**VI – I. 13 c** “The higher Consciousness is a state of pure love but it is also a state of pure openness to divine knowledge. There is no opposition there between these two kindred things; it is the mind that makes them separate.

The best way to get to it is to refuse all mental agitation when it comes, also all vital desires and turmoils, and to keep the mind and heart turned as constantly as possible towards the Divine. The love for the Divine is the strongest force for doing this.” 19 October 1939 (CWM 16: 213-214)

#### **14. A progressive change is the way**

**VI – I. 14** “It is difficult to get rid of desires *altogether* all at once — if the right ones have the upper hand, that already makes the ultimate victory sure. Therefore don't allow that to trouble you. A progressive change is the way these things work out — and if the progress has begun,

then there can be a fundamental sense of certitude about the outcome of the sadhana and a quiet view upon what has to be done because it is sure to be done.” (SABCL 24: 1404)

### **15. The right attitude is to wait on the Divine Will**

**VI – I. 15** “It is often the experience that when one gives up the insistence of desire for a thing, then the thing itself comes. The right attitude is to wait on the Divine Will and seek that only —desire always creates perturbation and even its fulfilment does not satisfy. Aspiration is a different thing.” (SABCL 24: 1404)

### **16. Supersede desire by the higher mind and psychic being**

**VI – I. 16 a** “As he can use his thinking mind and will to restrain and correct his life impulses, so too he can bring in the action of a still higher luminous mentality aided by the deeper soul in him, the psychic being, and supersede by these greater and purer motive-powers the domination of the vital and sensational force that we call desire. He can entirely master or persuade it and offer it up for transformation to its divine Master. This higher mentality



and this deeper soul, the psychic element in man, are the two grappling hooks by which the Divine can lay hold upon his nature.” (CWSA 23: 79) (SABCL 20: 73)

**VI – I. 16 b** “Yielding to desires is not the way of getting rid of them. There is no end to desires — each one which is satisfied is at once replaced by another one and they go on clamouring more and more.

It is only by conquering the desires that you can get rid of them, by coming out of this consciousness of the lower nature and rising to a higher consciousness.” 29 April 1930 (CWM 14: 253)

### **17. The descent of a full calm, strength and equanimity**

**VI – I. 17 a** “For it to realise itself you must progress first in two directions. The first we have already pressed on you —the surmounting of those vital desires which linked you to the lower movements and invited the pressure of a hostile Force on your lower vital and your body, and the complete surrender of life and body to the One alone. The other is the descent of a full calm and strength and equanimity into these parts so that you may conquer life and its difficulties and do your work for the Divine. This calm and strength had often descended into your mind and higher vital, but these other parts were still open to much

weakness and attachment and a self-indulgent movement. That must go if one wants to become a hero and master of spiritual action.” (SABCL 24: 1405-1406)

**VI – I. 17 b** “The vital in the physical easily slips back to its old small habits if it gets a chance. It is there that they stick. They go entirely only when that part gets equanimity and a simple natural freedom from all desires.” (SABCL 24: 1408)

**VI – I. 17 c** “Slay then desire; put away attachment to the possession and enjoyment of the outwardness of things. Separate yourself from all that comes to you as outward touches and solicitations, as objects of the mind and senses. Learn to bear and reject all the rush of the passions and to remain securely seated in your inner self even while they rage in your members, until at last they cease to affect any part of your nature. Bear and put away similarly the forceful attacks and even the slightest insinuating touches of joy and sorrow. Cast away liking and disliking, destroy preference and hatred, root out shrinking and repugnance. Let there be a calm indifference to these things and to all the objects of desire in all your nature. Look on them with the silent and tranquil regard of an impersonal spirit.

The result will be an absolute equality and the power of unshakable calm that the universal spirit maintains in

front of its creations, facing ever the manifold action of Nature.” (CWSA 19: 583) (SABCL 13: 563-564)

**VI – I. 17 d** “To establish and deepen the inner calm and quiet. If that is done, all these things {hours devoted to work, needs, family, etc.,} will be felt more and more as external and the falling off of desire and attachment will become possible.” (CWSA 29: 44)

**18. Can be removed with the aid of the Divine Force**

**VI – I. 18 a** “The Divine Grace and Power can do everything, but with the full assent of the sadhak. To learn to give that full assent is the whole meaning of the sadhana. It may take time either because of ideas in the mind, desires in the vital or inertia in the physical consciousness, but these things have to be and can be removed with the aid or by calling in the action of the Divine Force.” (CWSA 29: 171)

**VI – I. 18 b** “It is natural for the lower vital to be made up of feelings, impulses and desires and to be attached to outer things—but that is only a part of you. There is also the psychic and the higher mind and higher vital which only need quietude and the help of the Force and Peace behind them to come forward more strongly and dominate over the lower vital and help to change it.” (CWSA 29: 139)

**VI – I. 18 c** “In order to be cured, my child, not only is it necessary to stop all these unseemly practices completely, but it is necessary to get rid of all these unhealthy *desires* from your thought and sensation, for it is desires that irritate the organs and make them ill. You must ruthlessly clean up everything and your will is not strong enough for that; invoke my will, call it sincerely and it will be there to help you. You are right when you say that with my help you will surely be able to conquer. That is true, but you must sincerely want this help and let it work within you and in all circumstances.” (CWM 15:147)

**VI – I. 18 d** “You say that you are often depressed. It is the vital being that gets depressed when its desires are not satisfied.

In ordinary life, one has to struggle to satisfy one’s desires; here one struggles not to do so. Actually, whatever path one follows, success always comes to those who are strong, courageous, enduring. And you know that here our force and our help are always available to you; you have only to learn to make use of them. Love from your mother.”  
26 July 1937 (CWM 16: 134)

**19. To get the consciousness down into the whole of the vital proper**

**VI – I. 19 a** “It is the vital-physical that receives these suggestions and obeys these desires. What you have to do is to get the consciousness down into the whole of the vital proper so that not only the mind but the vital itself will reject these desires. In that case, the vital physical desires will lose half their force.” (SABCL 24: 1407)

**VI – I. 19 b Q.** “*Sweet Mother,*

*What is the most effective way of overcoming desires and attachments: to cut them off all at one stroke, even at the risk of breaking down, or to advance slowly and surely by eliminating them carefully one by one?*

**VI – I. 19 c** “Both these ways are equally ineffective. The normal result of both these methods is that you deceive yourself, you delude yourself that you have overcome your desires, whereas at best you are merely sitting on them — they remain repressed in the subconscious until they explode there and cause an upheaval in the whole being.

It is from *within* that you must become master of your lower nature by establishing your consciousness firmly in a domain that is free of all desire and attachment because it is under the influence of the divine Light and Force. It is a long and exacting labour which must be undertaken with an unflinching sincerity and a tireless perseverance.

In any case, you should never pretend to be more perfect than you are, and still less should you be satisfied with false appearances." 26 August 1964 (CWM 16: 301-302)

**VI – I. 19 d** "It is impossible to satisfy desire perfectly — it is something impossible. And also to renounce desire. You renounce one desire and you have another. Therefore both are relatively impossible; what is possible is to enter into a state where there is no desire." (CWM 10: 174)

## **20. When the psychic being is in front**

**VI – I. 20 a** "When the psychic being is in front, then also to get rid of desire becomes easy; for the psychic being has in itself no desires, it has only aspirations and a seeking and love for the Divine and all things that are or tend towards the Divine. The constant prominence of the psychic being tends of itself to bring out the true consciousness and set right almost automatically the movements of the nature." (SABCL 24: 1399)

**VI – I. 20 b** "*How can I strengthen my love so that it can vanquish the desires and impulses that hinder my progress?*

**Concentrate on the psychic consciousness."** (CWM 17: 119)

**VI – I. 20 c** “To develop and master your vital, carefully observe your movements and reactions with a will to overcome desires, and aspire to find your psychic being and unite with it.” (CWM 16: 299)

**VI – I. 20 d** “It is only when one gives oneself in all sincerity to the Divine Will that one has the peace and calm joy which come from the abolition of desires.

The psychic being knows this with certainty; so, by uniting with one’s psychic, one can know it. But the first condition is not to be subject to one’s desires and mistake them for the truth of one’s being.” 4 February 1972 (CWM 16: 433)

## **21. Throw desires into the fire of aspiration**

**VI – I. 21 a** “*Mother, what must I do so that the fire of aspiration never goes out?*”

One keeps this fire lit by throwing into it all one’s difficulties, all one’s desires, all one’s imperfections. In the morning and evening when you come to me, you should ask me in your heart to keep the fire lit and offer me all these things as fuel.” 15 January 1936 (CWM 17: 125-126)

**VI – I. 21 b** *“Into the fire all desires, all attachment, all impurity, all imperfection, as fuel.*

Yes, that is good. This movement should be constantly renewed.” 27 January 1936 (CWM 17: 126)

## **22. The being lives in the solid realisation of peace and oneness**

**VI – I. 22** “The inner being may have the realisation strongly and live in the oneness, calm, peace, but the interior parts of the outer may feel the reactions of desire etc. In this case the reactions are more superficial; but even so rejection is needed till they cease. When all the being lives in the solid realisation of calm, peace, liberation, oneness, then the desires fall away and the necessity of rejection ceases, because there is nothing to reject any longer.” (CWSA 29: 425)

## **23. Learn to desire, not in its own egoistic way, but in the way of the Divine**

**VI – I. 23** “But last, most difficult for it {craving life-force or desire-soul in us}, more difficult than to seek with the right object, it has to be taught to seek in the right manner; for it must learn to desire, not in its own egoistic way, but



in the way of the Divine. It must insist no longer, as the strong separative will always insists, on its own manner of fulfilment, its own dream of possession, its own idea of the right and the desirable; it must yearn to fulfil a larger and greater Will and consent to wait upon a less interested and ignorant guidance. Thus trained, Desire, that great unquiet harasser and troubler of man and cause of every kind of stumbling, will become fit to be transformed into its divine counterpart." (CWSA 23: 83-84) (SABCL 20: 77-78)

## **24. A wakeful consciousness, pure and alert**

**VI – I. 24** "*Can the protective envelope also feel the waves of desire, the impulses from others, etc.?*"

You mean whether the protective envelope of which I spoke from a physical point of view can serve also from a moral, a psychological point of view? It is not the same envelope, it is another domain. A man may have this subtle-physical envelope quite intact and it may work marvellously to protect him from all illnesses and accidents, and yet at the same time he may be full of desires, because desires belong to another sphere. Desire is not a physical thing, desire is something vital, and this envelope is more material than the vital: it cannot prevent the vital from entering into contact with the vital world and receiving from there all its impulses. Naturally he who has

mastered himself, who has found his psychic being, who lives constantly in the consciousness of this psychic being, who has established a perfect relation or at least a constant relation with the inner divine Presence is enveloped in an atmosphere of knowledge, light, beauty, purity, which is the best of all protections against desires, but all the same it is possible for desire to intrude if one is not always on one's guard, because we say that it comes from outside. One may have overcome a desire within oneself, and yet it may come from outside as a contagion; but through this envelope of light, knowledge and purity, the desire loses its force and instead of coming like a movement which evokes a blind and immediate response, one perceives what is happening, becomes aware of the force which wants to enter and one can quietly—when it is not wanted—make an inner movement and reject the incoming desire. This is the only true defence: a wakeful consciousness, pure and alert, so to say, which does not sleep, does not let things enter without being aware of them. The worst thing is that people are quite unconscious and that it is only after the contagion has entered that they notice it, and it is a little late to react—it is not impossible, but it is more difficult—while if one sees it coming, if in the surrounding atmosphere it comes making a kind of little black mark, one can chase it off as one would something disagreeable. But the protective envelope on the material plane has no effect in this instance." (CWM 4: 323-324)

## **25. To identify oneself with the divine Power**

**VI – I. 25** *"Does an individual mastery over desire suffice or is a general, collective mastery necessary?"*

Ah! There we are.... Is it possible to attain a total personal transformation without there being at least a correspondence in the collectivity?... This does not seem possible to me. There is such an interdependence between the individual and the collectivity that, unless one does what the ascetics have preached, that is, escapes from the world, goes out of it completely, leaves it where it is and runs away selfishly leaving all the work to others, unless one does that.... And even so I have my doubts. Is it possible to accomplish a total transformation of one's being so long as the collectivity has not reached at least a certain degree of transformation? I don't think so. ... There is another: to identify oneself so well with the divine Power as to be able to act constantly and consciously upon all vibrations circulating through the world. Then the undesirable vibrations no longer have any effect upon you, but you have an effect upon them, that is, instead of an undesirable vibration entering into you without being perceived and doing its work there, it is perceived and immediately on its arrival you act upon it to transform it, and it goes back into the world transformed, to do its beneficent work and prepare others for the same

realisation. This is exactly what Sri Aurobindo proposes to do and, more clearly, what he asks you to do, what he intends us to do:

Instead of running away, to bring into oneself the power which can conquer." (CWM 4: 381-382)

## **VI – J. If desires are rejected and exiled then ...**

### **VI – J. 1. A quietude and purity into which the Peace can descend**

“One gets by the rejection of desire, rajas and ego a quietude and purity into which the Peace ineffable can descend; ...” (CWSA 29: 217) (SABCL 23: 528)

**VI – J. 1a.** “It is the old vital nature that feels its human worldly desires will not be satisfied and feels like this. All that has not to be indulged but rejected and swept aside. In its place must come the wideness in which there is a self-existent peace and satisfaction and into that peace and wideness must come the Mother's greater peace, force, light, knowledge, Ananda.” (SABCL 24: 1405)

**VI – J. 1b.** “When the consciousness as well as the action is free from ego and desire, there is always a fundamental calm.” (CWSA 28: 48)

**VI – J. 1c.** “One must constantly progress in the light and peace that come from the absence of personal desires.” (CWM 16: 430) (CWM 14: 158)

**VI – J. 1d.** “Peace in the vital: the result of abolishing desires.” (CWM 14: 355)

## **VI – J. 2. Equality can be gained**

**VI – J. 2.** “For it is desire, the principle of all our superficial life, which satisfies itself with the life of the senses and finds its whole account in the play of the passions. We must get rid then of desire and, that propensity of our natural being destroyed, the passions which are its emotional results will fall into quietude; for the joy and grief of possession and of loss, success and failure, pleasant and unpleasant touches, which entertain them, will pass out of our souls. A calm equality will then be gained.” (CWSA 19: 255) (SABCL 13: 244)

## **VI – J. 3. Physical protection is possible**

**VI – J. 3.** “Physical protection is possible only with a total surrender to the Divine and the absence of all desires.” (CWM 15: 47)

## **VI – J. 4. There is a greater joy in overcoming a desire than in satisfying it**

**VI – J. 4a.** “The Buddha has said that there is a greater joy in overcoming a desire than in satisfying it. It is an experience everybody can have and one that is truly very interesting, very interesting.

There was someone who was invited — it happened in Paris — invited to a first-night (a first-night means a first performance) of an opera of Massenet's. I think... I don't remember now whose it was. The subject was fine, the play was fine, and the music not displeasing; it was the first time and this person was invited to the box of the Minister of Fine Arts who always has a box for all the first nights at the government theatres. This Minister of Fine Arts was a simple person, an old countryside man, who had not lived much in Paris, who was quite new in his ministry and took a truly childlike joy in seeing new things. Yet he was a polite man and as he had invited a lady he gave her the front seat and himself sat at the back. But he felt very unhappy because he could not see everything. He leaned forward like this, trying to see something without showing it too much. Now, the lady who was in front noticed this. She too was very interested and was finding it very fine, and it was not that she did not like it, she liked it very much and was enjoying the show; but she saw how very unhappy that poor minister looked, not being able to see. So quite casually, you see, she pushed back her chair, went back a little, as though she was thinking of something else, and drew back so well that he came forward and could now see the whole scene. Well, this person, when she drew back and gave up all desire to see the show, was filled with a sense of inner joy, a liberation from all attachment to things and a kind of peace, content to have done something

for somebody instead of having satisfied herself, to the extent that the evening brought her infinitely greater pleasure than if she had listened to the opera. This is a true experience, it is not a little story read in a book, and it was precisely at the time this person was studying Buddhist discipline, and it was in conformity with the saying of the Buddha that she tried this experiment.

And truly this was so concrete an experience, you know, so real that... ah, two seconds later, you see, the play, the music, the actors, the scene, the pictures and all that were gone like absolutely secondary things, completely unimportant, while this joy of having mastered something in oneself and done something not simply selfish, this joy filled all the being with an incomparable serenity — a delightful experience... Well, it is not just an individual, personal experience. All those who want to try can have it. (CWM 7: 38-39)

**VI – J. 4b** “There is a kind of inner communion with the psychic being which takes place when one willingly gives up a desire, and because of this one feels a much greater joy than if he had satisfied his desire. Besides, most usually, almost without exception, when one satisfies a desire it always leaves a kind of bitter taste somewhere.

There is not one satisfied desire which does not give a kind of bitterness; as when one has eaten too sugary a sweet it fills your mouth with bitterness. It is like that. You



must try sincerely. Naturally you must not pretend to give up desire and keep it in a corner, because then one becomes very unhappy. You must do it sincerely.” (CWM 7: 40)

**VI – J. 4c** “To conquer a desire brings more joy than to satisfy it.” (CWM 14: 256)

**VI – J. 4d** “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.” (CWM 3: 268)

**VI – J. 4e** “*How can one learn of pure delight?*”

First of all, to begin with, one must through an attentive observation grow aware that desires and the satisfaction of desires give only a vague, uncertain pleasure, mixed, fugitive and altogether unsatisfactory. That is usually the starting-point.

Then, if one is a reasonable being, one must learn to discern what is desire and refrain from doing anything that may satisfy one’s desires. One must reject them without trying to satisfy them. And so the first result is exactly one of the first observations stated by the Buddha in his teaching: there is an infinitely greater delight in conquering

and eliminating a desire than in satisfying it. Every sincere and steadfast seeker will realise after some time, sooner or later, at times very soon, that this is an absolute truth, and that the delight felt in overcoming a desire is incomparably higher than the small pleasure, so fleeting and mixed, which may be found in the satisfaction of his desires. That is the second step.

Naturally, with this continuous discipline, in a very short time the desires will keep their distance and will no longer bother you. So you will be free to enter a little more deeply into your being and open yourself in an aspiration to... the Giver of Delight, the divine Element, the divine Grace. And if this is done with a sincere self-giving — something that gives itself, offers itself and expects nothing in exchange for its offering — one will feel that kind of sweet warmth, comfortable, intimate, radiant, which fills the heart and is the herald of Delight. After this, the path is easy.” (CWM 9: 21)

## **VI – J. 4f** “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.” (CWM 9: 22)

**VI – J. 4g** “If through an effort of inner consciousness and knowledge, you can truly overcome in yourself a desire, that is to say, dissolve and abolish it, and if through inner goodwill, through consciousness, light, knowledge, you are able to dissolve the desire, you will be, first of all in yourself personally, a hundred times happier than if you had satisfied this desire, and then it will have a marvellous effect. It will have a repercussion in the world of which you have no idea. It will spread forth. For the vibrations you have created will continue to spread. These things grow larger like the snowball. The victory you win in your character, however small it be, is one which can be gained in the whole world. And it is this I meant just now: all things which are done outwardly without changing the inner nature—hospitals, schools, etc.—are done through vanity, for the feeling of being great, whilst these small unnoticed things overcome in oneself gain an infinitely greater victory, though the effects are hidden. Every movement in you which is false and opposed to the truth is a negation of the divine life. Your small efforts have

considerable results which you don't even have the satisfaction of knowing, but which are true and have precisely an impersonal and general effect.

If you really want to do something good, the best thing you can do is to win your small victories in all sincerity, one after another, and thus you will do for the world the maximum you are able to." (CWM 5: 19-20)

### **VI – J. 5. A new nature is formed responding to the Truth above**

**VI – J. 5.** "By Prakriti [in a passage in Bases of Yoga] is meant universal Prakriti. Universal Prakriti entering into the vital being creates desires which appear by its habitual response as an individual nature; but if the habitual desires she throws in are rejected and exiled, the being remains but the old individual prakriti of vital desire is no longer there—a new nature is formed responding to the Truth above and not to the lower Nature." (CWSA 28: 43-44)

### **VI – J. 6. True condition for good health**

**VI – J. 6.** "Purity in the cells cannot be obtained except through conquest of desires; it is the true condition for good health." (CWM 14: 360)

### **VI – J. 7. Perfection can come**

**VI – J. 7.** “Perfection comes by renunciation of desires and surrender to a higher Will.” (CWSA 29: 278)

**VI – J. 8. One is on one’s upward march towards the Divine**

**VI – J. 8.** “In proportion as he can thus master and enlighten his lower self, he is man and no longer an animal. When he can begin to replace desire altogether by a still greater enlightened thought and sight and will in touch with the Infinite, consciously subject to a diviner will than his own, linked to a more universal and transcendent knowledge, he has commenced the ascent towards the superman; he is on his upward march towards the Divine.” (CWSA 23: 80) (SABCL 20: 74)

**VI – J. 9. The divine force is waiting to descend**

**VI – J. 9.** “The fear is again that of the physical consciousness or of the vital element in it — it is afraid if it gives up desire that it will lose everything —or everything it wants —and gain nothing in exchange or at least nothing it wants. It does not realise that it will get something far greater and more powerful and happy in place of this troubled desire and its doubtful and precarious fruits —for it has been accustomed to think of desire as the only possible motive of life. It does not know that the divine

Force is there waiting to descend with its light and peace and joy bringing much greater things and a happier life. When this part can be enlightened and persuaded to want whole-heartedly the change, then a great difficulty, indeed the central difficulty will have gone.” (SABCL 24: 1405)

### **VI – J. 10. Intimacy with the Divine in the vital**

**VI – J. 10.** “Intimacy with the Divine in the vital: only a pure, calm and desireless vital can hope to have access to this marvellous state.” (CWM 14: 21)

### **VI – J. 11. With aspiration psychic can open**

**VI – J. 11a** “If desire is rejected and no longer governs the thought, feeling or action and there is a steady aspiration of an entirely sincere self-giving, the psychic usually after a time opens of itself.” (SABCL 24: 1099)

**VI – J. 11b** “Once you have no more desires, no more attachments, once you have given up all necessity of receiving a reward from human beings, whoever they are — knowing that the only reward that is worth getting is the one that comes from the Supreme and that never fails — once you give up the attachment to all exterior beings and things, you at once feel in your heart this Presence, this Force, this Grace and things, you at once feel in your heart

this Presence, this Force, this Grace that is always with you.” (CWM 15: 398)

## **VI – J. 12. Indispensable for transformation**

**VI – J. 12.** “Renunciation of emotional desires: indispensable for transformation.” (CWM 15: 89)

## **VI – J. 13. The essential condition for realisation**

**VI – J. 13.** “Renunciation of desires: the essential condition for realisation.” (CWM 14: 253)

## **VI – J. 14. One is in Ananda**

**VI – J. 14a** *“Sweet Mother, what kind of a state is it in which one has passed beyond all enjoyings?”*

Well, it is a desireless state in which one lives — as Sri Aurobindo explains later — in an Ananda which has no cause, which does not depend on any circumstances, inner or outer, which is a permanent state, independent of the circumstances of life, causeless. One is in Ananda because

one is in Ananda. And in fact it is simply because one has become aware of the divine Reality.

But one cannot feel the Ananda unless one has become desireless. If one has desires, all one feels is just pleasures and enjoyments, but that is not Ananda. Ananda has an altogether different nature and can only manifest in the being when the desires are abolished. So long as one is a being of desire, one cannot feel the Ananda; even were a force of Ananda to descend, it would immediately be falsified by the presence of desires.” (CWM 8: 369)

**VI – J. 14b** “Ananda in the physical body: purified of all desire and all repulsion, in a perfect equality and surrender, the physical body is ready to enjoy the divine Ananda.” (CWM 14: 361)



## **VI – K. Replace desire by ...**

### **VI – K. 1. Vision of the Truth**

**VI – K. 1.** "Yet one must learn to act without any preference, free from all attractions and likings, taking one's stand solely on the Truth which guides. And having chosen in accordance with the Truth the necessary action, one must carry it out without any desire. If you observe yourself attentively, you will see that before acting you need an inner impetus, something which pushes you. In the ordinary man this impetus is generally desire.

This desire ought to be replaced by a clear, precise, constant vision of the Truth. Some call this the Voice of God or the Will of God. The true meaning of these words has been falsified, so I prefer to speak of "the Truth", though this is but a very limited aspect of That which we cannot name but which is the Source and the Goal of all existence." (CWM 4: 1-2)

### **VI – K. 2. The yearning for progress**

#### **VI – K. 2. ATHLETICS COMPETITION 1962**

"Replace the ambition to be first by the will to do the best possible. Replace the desire for success by the yearning for progress." (CWM 12: 273)

### **VI – K. 3. Ecstasy of the soul's seeking**

**VI – K. 3.** "For desire and passion too have their divine forms; there is a pure ecstasy of the soul's seeking beyond all craving and grief, there is a Will of Ananda that sits glorified in the possession of the supreme beatitudes." (CWSA 23: 83-84) (SABCL 20: 77-78)

### **VI – K. 4. Action of the Truth-will**

**VI – K. 4.** "The gnosis takes up not only our intelligent will, but our wishes, desires, even what we call the lower desires, the instincts, the impulses, the reachings out of sense and sensation and it transforms them. They cease to be wishes and desires, because they cease first to be personal and then cease to be that struggling after the ungrasped which we mean by craving and desire. No longer blind or half blind reachings out of the instinctive or intelligent mentality, they are transformed into a various action of the Truth-will; and that will acts with an inherent knowledge of the right measures of its decreed action and therefore with an effectivity unknown to our mental willing. Therefore too in the action of the vijñanamaya will there is no place for sin; for all sin is an error of the will, a desire and act of the Ignorance. When desire ceases entirely, grief and all inner suffering also cease. The Vijñana takes up not only our parts of knowledge and will, but our parts

of affection and delight and changes them into action of the divine Ananda.” (CWSA 24: 494-495) (SABCL 21: 474-475)

## **VI – L. If at all desire, what to desire for**

**VI – L1** “Desire nothing but the purity, force, light, wideness, calm, Ananda of the divine consciousness and its insistence to transform and perfect your mind, life and body. Ask for nothing but the divine, spiritual and supramental Truth, its realisation on earth and in you and in all who are called and chosen and the conditions needed for its creation and its victory over all opposing forces.” (CWSA 32: 8)

**VI – L2** “I hope that this new month will bring you the realisation you desire: a happy calm, an invariable peace, a luminous silence.

Such is my wish and my blessing.” 1 February 1934 (CWM 16: 93)

## **VI – L3. Prayer**

“O Lord, awaken in me the ardent desire to know You.

I aspire to consecrate my life to Your service.” 24 December 1971 (CWM 16: 428)

**VI – L4.** "Desire too can only cease rightly by becoming the desire of the infinite and satisfying itself with a supernal fulfilment and an infinite satisfaction in the all-possessing bliss of the Infinite." (SABCL 18: 195) (CWSA 21: 207)

## **VII – Rejection of vital nature's demands and cravings**

### **VII – A. the material man wants to satisfy vital demands and cravings**

**VII – A. 1** "But the material or animal man is ignorant of the inner aim of life; he knows only its needs and its desires and he has necessarily no other guide to what is required of him than his own perception of need and his own stirrings and pointings of desire. To satisfy his physical and vital demands and necessities before all things else and, in the next rank, whatever emotional or mental cravings or imaginations or dynamic notions rise in him must be the first natural rule of his conduct." (CWSA 23: 193)

**VII – A. 2** "But this vital mind, this unquiet life-will comes in with its demands and disturbs this inert or routine satisfaction which lives penned within the bounds of actuality; it enlarges always desire and craving, creates a dissatisfaction, an unrest, a seeking for something more than what life seems able to give it: it brings about a vast enlargement of the field of physical actuality by the actualisation of our unrealised possibilities, but also a constant demand for more and always more, a quest for new worlds to conquer, an incessant drive towards an exceeding of the bounds of circumstance and a self-

exceeding. ... This is the history of human thought and human endeavour, a constant breaking of bounds only to move always in the same spirals enlarged perhaps but following the same or constantly similar curves of direction." (CWSA 21: 430-431)

**VII – A. 3** "All animal perceptions, sensibilities, activities are ruled by nervous and vital instincts, cravings, needs, satisfactions, of which the nexus is the life-impulse and vital desire." (CWSA 23: 80)

**VII – A.4** "The Asuric nature has too its wealth, its plenitude of force, but it is of a very different, a powerful and evil kind. ... They see naturally in the world nothing but a huge play of the satisfaction of self; theirs is a world with Desire for its cause and seed and governing force and law, a world of Chance, a world devoid of just relation and linked Karma, a world without God, not true, not founded in Truth. Whatever better intellectual or higher religious dogma they may possess, this alone is the true creed of their mind and will in action; they follow always the cult of Desire and Ego. ... They {The Asuric man} imagine that desire and enjoyment are all the aim of life and in their inordinate and insatiable pursuit of it they are the prey of a devouring, a measurelessly unceasing care and thought and endeavour and anxiety till the moment of their death. Bound by a hundred bonds, devoured by wrath and lust,

unweariedly occupied in amassing unjust gains which may serve their enjoyment and the satisfaction of their craving, always they think, "Today I have gained this object of desire, tomorrow I shall have that other; today I have so much wealth, more I will get tomorrow." (CWSA 19: 472-473)

## **VII – B. Vital nature's demands and cravings cause problems in Yoga**

**VII – B.1** *"Q: I feel no interest in sadhana or even in the outer work. Whatever help or protection you send stops before it can enter me. What is the reason for all that?"*

A: The reason is quite clear from what you write in the next para. There is something in the consciousness that wanted the letters and answers not simply for help in sadhana but as a personal satisfaction with egoistic elements in it — pride, jealousy of others (X, Y), desire to be equal with them, demand for special consideration etc. Also it wanted nice, pleasing and elaborate answers. All that is the usual wrong attitude of the vital which is the stumbling-block for so many sadhaks and prevents true psychic love from developing, replacing it by the vital kind full of demand, ego, jealousy, revolt etc. — and it has been the ruin of some. All that you had thrown out of the higher parts, and quieted it elsewhere, but it remained sticking somewhere and when correspondence was suspended, the hostile forces took advantage of the fact that you were not allowed to write every day as before to raise up these feelings and you did not repel them with sufficient force to put an end to the attack. Hence they continue." 25 February 1935 (CWSA 35: 463)



**VII – B.2** “Q: *Oh Father! I want a heart that can respond to all my moods, that can understand me, that can do me justice, that can love me intensely and exclusively.*

Love, and love alone, is the chief note of my heart. But the inner voice says it is not love I crave for. It is Maya. . . . If you think it is time for me, will you allow me to come there for sadhana?

A: Reply to him that what he describes is a vital demand of the ego for emotional self-satisfaction; it *is* Maya. It is not true love, for true love seeks for union and selfgiving and that is the love one must bring to the Divine. This vital (so-called) love brings only suffering and disappointment; it does not bring happiness; it never gets satisfied and, even if it is granted something that it asks for, it is never satisfied with it.

It is perfectly possible to get rid of this Maya of the vital demand, if one wishes to do it, — but the will to do it must be sincere. If he is sincere in his will, he will certainly get help and protection.

It is no use his coming to the Asram for sadhana; for so long as he has this vital demand, it will *not* be easier but rather more difficult to go on with his sadhana here. Here this vital basis for the Yoga is discouraged, there is a pressure against it and he would probably find the struggle in him made still more acute. He must first get his basis

changed from the vital to the psychic centre." 20 March 1932 (CWSA 35: 577-578)

**VII – B.3** "Q: To those who demand from him, God gives what they demand. . . ." Is this true?

A: It is not meant that He gives always whatever anyone demands—but that what they demand is all He gives—they cannot get anything else." 9 January 1934 (CWSA 35: 83)

**VII – B.4** "Eliminate the falsity of the life which figures as mere vital craving and the mechanical round of our corporeal existence; our true life in the power of the Godhead and the joy of the Infinite will appear. Eliminate the falsity of the senses with their subjection to material shows and to dual sensations; there is a greater sense in us that can open through these to the Divine in things and divinely reply to it. Eliminate the falsity of the heart with its turbid passions and desires and its dual emotions; a deeper heart in us can open with its divine love for all creatures and its infinite passion and yearning for the responses of the Infinite." (CWSA 23: 291-292)

**VII – B.5** "The criterion is within, as the Gita insists. It is to have the soul free from craving and attachment, but free from the attachment to inaction as well as from the egoistic impulse to action, free from attachment to the forms of

virtue as well as from the attraction to sin." (CWSA 23: 332)

**VII – B.6** "Again our renunciation must obviously be an inward renunciation; especially and above all, a renunciation of attachment and the craving of desire in the senses and the heart, of self-will in the thought and action and of egoism in the centre of the consciousness. For these things are the three knots by which we are bound to our lower nature and if we can renounce these utterly, there is nothing else that can bind us. Therefore attachment and desire must be utterly cast out; there is nothing in the world to which we must be attached, not wealth nor poverty, nor joy nor suffering, nor life nor death, nor greatness nor littleness, nor vice nor virtue, nor friend, nor wife, nor children, nor country, nor our work and mission, nor heaven nor earth, nor all that is within them or beyond them." (CWSA 23: 329)

**VII – B.7** "The deformation which enters in and prevents the purity, is a form of vital craving; the grand deformation which the psychic prana contributes to our being, is desire. The root of desire is the vital craving to seize upon that which we feel we have not, it is the limited life's instinct for possession and satisfaction. It creates the sense of want, — first the simpler vital craving of hunger, thirst, lust, then these psychical hungers, thirsts, lusts of the mind which

are a much greater and more instant and pervading affliction of our being, the hunger which is infinite because it is the hunger of an infinite being, the thirst which is only temporarily lulled by satisfaction, but is in its nature insatiable.” (CWSA 24: 656)

**VII – B.8** “It is true that the sadhaks have turned the idea of a divine life into an excuse for an unbridled spirit of demand and desire and this is increasing to a perilous extent. The whole world is in a financial and economic crisis; money difficult to get, prices rising fantastically, people everywhere cutting down their standard of life and their expenses: here in the Asram the standard of life is rising and the expenditure on comforts increasing continually. At this rate it will not be long before a halt will have to come and circumstances will force a reversion to a more abstemious way of life.

But the remedy is not asceticism; it is self-control, the elimination of desire and demand, the spirit which is easily satisfied with what it gets, makes the most of it, is careful of physical things and not subject to craving. The ideal of the Yoga is not asceticism, but to do with things or without things in the same spirit of equality and non-attachment — only in that spirit can one make a true and spiritual use of physical things and material life.” 5 July 1937 (CWSA 35: 762-763)

## **VII – C. Yoga consists of conquest of vital demands and cravings**

**VII – C.1** “But the supreme Grace will act only in the conditions of the Light and the Truth; it will not act in conditions laid upon it by the Falsehood and the Ignorance. For if it were to yield to the demands of the Falsehood, it would defeat its own purpose.” (CWSA 32: 3)

**VII – C.2** “If behind your devotion and surrender you make a cover for your desires, egoistic demands and vital insistences, if you put these things in place of the true aspiration or mix them with it and try to impose them on the Divine Shakti, then it is idle to invoke the divine Grace to transform you.” (CWSA 32: 3-4)

**VII – C.3** “Reject the false notion that the divine Power will do and is bound to do everything for you at your demand and even though you do not satisfy the conditions laid down by the Supreme. Make your surrender true and complete, then only will all else be done for you.” (CWSA 32: 4)

**VII – C.4** “Let your faith be pure, candid and perfect. An egoistic faith in the mental and vital being tainted by ambition, pride, vanity, mental arrogance, vital self-will, personal demand, desire for the petty satisfactions of the

lower nature is a low and smoke-obscured flame that cannot burn upwards to heaven.” (CWSA 32: 8)

**VII – C.5** “When you give yourself, give completely, without demand, without condition, without reservation so that all in you shall belong to the Divine Mother and nothing be left to the ego or given to any other power.” (CWSA 32: 8)

**VII – C.6** “There must be no demand for fruit and no seeking for reward; the only fruit for you is the pleasure of the Divine Mother and the fulfilment of her work, your only reward a constant progression in divine consciousness and calm and strength and bliss.” (CWSA 32: 12)

**VII – C.7** “Let no demand or insistence creep in to stain the purity of the self-giving and the sacrifice.” (CWSA 32: 13)

**VII – C.8** “The Mother and myself deal with all according to the law of the Divine. ... Their progress in sadhana is our main concern — for they have come here for that, not to satisfy their palates or their bellies, not to make ordinary vital demands or to quarrel about position or place or comforts. That progress depends on how they answer to the Mother’s love or protection — whether they receive the forces she pours on all alike, whether they use or misuse

what she gives them. ... Each sadhak has to be dealt with according to his nature, his capacities, his real needs (not his claims or desires) and according to what is best for his spiritual welfare. ... We act according to the Light within us and for the Truth that we are striving to establish in this earthly Nature." 11 December 1933 (CWSA 32: 116)

**VII – C.9** "Now that you are here, try to enter into the higher ways of the sadhana. Withdraw from the vital and its demands and desires, make the inner heart and the psychic being your centre and seek union with the Mother's consciousness through self-giving and surrender." 22 August 1933 (CWSA 32: 145)

**VII – C.10** "You have to make your vital single-pointed towards the Mother, peaceful, without demands and desires, aspiring only for surrender and to be one with the Mother's consciousness and filled with her." 24 September 1933 (CWSA 32: 146)

**VII – C.11** "The Mother's presence is always there; but if you decide to act on your own — your own idea, your own notion of things, your own will and demand upon things, then it is quite likely that her presence will get veiled; it is not she who withdraws from you, but you who draw back from her. But your mind and vital don't want to admit that, because it is always their preoccupation to justify their own

movements. If the psychic were allowed its full predominance, this would not happen; it would have felt the veiling, but it would at once have said, "There must have been some mistake in me, a mist has arisen in me," and it would have looked and found the cause." 25 March 1932 (CWSA 32: 186)

**VII – C.12** "The conditions for following the Mother's will are to turn to her for Light and Truth and Strength, to aspire that no other force shall influence or lead you, to make no demands or conditions in the vital, to keep a quiet mind ready to receive the Truth but not insisting on its own ideas and formations, — finally, to keep the psychic awake and in front, so that you may be in constant contact and know truly what her will is; for the mind and vital can mistake other impulsions and suggestions for the Divine Will, but the psychic once awakened makes no mistake." (CWSA 32: 254-255)

**VII – C.13** "Demands should not be made. What you receive freely from the Mother helps you; what you demand or try to impose on her is bound to be empty of her force.

The Mother deals with each person differently according to his true need (not what he himself fancies to be his need) and his progress in the sadhana and his nature." (CWSA 32: 256)



**VII – C.14** *"Q: Is it easily possible for my nature to terminate the remaining journey only with love, joy and happiness? I mean to say, can the transformation of my lower nature go on at the same time that the sadhana proceeds with full love?"*

A: It is possible if you (1) can get free of vital demand, (2) regard the difficulties of the nature calmly and dispassionately as if some defects of a machine that has to be set right, the being that uses the machine remaining fully dedicated to the Mother." 17 October 1935 (CWSA 32: 335)

**VII – C.15** "If you want to get rid of the painful inner and physical reactions, you must get rid of their cause in you, the ego of self-esteem, demand and desire. It is only by a complete surrender of yourself, your mind, vital and everything else to the Divine that this ego can go." (CWSA 32: 343)

**VII – C.16** "You have been able to make progress because you had a certain freedom from demand and repining, an equability and confidence in turning towards the Mother. This is your main strength and you must not allow it to be disturbed or taken away from you." (CWSA 32: 371-372)

**VII – C.17** "Q: *If behind your devotion and surrender you make a cover for your desires, egoistic demands . . .*" Does this mean "you use devotion and surrender as a means of fulfilling your desires and demands"?

A: Yes, practically it means that. I put it in that way so as to avoid suggesting that the devotion is altogether insincere and meant *only* as a cover." 12 December 1934 (CWSA 35: 109)

**VII – C.18** "Our object is the supramental realisation and we have to do whatever is necessary for that or towards that under the conditions of each stage. At present the necessity is to prepare the physical consciousness; for that a complete equality and peace and a complete dedication free from personal demand or desire in the physical and the lower vital parts is the thing to be established. Other things can come in their proper time." (CWSA 35: 320)

**VII – C.19** "In the life here extreme asceticism in the sense of doing without everything but the barest needs is not enforced; but it is all the more necessary to be free within, to surmount desire and attachment, to be able to do without things in the sense of not hankering after things when they are not there, not being attached to them when they are there, not insisting on one's own demands, desires, wants, comforts, conveniences, being satisfied

with what one is given. Sannyasa is not enforced, but the inner tyaga of non-desire, non-demand, non-attachment is indispensable." (CWSA 35: 761)

**VII – C.20** "A sadhak should not have demands and ask for things for his personal use from people outside, but if they of their own accord and without any request or suggestion send them to him, he can receive them. The most important point is that he shall not indulge any spirit of greed or desire under any excuse or colour and should be unaffected in his vital being by the presence or absence of these things that satisfy desire." 5 March 1931 (CWSA 35: 761-762)

## **VII – D. In the pure psychic or spiritual self-giving there is no vital demand**

**VII – D.1** “It was from your description of the reaction that I said there was a vital demand. In the pure psychic or spiritual self-giving there are no reactions of this kind, no despondency or despair, no saying, “What have I gained by seeking the Divine?”, no anger, revolt, abhiman, wish to go away — such as you describe here — but an absolute confidence and a persistence in clinging to the Divine under all conditions.” (CWSA 29: 74-75)

**VII – D.2** “The heart is part of the vital — it has to be controlled in the same way as the rest, by rejection of the wrong movements, by acceptance of the true psychic surrender which prevents all demand and clamour, by calling in the higher light and knowledge.” (CWSA 28: 193)

## **VII – E. The light of discrimination must always detect vital demands**

“There must be no attachment to any idea of one’s own, to any experience, to any kind of imagination, mental building or vital demand; the light of discrimination must always play to detect these things, however fair or plausible they may seem. Otherwise the Truth will have no chance of establishing itself in its purity in the nature.”  
(CWSA 29: 422-423)

## **VII – F. Vital demand, cravings and true love**

**VII – F.1** “If the love is absolute and complete and there has never been any vital demand connected with it, then suggestions of revolt cannot come.” (CWSA 29: 348)

**VII – F.2** The vital demand of the ego for emotional self-satisfaction is not true love, for true love seeks for union and self-giving.

“The correspondent wrote, “I want a heart that can respond to all my moods, that can understand me, that can do me justice, that can love me intensely and exclusively.” Sri Aurobindo’s reply was written to his secretary, who answered the enquirer.—Ed.

What he describes is a vital demand of the ego for emotional self-satisfaction; it *is* Maya. It is not true love, for true love seeks for union and self-giving and that is the love one must bring to the Divine. This vital (so-called) love brings only suffering and disappointment; it does not bring happiness; it never gets satisfied and, even if it is granted something that it asks for, it is never satisfied with it.

It is perfectly possible to get rid of this Maya of the vital demand, if one wishes to do it,—but the will to do it must be sincere. If he is sincere in his will, he will certainly get help and protection.” (CWSA 29: 349)

## **VII – F.3 “Vital nature’s cravings —**

“But there is another way of vital love which is more usually the way of human nature and that is a way of ego and desire. It is full of vital craving, desire and demand; its continuance depends upon the satisfaction of its demands; if it does not get what it craves, or even imagines that it is not being treated as it deserves — for it is full of imaginations, misunderstandings, jealousies, misinterpretations — it at once turns to sorrow, wounded feeling, revolt, pride, anger, all kinds of disorder, finally cessation and departure. A love of this kind is in its very nature ephemeral and unreliable and it cannot be made a foundation for divine love. There has been too much of this kind in the relations of the sadhaks with the Mother — approaching her, I suppose, as a human mother with all the reactions of the lower vital nature. For a long time it was perforce tolerated — and this was the concession made to human weakness — even accepted in the beginning as a thing too prominent in the human being not to be there to some extent but to be transformed by degrees; but too often, it has refused to transform itself and has made itself a source of confusion, disorder, *asiddhi*, sometimes complete disaster. It is for this reason that we discourage this lower vital way of human love and would like people to reject and eliminate these elements as soon as may be from their nature. Love should be a flowering of joy and union and confidence and self-giving

and Ananda, — but this lower vital way is only a source of suffering, trouble, disappointment, disillusion and disunion. Even a slight element of it shakes the foundations of peace and replaces the movement towards Ananda by a fall towards sorrow, discontent and Nirananda.” (CWSA 29: 342-343)

**VII – F.4** “On the other hand when you insist too much on the love which exists by external cravings, what comes is the other movement — fits of despondency, sorrow, Nirananda. In stressing on the psychic basis, in wishing you to conquer this other movement, I am only pointing you to the true way of your own nature — of which the psychic bhakti, the true vital love are the real moving forces, and the other is only a superficial immixture.” (CWSA 29: 343-344)



## **VII – G. Complete surrender is impossible if vital demands are cherished**

**VII – G.1** “Difficult? It is the first principle of our sadhana that surrender is the means of fulfilment and so long as ego or vital demand and desire are cherished, complete surrender is impossible — the self-giving is incomplete. We have never concealed that. It may be difficult and it is; but it is the very principle of the sadhana. Because it is difficult it has to be done steadily and patiently till the work is complete.” (CWSA 29: 75-76)

**VII – G.2** “If there is any identification with the vital demands or outcries, that necessarily diminishes the surrender for the time.” (CWSA 29: 74)

**VII – G.3** “The true vital consciousness is one in which the vital makes full surrender, converts itself into an instrument of the Divine, making no demand, insisting on no desire, answering to the Mother’s force and to no other, calm, unegoistic, giving an absolute loyalty and obedience, with no personal vanity or ambition, only willing to be a pure and perfect instrument, desiring nothing for itself but that the Truth may prevail within itself and everywhere and the Divine Victory take place and the Divine Work be done.” (CWSA 28: 186)

## **VIII – Rejection of selfishness in Yoga**

### **VIII – A. What is selfishness?**

**VIII – A. 1.** "Selfishness means wanting everything for oneself, understanding nothing but oneself, caring for others only insofar as they are necessary or important to oneself." (CWM 16: 411)

**VIII – A. 2.** "Selfishness is to put oneself at the centre of the universe and to want everything to exist for one's own satisfaction." (CWM 10: 282)

**VIII – A. 3.** "You can't imagine how ridiculous these selfish people are!

When one sees them thinking all the time about themselves, referring everything to themselves, governed simply by their own little person, placing themselves in the centre of the universe and trying to organise the whole universe including God around themselves, as though that were the most important thing in the universe. If one could only see oneself objectively, you know, as one sees oneself in a mirror, observe oneself living, it is so grotesque! (*Laughing*) That's enough for you to... One suddenly feels that he is becoming—oh, so absolutely ridiculous!" (CWM 6: 255)

**VIII – A. 4.** "For what is selfishness? it is mistaking the body & the vital impulses for your true self and seeking their gratification, a gross, narrow and transient pleasure, instead of the stainless bliss of your true self which is the whole Universe & more than the Universe. Selfishness arises from Avidya, from the great fundamental ignorance which creates Ahankara, the sense of your individual existence, the preoccupation with your own individual existence, which at once leads to Desire, to Hunger which is Death, death to yourself and death to others.

The sense that this is I and that is you, and that I must take this or that, or else you will take it, that is the basis of all selfishness; the sense that this I must eat that you, in order to live & avoid being eaten, that is the principle of material existence from which arises strife and hatred.

And so long as the difference between I and you exists, hatred cannot cease, covetousness cannot cease, war cannot cease, evil & sin cannot cease, and because sin cannot cease, sorrow & misery cannot cease." The Ishavasyopanishad (Isha Upanishad) (CWSA 17: 140)

**VIII – A. 5.** "Q: *Nowadays I find ego in every little act or feeling. Formerly I saw it only when I acted with desire or pride.*

A: Perhaps because then you were looking for ego only in the form which people specially call egoism, i.e. pride, vanity, selfishness, insistence on vital satisfactions. But ego

is of all kinds—and you are only just now finding it out.”  
(CWSA 35: 663)

**VIII – A. 6.** “Selfishness is the only sin, meanness the only vice, hatred the only criminality. All else can easily be turned into good, but these are obstinate resisters of deity.” Thoughts and Aphorisms (CWM 10: 213)

**VIII – A. 7.** “Selfishness kills the soul; destroy it. But take care that your altruism does not kill the souls of others.” Thoughts and Aphorisms (CWM 10: 280)

**VIII – A. 8.** “Meanness and selfishness are the only sins that I find it difficult to pardon; yet they alone are almost universal. Therefore these also must not be hated in others, but in ourselves annihilated. Thoughts and Aphorisms (CWM 10: 281)

## **VIII – B. Human beings and selfishness**

**VIII – B. 1.** "Rajas contributes our normal active nature with all its good and evil; when unchastened by a sufficient element of sattwa, it turns to egoism, ... self-will, pride, arrogance, selfishness, ... all the vices and passions, ... the morbidities and perversions of the sensational and vital being." (CWSA 24: 686)

**VIII – B. 2.** "... the human life-instincts too blind, selfish, obscure, shut up in their own earth-bound pursuits and satisfactions, ..." (CWSA 12: 351-352)

**VIII – B. 3.** "You carry with you, around you, in you, the atmosphere created by your actions, and ... if you live in a sordid selfishness, unscrupulous self-interest, ruthless bad will, that is what you will breathe every moment of your life and that means misery, constant uneasiness; it means ugliness that despairs of its own ugliness." (CWM 3: 198)

**VIII – B. 4.** "For instance, love between human beings, in all its forms, the love of parents for children, of children for parents, of brothers and sisters, of friends and lovers, is all tainted with ignorance, selfishness and all the other defects which are man's ordinary drawbacks; so instead of completely ceasing to love—which, besides, is very difficult as Sri Aurobindo says, which would simply dry up the heart

and serve no end—one must learn how to love better: to love with devotion, with self-giving, self-abnegation, and to struggle, not against love itself, but against its distorted forms: against all forms of monopolising, of attachment, possessiveness, jealousy, and all the feelings which accompany these main movements." (CWM 8: 301)

**VIII – B. 5.** "It is the confinement in the physical consciousness that makes you (and everybody) narrow and selfish and miserable." (CWSA 30: 438)

**VIII – B. 6.** "To the student: To be noisy in class is an act of selfish stupidity.

If you don't intend to attend the class silently and attentively, it is better not to come." (CWM 12: 155)

**VIII – B. 7.** "There is no better lesson than that of an example. To tell others: "Do not be selfish," is not much use, but if somebody is free from all selfishness, he becomes a wonderful example to others; and someone who sincerely aspires to act in accordance with the Supreme Truth, creates a kind of contagion for the people around him. So the first duty of all those who are teachers or instructors is to give an example of the qualities they teach to others." (CWM 12: 358)

**VIII – B. 8.** "The human vital everywhere, in the Asram also, is full of unruly and violent forces—anger, pride, jealousy, desire to dominate, selfishness, insistence on one's own will, ideas, preferences, indiscipline—and it is these things that are the cause of the disorder and difficulty in the D. R. [*Dining Room*] and elsewhere also in the Asram work." (CWSA 32: 387)

**VIII – B. 9.** "If things are constantly broken, X is perfectly right in enforcing economy. Very few of the sadhaks have any sense of responsibility in this respect; most seem to think that they are entitled to waste, destroy, spoil, use freely as if the Mother's sole business was to supply their wants and the Asram had unlimited resources. But it is not possible for the Asram to develop its wealth so long as the sadhaks and workers are selfish, careless, undisciplined and irresponsible. Lakshmi does not continue to pour her gifts under such conditions." 30 January 1933 (CWSA 35: 765)

**VIII – B. 10.** "It appears that there are complaints against you from all sides that you are quarrelling with the servants, upsetting the work, putting others to inconvenience in order to put your own convenience and arrange things according to your own fancy. This kind of selfishness and quarrelsomeness will not do. You have to consider the convenience of others before yours—

especially as you have been given the management of the house. A manager has to consider the convenience of others first and his own last." 5 March 1933 (CWSA 35: 800-801)

**VIII – B. 11.** "But if Science teaches men to regard themselves as distinct and purely corporeal beings, with no connection with others except such as may be created by physical contact and the communication of the senses, it is obvious that the human Will under the obsession of this belief, will inevitably shape its action & thought in accordance passing over the more shadowy moral generalities of evolutionary theorists or play with them only as intellectual marbles. And that spells in the end a colossal selfishness, an increasing sensuality, lust of power, riches, comfort & dominion, a monstrous & egoistic brutality like that of a hundred-armed Titan wielding all the arms of the Gods in those hundred hands. If man believes himself to be an animal he will act like an animal & exalt the animal impulse into his guide." (CWSA 17: 160)

**VIII – B. 12.** To speak good words and to give wise advice to a child has very little effect if one does not oneself give him an example of what one teaches. Sincerity, honesty, straightforwardness, courage, disinterestedness, unselfishness, patience, endurance, perseverance, peace, calm, self-control are all things that are taught infinitely



better by example than by beautiful speeches. Parents, have a high ideal and always act in accordance with it and you will see that little by little your child will reflect this ideal in himself and spontaneously manifest the qualities you would like to see expressed in his nature. Quite naturally a child has respect and admiration for his parents; unless they are quite unworthy, they will always appear to their child as demigods whom he will try to imitate as best he can." (CWM 12: 10)

## **VIII – C. Selfishness and Spiritual life**

**VIII – C. 1.** "This ignorant attitude assumes that you are here to be first, to be equal to any other in the Asram in the eyes of others, to enjoy position and privileges, to grab whatever you can for yourself, to have pleasure and enjoyment, to get everything that anybody else may have. All that is **utterly false for the spiritual life**. These are the aims that selfish, worldly and ambitious men seek in the ordinary life. **The spiritual life has nothing to do with these things**. One is here only for two things, to realise the Divine and to transform the consciousness and nature into the higher consciousness and nature. That is what the Power that works on you intends and nothing else. The influence upon you which struggles against it has to disappear and no more be a part of your nature." 8 June 1934 (CWSA 35: 762)

**VIII – C. 2.** "If you want to do sadhana, it is obvious that you must have at least partially an occupation which is not selfish, that is, which is not done for oneself alone." (CWM 6: 153)

**VIII – C. 3.** "The first step is to stop being selfish. For everyone it is the same thing, not only for those who want to do yoga but also in ordinary life: if one wants to know how to love, one must not love oneself first and above all

selfishly; one must give oneself to the object of love without exacting anything in return. This discipline is elementary in order to surmount oneself and lead a life which is not altogether gross." (CWM 8: 302)

**VIII – C. 4.** *"Sweet Mother, You have said that to be allowed to sit in Sri Aurobindo's room and meditate there, "one must have done much for Him". What do you mean by that, Mother? What can one do for the Lord which will be this "much"?"*

To do something for the Lord is to give Him something of what one has, or of what one does, or of what one is. That is to say, to offer to Him one part of our goods or all of our possessions, to consecrate to Him one part of our work or all our activities, or to give ourselves to Him totally and without reserve so that He may take possession of our nature in order to transform and divinise it. But there are many people who, without giving anything, always want to take and to receive. These people are selfish and unworthy to meditate in Sri Aurobindo's room." (CWM 13: 29-30) 17 August 1960

**VIII – C. 5.** "Care should be taken that there should be no ambitious or selfish misuse, no pride or vanity, no sense of superiority, no claim or egoism of the instrument, only a simple and pure psychic instrumentation of the nature in

any way in which it is fit for the service of the Divine."  
(CWSA 29: 245)

**VIII – C. 6.** "Mother Durga! We are thy children, through thy grace, by thy influence may we become fit for the great work, for the great Ideal. Mother, destroy our smallness, our selfishness, our fear." (CWM 12: 43)

**VIII – C. 7.** *Prayer Given to the Children of Dortoir Boarding*

"We all want to be the true children of our Divine Mother. But for that, sweet Mother, give us patience and courage, obedience, goodwill, generosity and unselfishness, and all the necessary virtues." (CWM 12: 127)

**VIII – C. 8.** "Keep your love pure of all selfish claim and desire; you will find that you are getting all the love that you can bear and absorb in answer." (CWSA 29: 338-339)  
(CWSA 32: 461)

**VIII – C. 9.** "Q: *I felt a disinclination to come to Pranam, a dryness and lack of interest in anything, an absence of love for Mother. What is the use of going to Pranam in such a dry manner or simply for protection or peace or any such selfish object?*

A: That is a suggestion which should be entirely rejected. It is the usual attack trying to act on the physical

consciousness through dryness and depression." 24  
February 1934 (CWSA 32: 559)

**VIII – C. 10.** "How can one dissolve, you mean dissolve in the Divine, and lose one's ego? ...

The first method... you see, there are many stages... first, one must try not to be selfish ..." (CWM 6: 254)

**VIII – C. 11.** "One enters into contact with very pure, very intense forces— what could be already called converted forces, that is, universal vital forces which are in contact with the Divine and not only receive the Divine but aspire to receive Him. So if you absorb these forces it gives you a great strength for progress. ... If one uses these forces for a purely selfish action of a base kind, well, one makes it almost totally impossible for himself to receive any new ones of as fine a quality." (CWM 7: 138-139)

## **VIII – D. Rejection of selfishness in Yoga**

**VIII – D. 1.** "To bring the psychic forward, selfishness and demand (which is the base of the vital feelings) must be got rid of—or at least never accepted." (CWSA 30: 361)

**VIII – D. 2.** "Do not imagine that truth and falsehood, light and darkness, surrender and selfishness can be allowed to dwell together in the house consecrated to the Divine." (CWSA 32: 4)

**VIII – D. 3.** "Selfishness kills the soul; destroy it. But take care that your altruism does not kill the souls of others." (CWSA 12: 455)

**VIII – D. 4.** "How do you expect the psychic to be in full activity with these things there and not thoroughly rejected? Moreover if the love comes forward in full, what is to prevent the selfish vital taking hold of it and making demand on demand on the Mother which she will certainly refuse to satisfy—as so many have done and afterwards revolted because "the Mother does not love them" — otherwise she would do whatever they want?" 2March 1935 (CWSA 32: 474)

**VIII – D. 5.** "To put the individual Self in intimate relation with the Eternal is the aim of Hindu life, its religion, its

polity, its ethics. ... Its true aim is a preparation and purification of the soul to fit it for the presence of God. The sense-obscured, limited and desire-driven individual self ... must disembararrass itself of servile bondage to bodily, emotional & intellectual selfishness and ... must expand itself from the narrow, petty, inefficient ego till it becomes commensurate with the infinite, all-powerful, omnipresent Self of All; then is its aim of existence attained, then is its pilgrimage ended." (CWSA 18: 403-404)

**VIII – D. 6.** "One thing seems to me clear that the future will deny that principle of individual selfishness and collective self interest on which European society has hitherto been based and our renovated systems will be based on the renunciation of individual selfishness and the organisation of brotherhood, principles common to Christianity, Mahomedanism and Hinduism." (CWSA 12: 58)

**VIII – D. 7.** "All the deformations of this great and divine Power come from the obscurity and ignorance and selfishness of the limited instrument." (CWM 3: 70)

**VIII – D. 8.** least selfish aim -

"Naturally, the highest aim is to unite with the Divine and fulfil His work, but that, that's right at the top of the ladder. ... But still, it goes without saying that the discovery of the

Divine in oneself and uniting with Him and accomplishing His work is the highest and most disinterested aim, and the least selfish." (CWM 5: 392)

**VIII – D. 9.** "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." (CWM 7: 189)

**VIII – D. 10.** "... while all that carries with it restlessness, doubt, scepticism, sorrow, discord, selfish narrowness, inertia, discouragement and despair comes straight from the falsehood." (CWM 12: 302)

22 January 1965

**VIII – D. 11.** "You are far too ego-centric to lead a spiritual life; and it is also the cause of this catastrophe and of the suffering it has brought to you, which is the natural consequence of the whole affair. Indeed it is good if you go to face the ordinary life now and learn to live with the others and for the others instead of making of the Ashram life an excuse for living selfishly for yourself." (CWM 13: 135)



**VIII – D. 12.** "Everyone must do his or her work conscientiously and earnestly, and overcome all obscure selfish movements. 27 September 1939 (CWM 13: 157)

**VIII – D. 13.** "It is vanity and selfishness that prevent the sadhaks from taking the teaching in a good spirit." 10 May 1944 (CWM 13: 180)

**VIII – D. 14.** "True spirituality lies in the service of the divine work.

To refuse to work for all is only a demonstration of selfishness, and has no spiritual value." (CWM 13: 210)

**VIII – D. 15.** "There is certainly a great difference between calling and pulling—you can and must always call for help and the rest—the answer will be proportionate to your capacity of reception and assimilation. Pulling is a selfish movement that may bring down forces quite disproportionate to your capacities and thus are harmful." (CWM 14: 78)

**VIII – D. 16.** "We must be free of all selfishness to serve properly the Divine's Cause." 26 May 1954 (CWM 14: 259)

**VIII – D. 17.** "Selfishness and self-pity lead nowhere. You would do better to get rid of them—for it is these two

narrow movements which prevent you from feeling the Divine's help and love." 25 March 1965 (CWM 14: 259)

**VIII – D. 18.** *Sweet Mother,*

*Is it right to pray to the Mother for little things and selfish gains?*

It all depends on one's point of view. It is quite possible that one will obtain the thing one has prayed for. But for spiritual progress, it is harmful." 4 May 1963 (CWM 16: 276)

**VIII – D. 19.** "It is selfishness that makes one jealous ..." (CWM 16: 401)

**VIII – D. 20.** "The indispensable basis of our Yoga is sincerity, honesty, unselfishness, disinterested consecration to the work to be done, nobility of character and straightforwardness. They who do not practise these elementary virtues are not Sri Aurobindo's disciples and have no place in the Ashram." (CWM 13: 123)

**VIII – D. 21.** "Your service to the Divine must be scrupulously honest, disinterested and unselfish, otherwise it has no value." 25 January 1965 (CWM 13: 163)

## VIII – E. How to reject selfishness

**VIII – E. 1.** Q: *"Half my being is trying hard to reject the sense of ego, while the ego itself colours all my actions. This contradiction creates an inner pain. Will the ego never be dissolved completely?"*

A: There is nothing to be troubled about. You ought rather to congratulate yourself that you have become conscious. Very few people in this Asram are. They are all ego-centric and they do not realise their ego-centricity. Even in their sadhana the I is always there,—*my* sadhana, *my* progress, *my* everything. The remedy is to think constantly of the Divine, not of oneself, to work, act, do sadhana for the Divine,—not to consider how this or that affects *me* personally, not claim anything, but to refer all to the Divine. It will take time to do that sincerely and thoroughly, but it is the proper way." 31 March 1936 (CWSA 35: 663)

**VIII – E. 2.** Q: *"How can one get rid of one's vanity and selfishness?"*

A: By a complete consecration to the Divine and a loving surrender to the Divine's Will." Blessings. 15 May 1944 (CWM 14: 258)

**VIII – E. 3.** "No material organisation, whatever its degree of preparation, is capable of bringing a solution to the miseries of man.

Man must rise to a higher level of consciousness and get rid of his ignorance, limitation and selfishness in order to get rid also of his sufferings." 21 February 1955 (CWM 14: 277)

**VIII – E. 4.** Q: *"At first I used to feel so much love for You, but now my love has become more selfish.*

A: Yes, that is it; you began to bargain in your giving and that has dried up the source. If, however, you resolve not to demand anything in return for what you give, you will soon rediscover the incomparable joy of loving." 24 May 1935 (CWM 17: 98)

**VIII – E. 5.** "One has to get rid of selfishness and ego, not in this way, but by selfless service of the Divine and by merging the ego in the Divine Consciousness, submitting the personal will to the Divine Will, calling into the being the Divine Peace, Purity, Oneness, Knowledge, Light, Ananda, replacing the ego by the psychic being devoted and surrendered to the Divine. It is the love of the Divine that saves, not a love turned towards human beings. When the Divine Consciousness is there, then there comes based on the love of the Divine a true love and oneness for all beings. But that does not act separately from the Divine but only according to the Divine Mother's will and in her service." (CWSA 28: 428)

**VIII – E. 6.** "That [*feeling the Mother's Presence, Love, Joy, Beauty*] is one part of the psychic experience—the other is a complete selfgiving, absence of demand, a prominence of the psychic being by which all that is false, wrong, egoistic, contrary to the Divine Truth, Divine Will, Divine Purity and Light is shown, falls away, cannot prevail in the nature. With all that the increase of the psychic qualities, gratitude, obedience, unselfishness, fidelity to the true perception, true impulse etc. that comes from the Mother or leads to the Mother. When this side grows, then the other, the Presence, Love, Joy, Beauty, can develop and be permanently there." (CWSA 30: 338-339)

**VIII – E. 7.** " ... if you want to begin to do sadhana, you must do something which does not have an exclusively personal motive. One must do something a little unselfish, for if one is exclusively occupied with oneself, one gets shut up in a sort of carapace and is not open to the universal forces. A small unselfish movement, a small action done with no egoistic aim opens a door upon something other than one's own small, very tiny person." (CWM 6: 153)

**VIII – E. 8.** "Each one must devote at least one-third of his time to a useful work. All activities are represented in the Ashram and each one chooses the work most congenial to his nature, but must do it in a spirit of service and

unselfishness, keeping always in view the aim of integral transformation." (CWM 13: 108) (CWM 14: 34)

**VIII – E. 9.** "If in all sincerity one acts only to express the Divine Will, all actions without exception can become unselfish." (CWM 16: 179)

## VIII – F. What is unselfishness?

**VIII – F. 1.** “Unselfishness is not something outside the nature, but in the nature, not negative but positive, not a self-mortification and abnegation but a self-enlargement and self-fulfilment; not a law of duty but a law of self-development, not painful, but pleasurable. It is in the nature, only latent, and has to be evolved from inside, not tacked on from outside.” Isha Upanishad: (CWSA 17: 185)

**VIII – F. 2.** Selflessness is man’s true nature

“The lion’s whelp in the fable who was brought up among sheep, shrank from flesh when it was placed before him, but once he had eaten of it, the lion’s instincts awoke and the habits of the sheep had no more delight for him. So it is with man. **Selflessness is his true nature**, but the gratification of the body and the vital impulses has become his habit, his second or false nature, because he has been accustomed to identify his body & vital impulses with himself. He, a lion, has been brought up to think himself a sheep; **he, a god, has been trained to be an animal.** But let him once get the taste of his true food, and the divinity in him awakes; the habits of the animal can please him no longer and he hungers after selflessness and selfless work as a lion hungers after his natural food. Only the feeling has to be evolved as a fulfilment of his nature,

not painfully worked up to as a contravention of his nature.  
Isha Upanishad: (CWSA 17: 185)

**VIII – F. 3.** Selfishness is animal nature – human nature is divine & selfless

"The man who regards selflessness as a duty, has not yet learned the alphabet of true altruism; it is the man who feels it as a delight and a natural craving, who has taken the right way to learn. The Hindu outlook here is the true outlook. The Hindu does not call the man who has risen above the gratification of desire a selfless man; he calls him *atmavan*, the selfful man; that man is *anatmavan*, that man has not found himself who still clings to the gratification of his body & vital impulses. Read that great drama of self-sacrifice, the *Nagananda*, and you will feel how different is the Hindu outlook from the Western; there self-sacrifice is not a painful and terrible struggle but a glorious outpouring of the nature, a passionate delight. "It is only human nature," we say indulgently of any act of selfishness. But that is an error and thrice an error. It is not human nature, but animal nature; human nature is divine & selfless and the average selfish man is selfish not because of his humanity, but because his humanity is as yet undeveloped & imperfect. Christ, Buddha, these are the perfect men; Tom, Dick & Harry are merely animals slowly shaping into men." Isha Upanishad: (CWSA 17: 185-186)



**VIII – F. 4.** "Unselfishness is not the only thing to be aimed at—by itself it would be only a moral, not a spiritual attainment." (CWSA 28: 428)

**VIII – F. 5.** "Selfishness and the reaction of unselfishness of which you speak are both of them things that have to be put aside—both are obstacles or movements leading off from the true and straight path. For both these things belong to the mind and vital, they are different forms of the ego. The mind in its attempt to get away from the rajasic selfish ego tries to do just the opposite of what selfishness usually does and serve others, sacrifice itself for others, but in doing so it is only constructing another kind of egoism that prides itself on its own unselfishness and altruism and makes human service its mental ideal instead of spiritual service of the Divine. That it is a misleading movement you saw yourself; for it wanted to sacrifice your sadhana, that is, your seeking for the Divine to this new ego of altruistic self righteousness; it was prepared to do things without permission of the Mother or rather avoiding asking for permission." (CWSA 28: 428)

**VIII – F. 6.** "You can at least know that anger, jealousy, envy, restlessness, despair, indolence etc. are not divine things and that purity, peace, harmony, zeal, unselfishness

etc., are good things and help the growth to the Divine." (CWSA 32: 63)

**VIII – F. 7.** "An act of courage, of unselfishness, a fine sacrifice have a beauty in them which gives you joy." (CWM 4: 30)

**VIII – F. 8.** "An unselfish work always cures you of your petty personal maladies." (CWM 5: 120)

**VIII – F. 9.** "The unselfish movement, uncalculating, is one of the most beautiful forms of psychic consciousness in the world." (CWM 5: 243)

**VIII – F. 10.** "Yes, there is a beauty of thought, a beauty of feeling. This is something we perceive very often; when someone has done a very noble deed, very generous, very unselfish, quite spontaneously we say, "It is beautiful!" And it's true, it gives the sense of beauty." (CWM 7: 180)

**VIII – F. 11.** "Unselfishness is the first need to participate in the creation of Auroville." 5 November 1968 (CWM 13: 197)

**VIII – F. 12.** "When you give yourself to the accomplishment of an unselfish aim, never expect ordinary people to praise and support you—on the contrary, they

will always fight against you, hate and curse you. But the Divine will be with you." 17 September 1953 (CWM 14: 281)

**VIII – F. 13.** "If in all sincerity one acts only to express the Divine Will, all actions without exception can become unselfish." (CWM 14: 325)

**VIII – F. 14.** "Unselfish prosperity: he who receives it abundantly, gives all that he has as he receives it." (CWM 15: 50)

**VIII – F. 15.** "Unselfishness: deeply open so as not to refuse anything." (CWM 15: 234)

**VIII – F. 16.** "In aspiration there is what I might call an unselfish flame which is not present in desire." (CWM 4: 135)

**VIII – F. 17.** "To accept gladly what I give is never selfish. There is no better cure for egoism than a happy gratefulness." (CWM 14: 155)

**VIII – F. 18.** "Vital joy in matter: the reward for abolishing selfishness." (CWM 14: 355)

## **VIII – G. True leader and selfishness**

**VIII – G. 1.** "To forget oneself is one of the most essential conditions for being a true leader: to have no selfish interests, to want nothing for oneself, to consider only the good of the group, of the whole, the totality that depends on one; to act only with that aim in mind, without wanting any personal profit from one's action." (CWM 9: 82)

**VIII – G. 2.** "To be a true leader one must be completely disinterested and efface from oneself as much as possible all self-regard and all selfish movements. To be a leader one must master one's ego, and to master one's ego is the first indispensable step for doing yoga. And this is what can make sports a powerful aid for the realisation of the Divine." (CWM 9: 81)

**VIII – G. 3.** The modern politician

"Nothing of the kind can be asserted of the modern politician in any part of the world; he does not represent the soul of a people or its aspirations. What he does usually represent is all the average pettiness, selfishness, egoism, self-deception that is about him and these he represents well enough as well as a great deal of mental incompetence and moral conventionality, timidity and pretence." (CWSA 25: 296)

## **VIII – H. Rejection of selfishness will lead to ...**

**VIII – H. 1.** "The nature of your difficulty indicates the nature of the victory you will gain, the victory you will exemplify in Yoga. Thus, if there is persistent selfishness, it points to a realisation of universality as your most prominent achievement in the future. And, when selfishness is there, you have also the power to reverse this very difficulty into its opposite, a victory of utter wideness." (CWM 3: 143)

**VIII – H. 2.** "Shake off all narrowness, selfishness, limitations, and wake up to the consciousness of Human Unity. This is the only way to achieve peace and harmony." May 1955 (CWM 15: 59)

**VIII – H. 3.** "*Sweet Mother! When will the vital yearn for the Divine?  
May its passion be changed into psychic love, ... its selfishness into Self-giving.*" 26 May 1934 (CWM 17: 41)

## **VIII – I. Sri Aurobindo's supreme act of unselfishness**

**VIII – I. 1.** "Sri Aurobindo has given up his body in an act of supreme unselfishness, renouncing the realisation in his own body to hasten the hour of the collective realisation. Surely if the earth were more responsive, this would not have been necessary." 12 April 1953 (CWM 13: 9)

## **IX – Rejection of vital nature's pride and arrogance in Yoga**

### **IX – A. Pride and arrogance is an Asuric quality**

**IX – A. 1.** "The Asuric qualities, wrath, greed, cunning, treachery, wilful doing of injury to others, pride and arrogance and excessive self-esteem have no place in its (Deva nature) composition." (CWSA 19: 471-472)

**IX – A. 2.** "The Asuric man becomes the centre or instrument of a fierce, Titanic, violent action, a power of destruction in the world, a fount of injury and evil. Arrogant, full of self-esteem and the drunkenness of their pride, these misguided souls delude themselves, persist in false and obstinate aims and pursue the fixed impure resolution of their longings. They imagine that desire and enjoyment are all the aim of life and in their inordinate and insatiable pursuit of it they are the prey of a devouring, a measurelessly unceasing care and thought and endeavour and anxiety till the moment of their death." (CWSA 19: 472)

**IX – A. 3.** "This magnified image of their ego is the Master whom they serve. This happens only too often in Yoga to strong but crude vital natures or minds too easily exalted when they allow ambition, pride or the desire of greatness

to enter into their spiritual seeking and vitiate its purity of motive; a magnified ego stands between them and their true being and grasps for its own personal purpose the strength from a greater unseen Power, divine or undivine, acting through them of which they become vaguely or intensely aware." (CWSA 23: 249)

**IX – A. 4.** "The strong vital when the will is there can do it {to turn to spiritual} much more easily—its {strong vital's} one central difficulty is the pride of its ego and the attraction of its powers." (CWSA 28: 196)

**IX – A. 5.** *"Your remark of yesterday, "There is no quarrel on the Mother's part, the quarrel is with me", intrigues me. The basis of my quarrel with the Mother is that I do not feel her, so we have no dealings with each other. Whereas you are always with me, so how can there be any quarrel with you? I recognise, of course, my arrogance, egoism and pride in this matter.*

If you listen to the inspirations of the Asura against the Mother that brings a quarrel with me—just as if you did anything against me, it will land you in a quarrel with her. It is precisely this arrogance, egoism and pride that make it difficult for you to feel the Mother." 11 April 1933 (CWSA 32: 110-111)



## **IX – B. In Yoga there should be no pride and arrogance**

**IX – B. 1.** "Care should be taken that there should be no ambitious or selfish misuse, no pride or vanity, no sense of superiority, no claim or egoism of the instrument, only a simple and pure psychic instrumentation of the nature in any way in which it is fit for the service of the Divine." (CWSA 29: 245)

**IX – B. 2.** "The true love for the Divine is a self-giving, free of demand, full of submission and surrender; it makes no claim, imposes no condition, strikes no bargain, indulges in no violences of jealousy or pride or anger—for these things are not in its composition." (CWSA 29: 338)

**IX – B. 3.** "... if there is anything in the sadhak that interferes with the clarity and singleness of his attitude. In that case any wrong desire, vanity, pride, sexual impurity, ambition, or any other pronounced weakness may open the way to serious distortion of the sadhana, turning into wrong ways, breakdown or collapse, even to spiritual perdition. Krishna's own influence cannot be a wrong influence, if it is really his, but it is easy to mistake and accept some other influence as his." (CWSA 29: 488)

**IX – B. 4.** "An egoistic faith in the mental and vital being tainted by ambition, pride, vanity, mental arrogance, vital self-will, personal demand, desire for the petty satisfactions of the lower nature is a low and smoke-obscured flame that cannot burn upwards to heaven." (CWSA 32: 8)

**IX – B. 5.** "The true love for the Divine is a self-giving, free of demand, full of submission and surrender; it makes no claim, imposes no condition, strikes no bargain, indulges in no violences of jealousy or pride or anger—for these things are not in its composition." (CWSA 32: 461)

**IX – B. 6.** "It is to the divine Mother that you have come for Yoga, not for the old kind of life. You should also regard this as an Asram, not an ordinary Sansar, and in your dealings with others here strive to conquer anger, self-assertion and pride, whatever may be their attitude or behaviour towards you; for so long as you keep these moods, you will find it difficult to make progress in the Yoga." 8 July 1932 (CWSA 35: 634-635)

**IX – B. 7.** "One should cast away anger, one should reject pride, one should break all bonds. One who is not attached to name or form, who possesses nothing, is delivered from suffering." (CWM 3: 258)

**IX – B. 8.** "... typical modes of total self-giving to the Divine:

(1) To prostrate oneself at His feet, giving up all pride in perfect humility." (CWM 14: 102)

**IX – B. 9.** "The true love for the Divine is self-giving, free of demand, full of submission and surrender. It makes no claim, imposes no condition, strikes no bargain, indulges in no violences of jealousy or pride or anger—for these things are not in its composition." (CWM 14: 130)

**IX – B. 10.** "The yogic life does not depend on what one does but on how one does it; I mean it is not so much the action which counts as the attitude, the spirit in which one acts. To know how to give yourself entirely and without egoism while washing dishes or serving a meal brings you much nearer the Divine than doing what men call "great things" in a spirit of vanity and pride." (CWM 16: 179)

**IX – B. 11.** "The Gita then tells us what is the spiritual knowledge or rather it tells us what are the conditions of knowledge, the marks, the signs of the man whose soul is turned towards the inner wisdom. These signs are the recognised and traditional characteristics of the sage,— ... There is fixed in him a total absence of worldly pride and arrogance, a candid soul, a tolerant, long-suffering and benignant heart, purity of mind and body, ..." (CWSA 19: 414-415)

## **IX – C. Why one should not have egoistic pride**

### **IX – C. 1. Sadhak's strength is not his own but that of the divine Shakti**

"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. The power of the divine universal Shakti which is behind our aspiration is illimitable, and when it is rightly called upon it cannot fail to pour itself into us and to remove whatever incapacity and obstacle, now or later; for the times and durations of our struggle while they depend at first, instrumentally and in part, on the strength of our faith and our endeavour, are yet eventually in the hands of the wisely determining secret Spirit, alone the Master of the Yoga, the Ishwara." (CWSA 24: 780)

### **IX – C. 2. Divine Power that works in me is the same that works in all men**

"There must be no egoism of any kind in the attitude of the instrument, even when we are fully conscious of the greatness of the Force within us. Every man is knowingly

or unknowingly the instrument of a universal Power and, apart from the inner Presence, there is no such essential difference between one action and another, one kind of instrumentation and another as would warrant the folly of an egoistic pride. The difference between knowledge and ignorance is a grace of the Spirit; the breath of divine Power blows where it lists and fills today one and tomorrow another with the word or the puissance. If the potter shapes one pot more perfectly than another, the merit lies not in the vessel but the maker. The attitude of our mind must not be "This is my strength" or "Behold God's power in me", but rather "A Divine Power works in this mind and body and it is the same that works in all men and in the animal, in the plant and in the metal, in conscious and living things and in things apparently inscient and inanimate." This large view of the One working in all and of the whole world as the equal instrument of a divine action and gradual self-expression, if it becomes our entire experience, will help to eliminate all rajasic egoism out of us and even the sattwic ego-sense will begin to pass away from our nature." (CWSA 23: 250)

### **IX – C. 3. All pride arises from a certain deficiency of one's nature**

"The pride of the philosopher looking down on the passion of the devotee arises, as does all pride, from a certain

deficiency of his nature; for the intellect too exclusively developed misses what the heart has to offer. The intellect is not in every way superior to the heart; if it opens more readily doors at which the heart is apt to fumble in vain, it is, itself, apt to miss truths which to the heart are very near and easy to hold. And if when the way of thought deepens into spiritual experience, it arrives readily at the etherial heights, pinnacles, skiey widenesses, it cannot without the aid of the heart fathom the intense and rich abysses and oceanic depths of the divine being and the divine Ananda." (CWSA 24: 548)

#### **IX – C. 4. Pride, egoism is used by the hostile Powers**

*"How is it possible for someone who feels aspiration and the Divine call in his heart to come to live at the Mother's feet and then afterwards to leave them? Is it through vital depression or something else?"*

Through the suggestions of the hostile forces, because of pride, egoism, ambition, sexual desire, vanity, greed or any other vital impulse used by the hostile Powers." (CWSA 32: 367)

## **IX – D. The problems pride and arrogance can cause in Yoga**

### **IX – D. 1. Pride refuses or is unable to surrender**

"... the pride that imposes its own reasonings on the ways of the spirit and the pride that refuses or is unable to surrender, ..." (CWSA 29: 47) (CWSA 35: 619)

### **IX – D. 2. Becomes ignorant and mistake and misunderstand everything**

"Only a consciousness full of light can be pure. For instance, when you are conscious, your mind is clear and you have the right ideas about things and people; your mind is pure of ignorance. But when the mind is clouded by some impurity, —say, anger, jealousy or pride or some unreasonable desire,— you at once become ignorant and mistake and misunderstand everything." (CWSA 29: 49)

### **IX – D. 3. Finds it below their dignity to recognise a Guru**

"Up to now no liberated man has objected to the Guruvada; it is usually only people who live in the mind or vital and have the pride of the mind or the arrogance of

the vital that find it below their dignity to recognise a Guru." (CWSA 29: 192)

#### **IX – D. 4. Robs us of the finer psychic perception**

"Several have been misled in this way because pride, vanity or desire was strong in them and robbed them of the finer psychic perception that is not mental and can at once turn the Mother's light on such misleadings or errors." (CWSA 28: 136)

#### **IX – D. 5. Deceive themselves**

"If thou keepest this limited human ego & thinkest thyself the superman, thou art but the fool of thy own pride, the plaything of thy own force and the instrument of thy own illusions." (CWSA 12: 439)

"This naturally implies that all the ambitious people who now declare themselves to be supermen can only be impostors or people full of pride who deceive themselves and try to deceive others." 30 August 1969 (CWM 10: 246-247)

#### **IX – D. 6. Self-delusion**



"Each of the *gunas* as working on the *ahankara* has its particular danger for the sadhak who has made the *sankalpa* of self-surrender, but has not yet attained to the full accomplishment of the surrender. The danger of the *rajoguna* is when the sadhak is assailed by the pride that thinks, "I am a great sadhak, I have advanced so far, I am a great instrument in God's hands," and similar ideas, or when he attaches himself to the work as God's work which must be carried out, putting himself into it and troubling himself about it as if he had more interest in God's work than God himself and could manage it better. Many, while they are acting all the while in the spirit of rajasic *ahankara*, persuade themselves that God is working through them and they have no part in the action. This is because they are satisfied with the mere intellectual assent to the idea without waiting for the whole system and life to be full of it. A continual remembrance of God in others and renunciation of individual eagerness (*sprha*) are needed and a careful watching of our inner activities until God by the full light of self-knowledge, *jnanadipena bhasvata*, dispels all further chance of self-delusion." (CWSA 13: 84)

## **IX – D. 7. Go down into the trench of Time**

"The men who prided themselves that great events were their work, because they seemed to have an initial hand in them, go down into the trench of Time and others march

forward over their shattered reputations. Those who are swept forward by Kali within them and make no terms with Fate, they alone survive. The greatness of individuals is the greatness of the eternal Energy within." (CWSA 13: 32)

### **IX – D. 8. The pride of exclusive knowledge is also a limitation and a barrier**

"But the pride of exclusive knowledge is also a limitation and a barrier. For there is, concealed behind individual love, obscured by its ignorant human figure, a mystery which the mind cannot seize, the mystery of the body of the Divine, the secret of a mystic form of the Infinite which we can approach only through the ecstasy of the heart and the passion of the pure and sublimated sense, and its attraction which is the call of the divine Flute-player, the mastering compulsion of the All- Beautiful, can only be seized and seize us through an occult love and yearning which in the end makes one the Form and the Formless, and identifies Spirit and Matter." (CWSA 23: 160)

### **IX – D. 9. Leads to spiritual downfall**

"It is a mistake to think, as many are apt to think, that the object of a supramental Yoga is to arrive at a mighty magnificence of supermanhood, a divine power and greatness, the self-fulfilment of a magnified individual

personality. This is a false and disastrous conception, — disastrous because it is likely to raise the pride, vanity and ambition of the rajasic vital mind in us and that, if not overpassed and overcome, must lead to spiritual downfall, false because it is an egoistic conception and the first condition of the supramental change is to get rid of ego." (CWSA 23: 280)

### **IX – D. 10. Goes out of the Mother's protection**

*"When the Mother's protection is put around a person, how does he go out of it?"*

By desire, wrong thoughts, wrong actions, wrong feelings—by revolt, pride, ambition, lust or any other vital indulgence." 16 July 1933 (CWSA 32: 305)

### **IX – D. 11. Avoiding Pranam is a hostile suggestion**

*"Q: Is the idea of not coming to Pranam usually a hostile suggestion?"*

A: It is a hostile suggestion almost always.

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

A: Various motives are played upon—pride, the desire not to be like others, not to be dependent on the Mother, the wish to protect some wrong movement from the Mother's control, the idea of doing the sadhana in one's own way free from the pressure of the Truth etc." 30 May 1933 (CWSA 32: 559)

## **IX – D. 12. No interest in sadhana**

*"I feel no interest in sadhana or even in the outer work. Whatever help or protection you send stops before it can enter me. What is the reason for all that?"*

The reason is quite clear from what you write in the next para. There is something in the consciousness that wanted the letters and answers not simply for help in sadhana but as a personal satisfaction with egoistic elements in it—pride, jealousy of others (X, Y), desire to be equal with them, demand for special consideration etc. Also it wanted nice, pleasing and elaborate answers. All that is the usual wrong attitude of the vital which is the stumbling-block for so many sadhaks and prevents true psychic love from developing, replacing it by the vital kind full of demand, ego, jealousy, revolt etc.—and it has been the ruin of some. All that you had thrown out of the higher parts, and quieted it elsewhere, but it remained sticking somewhere and when correspondence was suspended, the hostile

forces took advantage of the fact that you were not allowed to write every day as before to raise up these feelings and you did not repel them with sufficient force to put an end to the attack. Hence they continue." 25 February 1935 (CWSA 35: 463)

### **IX – D. 13. Mentally deranged people who are possessed can be due to terrible pride**

*"Are mentally deranged people possessed?"*

Yes, unless there is a physical lesion, a defect in the formation or an accident, a congestion. In all other cases it is always a possession. The proof of it is that if a person is brought to you who is altogether mentally deranged, if he has a lesion, he cannot be cured, while if there is no physical lesion, if it is a possession, then one can cure him. Unfortunately these things happen only to people who like them; there must be in the being much ambition, vanity, combined with much stupidity and a terrible pride—it is on such things that those beings play.

I have known cases like that, of persons who were partially possessed, and I succeeded in freeing them from the beings who possessed them." (CWM 4: 186)

### **IX – D. 14. Not much chance that the Divine will manifest in him**

"On the other hand, for the sage or the saint who is quite infatuated with his own importance and his own worth, and full of pride and vanity, there is not much chance that the Divine will manifest in him, for there is no place for the expression of the Divine! There is no place except for the important personality of the wise man and his moral worth." (CWM 5: 348)

### **IX – D. 15. Greatest obstacle to come in contact with the Divine**

"The greatest obstacle to the contact with the Divine is pride and the sense of one's personal worth, one's personal capacities, personal power—the person becomes very big, so big that there is no place for the Divine." (CWM 5: 348)

### **IX – D. 16. Likes to be worshipped**

"It is because of pride that a man likes to be worshipped; if a man has no pride he doesn't like to be worshipped; and if, for instance, they see a good intention or a fine feeling or a movement of unselfishness or enthusiasm, a joy, a spiritual joy, these things have for them an infinitely greater value than prayers and acts of worship and pujas..." (CWM 6: 195-196)

"Besides, in the invisible world hardly any beings love to be worshipped, except those of the vital. These, as I said, are quite pleased by it. And then, it gives them importance. They are puffed up with pride and feel very happy, and when they can get a herd of people to worship them they are quite satisfied.

But if you take real divine beings, this is not at all something they value. They do not like to be worshipped. No, it does not give them any special pleasure at all! Don't think they are happy, for they have no pride." (CWM 6: 195)

#### **IX – D. 17. Makes virtue completely worthless**

"The same holds true for self-righteousness, which is a feeling of virtuous superiority.

Your virtue makes you disdainful of others, and this pride—which fills you with disdain for those who, according to you, are less virtuous than you are—makes your virtue completely worthless." (CWM 10: 68)

#### **IX – D. 18. Will fall into sin**

"So long as man prides himself on his virtue, the Supreme Lord will make him fall into sin to teach him the necessity of modesty." (CWM 10: 340)

## **IX – D. 19. The Adversary knocks at the door of pride**

"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." (CWM 14: 153)

## **IX – D. 20. Feels defeat and humiliation**

"It is not the soul, but the ego and its pride that feel "defeat and humiliation". 10 November 1961 (CWM 14: 167)

## **IX – D. 21. A great obstacle to progress**

"Pride: a great obstacle to progress." (CWM 14: 259)

## **IX – D. 22. You turn your back on your soul**

*"Mother, today I am sad. I don't know why but I even wept.*

And yet it is quite natural; how can you not be sad when you turn your back on your soul, and that simply out of pride!" (CWM 16: 72)

## **IX – D. 23. Invite blows from the surrounding circumstances**



"Certain conditions in us (and pride is one of them) automatically invite blows from the surrounding circumstances. And it is up to us to utilise these blows to make further progress. You are right in wanting all this pettiness and stupidity to disappear. I am fully with you in this determination and I am sure that you will triumph." 31 January 1934 (CWM 16: 93)

### **IX – D. 24. It leads only to ruin**

"Beware of false pride—it leads only to ruin." (CWM 16: 102)

### **IX – D. 25. Asuras hate, the God hidden in themselves and the God in man**

"They {Asura} sacrifice and give, but from a self-regarding ostentation, from vanity and with a stiff and foolish pride. In the egoism of their {Asuric nature} strength and power, in the violence of their wrath and arrogance they hate, despise and belittle the God hidden in themselves and the God in man." (CWSA 19: 473)

### **IX – D. 26. The hostile forces are upheld**

"The hostile forces are upheld not by the Mother but by something in the sadhaks themselves which opens the doors to them by concentrated egoism, mental arrogance, vital revolt and many other things, e.g. lying, sex etc." (CWSA 35: 643)

### **IX – D. 27. Pride of pure knowledge belittles the spiritual reality**

"No God-knowledge can be integral, perfect or universally satisfying which leaves unfulfilled their absolute claim, no wisdom utterly wise which in its ... pride of pure knowledge belittles the spiritual reality behind these ways of the Godhead." (CWSA 19: 340)

### **IX – D. 28. A most foolish and comically ridiculous attitude**

"I have heard that people from outside often find the sadhaks here full of an insufferable pride and arrogance, looking on all others outside as far below them! If it is so, it is a most foolish and comically ridiculous attitude." (CWSA 35: 303-304)

### **IX – D. 29. Arrogance and pride will pass judgment on everything**

"I don't know a human being who does not have mental arrogance. There are those who have a little, there are those who have much, there are those who are entirely made up of it.... The mind, by its very nature, is something essentially arrogant. It fancies that it can know, it imagines that it can judge, and it spends its time passing judgments on everything—within you, on yourself, on others, on all things!" (CWM 6: 241)

"There will always be between you and Him the conscious ego of one's own intellectual superiority which judges the Divine and is sure of never being mistaken. For they are convinced that if they had made the world, they would not have committed all the stupidities that God has perpetrated. And all this comes from pride, vanity, self-conceit; and there is exactly the seed of that in people who want to serve humanity." (CWM 5: 14-15)

## **IX – D. 30. Ascetic discipline inflates and strengthens your pride**

"Doesn't ascetic discipline help us to overcome attachment?

No, it inflates and strengthens your pride." (CWM 6: 301)

"All ascetic disciplines are, as ordinarily practised, the best means of making you proud, of building up in you such a

terrific pride that never, never will you be converted. It will have to be broken down with hammer-strokes.

The first condition is a healthy humility which makes you realise that unless you are sustained, nourished, helped, enlightened, guided by the Divine, you are *nothing at all*." (CWM 6: 302)

"Ascetic methods are things like repeated fasting, compelling yourself to endure the cold... in fact, to torture your body a little. This indeed gives you only a spiritual pride, nothing more. It masters nothing at all. It is infinitely easier. People do it because it is very easy, it is simple. Just because the pride is quite satisfied and the vanity can get puffed up, it becomes very easy. One makes a great demonstration of one's ascetic virtues, and so considers oneself an extremely important personage, and that helps one to endure many things." (CWM 6: 429)

## **IX – D. 31. fall into error**

"All these "experiments" of yours are founded upon the vital nature and the mind in connection with it; working on this foundation, there is no security against falsehood and fundamental error. No amount of powers (small or great) developing can be a surety against wandering from the Truth; and, if you allow pride and arrogance and ostentation of power to creep in and hold you, you will

surely fall into error and into the power of rajasic Maya and Avidya. Our object is not to get powers, but to ascend towards the divine Truth-consciousness and bring its Truth down into the lower members. With the Truth all the necessary powers will come, not as one's own, but as the Divine's. The contact with the Truth cannot grow through rajasic mental and vital self-assertion, but only through psychic purity and surrender." (CWSA 28: 574)

### **IX – D. 32. The arrogance of the intellect claim that physical work is of an inferior value to mental culture**

"... it is not true that physical work is of an inferior value to mental culture, it is the arrogance of the intellect that makes the claim. All work done for the Divine is equally divine; manual labour done for the Divine is more divine than mental culture done for one's own development, fame or mental satisfaction." (CWSA 29: 247)

### **IX – D. 33. Mental arrogance says, "I didn't get the response I deserved"**

"And so one wonders... with, "Oh, I had such a beautiful aspiration, I had so much goodwill, I had such a great desire to change, and then, see, I cannot! Why?" Then, of course, your mental arrogance comes in and says, "I didn't

get the response I deserved, the divine Grace doesn't help me, and I am left all alone to shift for myself", etc., etc." (CWM 6: 242)

## **IX – D. 34. Ignorant mental arrogance mocks**

"Mockery is not at all a sign of intellectual superiority, but of ignorant mental arrogance. The psychic never mocks. 2 December 1933 (CWM 17: 18)

## **IX – D. 34. Calls hostile forces**

"A certain vanity and arrogance and self-assertive rajasic vehemence which in this smaller vital being are, for those who have a pronounced strength in these parts, the deformation of the vital force and habit of leading and domination that certain qualities in the higher vital gave them. This is accompanied by an excessive *amour-propre* {self-esteem} which creates the necessity of making a figure, maintaining by any means position and prestige, even of posturing before others, influencing, controlling or "helping" them, claiming the part of a superior sadhak, one with greater knowledge and with occult powers. The larger vital being itself has to give up its powers and capacities to the Divine Shakti from whom they come and must use them only as the Mother's instrument and according to her directions; if it intervenes with the claim of its ego and puts

itself between her and the work or between her and other sadhaks, then whatever its natural power, it deviates from the true way, spoils the work, brings in adverse forces and wrong movements and does harm to those whom it imagines it is helping. When these things are transferred to the smallness of the lower vital nature and the external personality and take lower and pettier forms, they become still more false to the Truth, incongruous, grotesque, and at the same time can be viciously harmful, though in a smaller groove. There is no better way of calling in hostile forces into the general work or of vitiating and exposing to their influence one's own sadhana. On a smaller scale these defects of vanity, arrogance and rajasic violence are present in most human natures. They take other forms, but are then also a great obstacle to any true spiritual change." (SABCL 24: 1307-308)

### **IX – D. 35. The main cause of the spiritual casualties**

"It {sex} can become at any moment a disturbing, upsetting and deforming force. I have observed that to an equal extent with ego (pride, vanity, ambition) and rajasic greeds and desires it is one of the main causes of the spiritual casualties that have taken place in sadhana." (SABCL 24: 1510)

## **IX – E. How to reject pride and arrogance**

### **IX – E. 1. To have seen clearly the instinct of the pride means that the being is on the right way to change**

“All that you write shows a clear consciousness and a new orientation in the lower vital. To have seen clearly the instinct of domination and the pride of the instrument there means that that part of the being is on the right way to change— ...” (CWSA 29: 282)

### **IX – E. 2. Humility before the Divine liberates from egoism and the pride**

“Humility before the Divine is also a *sine qua non* {indispensable condition} of the spiritual life, and spiritual pride, arrogance, or vanity and self assurance press always downward.” (CWSA 29: 42)

“... humility before the Divine which liberates from egoism and the pride of the mind and of the vital, ...” (CWSA 29: 47)

“On the contrary humility is the first necessity, for one who has ego and pride cannot realise the Highest.” (CWSA 28: 505)



"A spiritual humility within is very necessary, but I do not think an outward one is very advisable (absence of pride or arrogance or vanity is indispensable of course in one's outer dealings with others)—it often creates pride, becomes formal or becomes ineffective after a time. I have seen people doing it to cure their pride, but I have not found it producing a lasting result." (CWSA 28: 429)

### **IX – E. 3. To do all work as an instrument of the Mother and as an offering to her**

"You have painting and music in you and if you apply yourself they will develop in you. Only it is best to do it as an instrument of the Mother and as an offering to her, and not allow any personal desire for fame or appreciation by others or any personal pride to be the motives—for it is that that gives trouble. All work done as an offering is a great help and does not give trouble." (CWSA 27: 733)

### **IX – E. 4. Do real surrender, give up yourself into the hands of the Divine Mother**

"However hard the fight, the only thing is to fight it out now and here to the end.

The trouble is that you have never fully faced and conquered the real obstacle. There is in a very fundamental part of your nature a strong formation of ego-individuality

which has mixed in your spiritual aspiration a clinging element of pride and spiritual ambition. This formation has never consented to be broken up in order to give place to something more true and divine. Therefore, when the Mother has put her force upon you or when you yourself have pulled the force upon you, this in you has always prevented it from doing its work in its own way. It has begun itself building according to the ideas of the mind or some demand of the ego, trying to make its own creation in its "own way", by its own strength, its own sadhana, its own tapasya. 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." (CWSA 32: 142-143)

### **IX – E. 5. An aspiration for its own sake and not for any profit may bring a straightforward acceptance of the Mother's will**

"All ambition, pride and vanity must disappear from the thoughts and the feelings. There must be no seeking now or in the future for place, position or prestige, no stipulation for a high seat among the elect, no demand for a special closeness to the Mother, ... All falsehood must be rejected from the speech, thought and action and all ostentation, arrogance and insolence. A simple, quiet and

unpretending aspiration to the Truth and reception of it for its own sake and not for any profit it may bring you, a straightforward acceptance of the Mother's will whatever it may be, ... are the only conditions on which a divine change can be effected in you. It is for this that you must strive.

... When you are ready in your inner condition and things are ready here, then the Mother will call you." 4 October 1927 (CWSA 32: 382-383)

### **IX – E. 6. To do the work given by the Mother without abhiman or insistence on personal choice, not getting hurt by anything**

"Work should be done for the Mother and not for oneself,—that is how one encourages the growth of the psychic being and overcomes the ego. The test is to do the work given by the Mother without abhiman or insistence on personal choice or prestige,—not getting hurt by anything that touches the pride, amour-propre or personal preference." (CWSA 32: 413)

### **IX – E. 7. Feel that the work is the Mother's**

"Mistakes come from people bringing their ego, their personal feelings (likes and dislikes), their sense of prestige or their convenience, pride, sense of possession, etc. into

the work. The right way is to feel that the work is the Mother's—not only yours, but the work of others—and to carry it out in such a spirit that there shall be general harmony." 26 February 1932 (CWSA 32: 446)

## **IX – E. 8. Pray to deliver from foolish pride and make one humble**

Prayers for a Sadhak

"Deliver me from anger, ingratitude and foolish pride. Make me calm, humble and gentle. Let me feel your divine control in my work and in all my action." 5 November 1938 (CWSA 35: 843)

"May I get rid of all arrogance, quarrelsomeness, self-esteem and vanity, disobedience and revolt against the Mother, hatred and rancour against others, violence of speech and conduct, falsehood, self-assertion and demand, discontent and grumbling. May I be friendly to all and without malice against anyone. May I become a true child of the Mother." 5 November 1943 (CWSA 35: 843)

## **IX – F. Pride to be replaced by its counterpart**

**IX – F. 1.** "... these defects must now be replaced by their true counterparts—the power to act selflessly on others for the Truth and the Right and the power to be a strong and confident but egoless instrument of the Divine." (CWSA 29: 282)

**IX – F. 2.** "... it {Equality} means self-mastery over the vital movements, anger and sensitiveness and pride as well as desire and the rest,..." (CWSA 29: 130)

**IX – F. 3.** "There are only two ways by which we can effectively get the better of the passion which seeks to enslave us. One is by substitution, replacing it whenever it rises by the opposite quality, anger by thoughts of forgiveness, love or forbearance, lust by meditation on purity, pride by thoughts of humility and our own defects or nothingness; this is the method of Rajayoga, but it is a difficult, slow and uncertain method; for both the ancient traditions and the modern experience of Yoga show that men who had attained for long years the highest self-mastery have been suddenly surprised by a violent return of the thing they thought dead or for ever subject. Still this substitution, slow though it be, is one of the commonest methods of Nature and it is largely by this means, often unconsciously or half-consciously used, that the character

of a man changes and develops from life to life or even in the bounds of a single lifetime. It does not destroy things in their seed and the seed which is not reduced to ashes by Yoga is always capable of sprouting again and growing into the complete and mighty tree." (CWSA 13: 34)

**IX – F. 4.** "Conversion of the mind: the mind has liberated itself from its arrogance and knows it is only an instrument." (CWM 14: 339)

## **X — Rejection of the vital nature's greed**

### **X — A. Greed is a part of the lower vital**

**X — A. 1.** "Below the navel is the lower vital plane, which is ignorant and obscure, the seat of small desires, greeds, passions and enjoyments." (CWSA 28: 195)

**X — A. 2.** "The lower vital as distinguished from the higher is concerned only with the small greeds, small desires, small passions etc. which make up the daily stuff of life for the ordinary sensational man—while the vital physical proper is the nervous being giving vital reflexes to contacts of things with the physical consciousness." (CWSA 28:178)

**X — A. 3.** "It is not possible to give a name to all the energies that act in the being. They are put into several classes. First are the mental thought energies (intelligence, dynamic mind, physical perceptive mind); the vital—1st emotional vital with all the emotional movements in it; 2nd the central vital (the larger desires, passions, ambitions, forces of work, possession, conquest); 3rd the lower vital (all the small egoistic movements of desire, enjoyment, lust, greed, jealousy, envy, vanity etc. etc.); 4th the physical energies concerned with the material life and its functioning, needs, outer action, instrumental fulfilment of the other powers." (CWSA 28:167)

**X — A. 4.** "As there is a physical mind, so there is a physical vital—a vital turned entirely upon physical things, full of desires and greeds and seekings for pleasure on the physical plane." (CWSA 28: 195)

**X — A. 5.** "For although this part of the nature {lower nature} in earthly beings tends to be very obscure and is full of perversions,—lust, greed of all kinds, vanity, small ambitions, petty anger, envy, jealousy are its ordinary guests ..." (CWSA 28:188)

**X — A. 6.** "The centre between the navel and the Muladhara commands the lower vital (physical desires, small greeds, passions etc.)." (CWSA 28:240)



## **X — B. One of the things unrestrained Rajas turns to is greed**

**X — B. 1.** "Rajas contributes our normal active nature with all its good and evil; when unchastened by a sufficient element of sattwa, it turns to egoism, self-will and violence, the perverse, obstinate or exaggerating action of the reason, prejudice, attachment to opinion, clinging to error, the subservience of the intelligence to our desires and preferences and not to the truth, the fanatic or the sectarian mind, self-will, pride, arrogance, selfishness, ambition, lust, greed, cruelty, hatred, jealousy, the egoisms of love, all the vices and passions, the exaggerations of the aesthesis, the morbidities and perversions of the sensational and vital being." (CWSA 24: 686)

**X — B. 2.** "Rajas, again, the Gita tells us, has for its essence attraction of liking and longing. Rajas is a child of the attachment of the soul to the desire of objects; it is born from the nature's thirst for an unpossessed satisfaction. It is therefore full of unrest and fever and lust and greed and excitement, a thing of seeking impulsions, and all this mounts in us when the middle guna increases." (CWSA 19:429)

**X — B. 3.** "The Asuric qualities, wrath, greed, cunning, treachery, wilful doing of injury to others, pride and arrogance and excessive self-esteem have no place in its composition." (CWSA 19:471-472)

**X — B. 4.** The three powers of rajasic ego are desire, wrath and greed

"The Asuric Prakriti is the rajasic at its height; it leads to the slavery of the soul in Nature, to desire, wrath and greed, the three powers of the rajasic ego, and these are the threefold doors of Hell, the Hell into which the natural being falls when it indulges the impurity and evil and error of its lower or perverted instincts." (CWSA 19:474)

**X — B. 5.** "The tamasic man is ordinarily slow to act, dilatory in his steps, easily depressed, ready soon to give up his task if it taxes his strength, his diligence or his patience. The rajasic doer of action on the contrary is one eagerly attached to the work, bent on its rapid completion, passionately desirous of fruit and reward and consequence, greedy of heart, impure of mind, often violent and cruel and brutal in the means he uses; he cares little whom he injures or how much he injures others so long as he gets what he wants, satisfies his passions and will, vindicates the claims of his ego." (CWSA 19:502)

**X — B. 6.** "For there is in front in man a heart of vital emotion similar to the animal's, ... its emotions are governed by egoistic passion, blind instinctive affections ... a heart besieged and given over to the lusts, desires, wraths, intense or fierce demands or little greeds and mean pettinesses of an obscure and fallen life force and debased by its slavery to any and every impulse. This mixture of the emotive heart and the sensational hungering vital creates in man a false soul of desire; it is this that is the crude and dangerous element which the reason rightly distrusts and feels a need to control, even though the actual control or rather coercion it succeeds in establishing over our raw and insistent vital nature remains always very uncertain and deceptive." (CWSA 23:150)

**X — B. 7.** Q: *There are some human beings who are like vampires. What are they and why are they like that?*

A: They are not human; there is only a human form or appearance. They are incarnations of beings from the world that is just next to the physical, beings who live on the plane which we call the vital world. It is a world of all the desires and ... greed and cunning and every kind of ignorance; but all the dynamisms too are there, all the life-energies and all the powers. The beings of this world have by their nature a strange grip over the material world and can exercise upon it a sinister influence. Some of them are formed out of the remains of the human being that persist

after death in the vital atmosphere near to the earth-plane. His desires and hungers still float there and remain in form even after the dissolution of the body; often they are moved to go on manifesting and satisfying themselves and the birth of these creatures of the vital world is the consequence. But these are minor beings and, if they can be very troublesome, it is yet not impossible to deal with them." (CWM 3:42)

**X — B. 8.** "The arrogant ignorance of the human mind and its self-satisfied perversions and presumptuous errors, the pride and vanity and ambition, the cruelty and tyranny and beast wrath and violence, the selfishness and baseness and hypocrisy and treachery and vile meanness, the lust and greed and rapacity, the jealousy, envy and bottomless ingratitude that disfigure the earth-nature are the natural children of this indispensable but strong and dangerous turn of Nature." (CWSA 23:234)

**X — B. 9.** "For in an impure mind the silence will soon fill with misleading lights and false voices, the echo or sublimation of its own vain conceits and opinions or the response to its secret pride, vanity, ambition, lust, greed or desire. The Titans and the Demons will speak to it more readily than the divine Voices.

Silence is indispensable, but also there is needed wideness. If the mind is not silent, it cannot receive the

lights and voices of the supernal Truth or receiving mixes with them its own flickering tongues and blind pretentious babble. Active, arrogant, noisy, it distorts and disfigures what it receives." (CWSA 12: 256)

## **X — C. Symbols of greed**

**X — C. 1.** "It is when the vital gets broken up, some strong movements of it, desires, greeds, may precipitate themselves into animal forms, e.g., sexual desire with the part of the vital consciousness under its control into a dog or some habitual movement of excessive greed may carry part of the vital consciousness into a pig. The animals represent the vital consciousness with mind involved in the vital, so that it is naturally there that such things would gravitate for satisfaction." (CWSA 28:550)

**X — C. 2.** "*Q: The other day I dreamt that many pigs — big and small — are being kept in the Dining Room for being killed. I wanted to run away. But then I thought, "If Mother wants it, let it be done." It had a very strong impression upon me.*

A: This dream is a result of your old sanskaras that are still alive in your subconscious. No intention of killing pigs, unless they are the symbol of greed and gluttony. Blessings." 10 June 1964 (CWM 17:237)

**X — C. 3.** "The crocodile signifies greed, *lobha*, of some kind." (CWSA 30:173)

## **X — D. Problems greed can cause in Yoga**

### **X — D. 1. Ignorant and stupid greed is sure to lead to ruin**

“Do you know the story of the hen that laid golden eggs? There was once a peasant whose entire fortune consisted of one hen; but this was a wonderful hen. Every other day she gave him a golden egg. Now this peasant in his stupid and greedy ignorance imagined that the hen’s body must be full of gold, and that if he opened it up he would find a great treasure. So he slit her open — and found nothing. Thus he lost both the hen and the eggs.

This story shows us that ignorant and stupid greed is sure to lead to ruin. So learn a lesson from it and understand that if you demand from me what is beyond my means, and if I were so foolish as to yield to you, I should go straight to my ruin and the result would be that all the work would be stopped and you would be out of work and would therefore have no wages at all, and no way to earn your living.” (CWM 13:176-177)

### **X — D. 2. The surest way to decrease one’s conscience and to narrow one’s nature**

“Greed for money: the surest way to decrease one’s conscience and to narrow one’s nature.” (CWM 15:52)

### **X — D. 3. Fame-hungry vital is greedy and will accept praise from even the very embodiments of incompetence**

“So also your own vital being and the vital forces behind it thrive — that is to say, fatten their ignorance—by absorbing the flatteries given by others. But you must remember that the compliments paid by creatures on the same level of ignorance as oneself are really worth nothing, they are just as worthless as the criticisms levelled at one. No matter from what pretentious source they derive, they are futile and empty. Unfortunately, however, the vital craves even for the most rotten food and is so greedy that it will accept praise from even the very embodiments of incompetence. I am reminded of the annual opening of the Arts Exhibition in Paris, when the President of the Republic inspects the pictures, eloquently discovering that one is a landscape and another a portrait, and making platitudinous comments with the air of a most intimate soul-searching knowledge of Painting. The painters know very well how inept the remarks are and yet miss no chance of quoting the testimony of the President to their genius. For such indeed is the vital in mankind, ravenously fame-hungry.” (CWM 3:137-138)



## **X — D. 4. Greed has depraved taste, sordid desire, which finds its satisfaction in grossness and perversity**

"I shall tell you about an experience I had which will help you to understand better. It was shortly after the supramental experience of the third of February, and I was still in the state in which things of the physical world seemed so far off, so absurd. A group of visitors had asked permission to come to me and one evening they came to the Playground. They were rich people, that is, they had more money than they needed to live on. Among them there was a woman in a sari; she was very fat, her sari was arranged so as to hide her body. As she was bending down to receive my blessings, one corner of the sari came open, uncovering a part of her body, a naked belly —an enormous one. I felt a real shock. ... There are corpulent {plump} people who have nothing repugnant {repulsive} about them, but I suddenly saw the perversion, the rottenness that this belly concealed, it was like a huge abscess, expressing greed, vice, depraved taste, sordid desire, which finds its satisfaction as no animal would, in grossness and especially in perversity. I saw the perversion of a depraved mind at the service of the lowest appetites. Then, all of a sudden, something sprang up from me, a prayer, like a Veda: "O Lord, this is what must disappear!" (CWM 9:299-300)

## **X — D. 5. Greed is mental misery, the vital perversion, which doesn't want to change**

"One understands very well that physical misery, the unequal distribution of the goods of this world could be changed, one can imagine economic and social solutions which could remedy this, but it is that misery, the mental misery, the vital perversion, it is that which cannot change, doesn't want to change. And those who belong to this type of humanity are condemned in advance to disintegration. That is the meaning of original sin: the perversion which began with the mind." (CWM 9:300)

## **X — D. 6. When the Divine manifests greed rush to appropriate, to rob, exploit, squeeze, swallow and in the end crush down the Divine**

"Greed, greed, always greed... is the response of material nature.

In whatever way the Divine manifests there, it becomes at once an object of covetousness. A rush to appropriate, an endeavour to rob, exploit, squeeze, swallow and in the end crush down the Divine, this is the receptivity of matter to the divine touch.

O my Lord, Thou comest as the redeemer and these would make of Thee a dupe! Thou comest for union, for transformation, for realisation, and they think only of

absorption and selfish increase.” 9 March 1932 (CWM 14:128-129)

### **X — D. 7. The main cause of the spiritual casualties**

“It {sex} can become at any moment a disturbing, upsetting and deforming force. I have observed that to an equal extent with ego (pride, vanity, ambition) and rajasic greeds and desires it is one of the main causes of the spiritual casualties that have taken place in sadhana.” (SABCL 24: 1510)

### **X — D. 8. Tumor is the result of a very strong greed in the nature**

“Tumours always indicate some difficulty in the nature; certain cells decide to be independent of the discipline of the body. They do not remain in harmony with the other parts and begin to grow out of all proportion. Generally this is the result of a very strong greed in the nature. It may be greed for material things or for power or any other subtle object.

By performing an operation you may remove the tumour, but if the inner nature remains unchanged, it will come up in some other part and all the trouble that the patient has to undergo for the operation and its after-effects will be in vain.” (CWM 163-164)

*"Q: Mother once said that greed in the cells is at the root of tumours. Precisely what kind of psychological twist is responsible for brain tumours?"*

A: Greed for fame." February 1964 (CWM 17:385)

## **X — D. 9. The problem of aspirant Industrialist**

And what have I contributed to humanity? Men travel more easily. Do they understand each other any better? Following my example, all sorts of labour-saving gadgets have been mass produced and made available to an increasing number of customers. How far has this done anything more than to create new needs and a corresponding greed for gain? My workers are well paid but it seems that I have only succeeded in arousing in them the desire to earn always more—and above all more than workers in other factories. I feel that they are dissatisfied, unhappy in fact. Contrary to my hopes, raising their standard of living, assuring their security, has not induced them to develop their human personality. Indeed, the mass of human suffering remains practically unchanged, as formidable as ever, and, it seems, incurable by the means I have used. There is something fundamentally wrong which my actions fail to correct and which I even fail to understand. I feel that there is a secret yet to be

discovered; and without this discovery all our efforts are in vain." (CWM 12:488)

### **X — D. 10. Greed, anger and hatred are the roots of killings**

"Morality is for the Western mind mostly a thing of outward conduct; but conduct for the Indian mind is only one means of expression and sign of a soul-state. Hinduism only incidentally strings together a number of commandments for observance, a table of moral laws; more deeply it enjoins a spiritual or ethical purity of the mind with action as one outward index. It says strongly enough, almost too strongly, "Thou shouldst not kill," but insists more firmly on the injunction, "Thou shalt not hate, thou shalt not yield to greed, anger or malice {hatred}," for these are the roots of killing." (CWSA 20:149)

### **X — D. 11. Crimes of greed and selfish passion can bring war**

"Granted that the offence, the aggression, the first sin, the crimes of greed and selfish passion which have brought things {Kurushetra war} to such a pass came from the other side; ..." (CWSA 19:24-25)

## **X — D. 12. National greed is the fertile seeds of strife and war**

“The elimination of war is one of the cherished ideals and expectations of the age. But what lies at the root of this desire? A greater unity of heart, sympathy, understanding between men and nations, a settled will to get rid of national hatreds, greeds, ambitions, all the fertile seeds of strife and war? If so, it is well with us and success will surely crown our efforts.” (CWSA 25:600)

## **X — D. 13. These aggressions and massacres remain acts of greed or vengeance**

“As a whole, the official version of human history is nothing but a long, almost unbroken record of violent aggressions: wars, revolutions, murders or colonisations. True, some of these aggressions and massacres have been adorned with flattering terms and epithets; they have been called religious wars, holy wars, civilising campaigns; but they nonetheless remain acts of greed or vengeance.” (CWM 10:62)

## **X — D. 14. Then humanity is doomed**

“If human greed and passion remain what they are today, almost the same as they were in the Stone Age, then

humanity is doomed. We have reached a point where, unless there is a rapid and radical moral change, mankind will destroy itself with the power it has in its own hands.” (CWM 12:482)

## **X — D. 15. Mahalakshmi will not linger where there is greed**

“If she (Mahalakshmi) finds herself in men’s hearts surrounded with ... greed ... in such hearts the gracious and beautiful Goddess will not linger.” (CWSA 32:21)

Q: *Divine Mother,*

*About Mahalakshmi, Sri Aurobindo has said: "If she finds herself in men’s hearts surrounded with selfishness and hatred and jealousy and malignance and envy and strife, if treachery and greed and ingratitude are mixed in the sacred chalice, if grossness of passion and unrefined desire degrade devotion, in such hearts the gracious and beautiful Goddess will not linger. A divine disgust seizes upon her and she withdraws, for she is not one who insists or strives...."*

*In fear that you may do this, and with sorrow that we have caused you pain, we, at Aspiration, ask your forgiveness. Many of us, many times, have promised to change; many*

*of us again do so promise now. We pray for the grace. With our love.*

My love and blessings are always with you for progress and transformation.” 12 April 1972 (CWM 13:235)

When writing her reply, Mother said that this letter should be framed and kept in the place of meditation.



## **X — E. In spiritual life, the conquest and complete mastery over greed is demanded**

**X — E. 1.** "In the ordinary life, people accept the vital movements, anger, desire, greed, sex etc. as natural, allowable and legitimate things, part of the human nature. Only so far as society discourages them or wishes to keep them within fixed limits or subject to a decent restraint or measure, people try to control them so as to conform to the social standard of morality or rule of conduct. Here on the contrary as in all spiritual life, the conquest and complete mastery of these things is demanded." (CWSA 28:420)

**X — E. 2.** "There is of course also the ascetic ideal which is necessary for many and has its place in the spiritual order. I would myself say that no man can be spiritually complete if he cannot live ascetically or follow a life as bare as the barest anchorite's. Obviously, greed for wealth and money-making has to be absent from his nature as much as greed for food or any other greed and all attachment to these things must be renounced from his consciousness." (CWSA 29: 250) (CWSA 35: 771)

**X — E. 3.** "But the Gita discourages any excess of violence done to oneself; for the self within is really the Godhead evolving, it is Krishna, it is the Divine; it has not to be

troubled and tortured as the Titans of the world trouble and torture it, but to be increased, fostered, cherished, luminously opened to a divine light and strength and joy and wideness. It is not one's self, but the band of the spirit's inner enemies that we have to discourage, expel, slay upon the altar of the growth of the spirit; these can be ruthlessly excised, whose names are desire, wrath, inequality, greed, attachment to outward pleasures and pains, the cohort of usurping demons that are the cause of the soul's errors and sufferings." (CWSA 23:108-109)

#### **X — E. 4. THE RULE OF THE DIVINE LIFE**

"Enjoyment of the universe and all it contains is the object of world-existence, but renunciation of all in desire is the condition of the free enjoyment of all.

The renunciation demanded is not a moral constraint of self-denial or a physical rejection, but an entire liberation of the spirit from any craving after the forms of things.

The terms of this liberation are freedom from egoism and, consequently, freedom from personal desire. Practically, this renunciation implies that one should not regard anything in the universe as a necessary object of possession, nor as possessed by another and not by oneself, nor as an object of greed in the heart or the

senses.” Isha Upanishad: Analysis Verse 1-3 (CWSA 17:18-19)

**X — E. 5.** “Q: *You say certain things that human nature does not find so easy or natural.*

A: If I said only things that human nature finds easy and natural, that would certainly be very comfortable for the disciples, but there would be no room for any spiritual aim or endeavour. Spiritual aims and methods are not easy or natural (e.g. as quarrelling, sex-indulgence, greed, ... are easy and natural) and if people become disciples, they are supposed to follow spiritual aims and endeavours, however hard and above ordinary nature, and not the things that are easy and natural.” (CWSA 35:460-461)

## **X — F. How to reject greed**

### **X — F. 1. Regard greed as intruder and perverter of our diviner nature**

“These {greed and others} should be regarded not as part of oneself but as intruders and perverters of our self’s real and diviner nature; ...” (CWSA 23:109)

### **X — F. 2. Greed has to sacrificed, whatever pain in going it may throw on the consciousness of the seeker**

“... these {greed and others} have to be sacrificed in the harsher sense of the word, whatever pain in going they may throw by reflection on the consciousness of the seeker.” (CWSA 23:108-109)

### **X — F. 3. Spiritual self-giving and surrender to the Divine**

“... any other greed and all attachment to these things must be renounced from his consciousness. But I do not regard the ascetic way of living as indispensable to spiritual perfection or as identical with it. There is the way of spiritual self-mastery and the way of spiritual self-giving

and surrender to the Divine, abandoning ego and desire even in the midst of action or of any kind of work or all kinds of work demanded from us by the Divine. If it were not so, there would not have been great spiritual men like Janaka or Vidura in India and even there would have been no Krishna or else Krishna would have been not the Lord of Brindavan and Mathura and Dwarka or a prince and warrior or the charioteer of Kurukshetra, but only one more great anchorite." (CWSA 29: 250) (CWSA 35: 770-771)

#### **X — F. 4. As man's consciousness is subject to the chain of Karma the greed has to be abrogated in waking state**

"The ideal upheld before the Yogin who follows this method is to renounce all desire and every least velleity of the human life, of the mental existence, to detach himself utterly from the world and, entering more and more frequently and more and more deeply into the most concentrated state of Samadhi, finally to leave the body while in that utter in-gathering of the being so that it may depart into the supreme Existence. It is also by reason of this apparent incompatibility of mind and Spirit that so many religions and systems are led to condemn the world and look forward only to a heaven beyond or else a void Nirvana or supreme featureless self-existence in the Supreme.

But what under these circumstances is the human mind which seeks the divine to do with its waking moments? For if these are subject to all the disabilities of mortal mentality, if they are open to the attacks of grief, fear, anger, passion, hunger, greed, desire, it is irrational to suppose that by the mere concentration of the mental being in the Yogic trance at the moment of putting off the body, the soul can pass away without return into the supreme existence. For the man's normal consciousness is still subject to what the Buddhists call the chain or the stream of Karma; it is still creating energies which must continue and have their effect in a continued life of the mental being which is creating them. Or, to take another point of view, consciousness being the determining fact and not the bodily existence which is only a result, the man still belongs normally to the status of human, or at least mental activity and this cannot be abrogated by the fact of passing out of the physical body; to get rid of mortal body is not to get rid of mortal mind. Nor is it sufficient to have a dominant disgust of the world or an anti-vital indifference or aversion to the material existence; for this too belongs to the lower mental status and activity. The highest teaching is that even the desire for liberation with all its mental concomitants must be surpassed before the soul can be entirely free. Therefore not only must the mind be able to rise in abnormal states out of itself into a higher

consciousness, but its waking mentality also must be entirely spiritualised.” (CWSA 23:396)

### **X — F. 5. Prayer to remove greed**

“Remove from us all egoism, root out all petty vanity, greed and obscurity.” (CWM 1:37)

### **X — F. 6. To dwell in the psychic is to be lifted above all greed**

This {getting rid of greed} will be very easy to do once you get into contact with your psychic being, the true soul deep within you. Then you will feel immediately how very unimportant these things are and that the sole thing that matters is the Divine. To dwell in the psychic is to be lifted above all greed. You will have no hankering, no worry, no feverish desire. And you will feel also that whatever happens, happens for the best. Do not misunderstand me to imply that you must always think that everything is for the best. Everything is not for the best so long as you are in the ordinary consciousness.” (CWM 3:123)

## **X — G. Where there is no greed**

### **X — G. 1. He cannot be led astray**

“One in whom there is neither greed nor desire, how can he be led astray? Which path can lead to Him, the Pathless, the Awakened One who dwells within the Infinite?” (CWM 3:246)

### **X — G. 2. Happy are we to live without greed**

“Among those who are full of greed, happy are we to live without greed. Among the greedy, let us live free from greed.” (CWM 3:252)

### **X — G. 3. Aspiration for beauty is not an expression of greed**

“There is nothing harmful in the thing [aspiration for beauty] itself—on the contrary to awake to the universal beauty and refinement of the Mahalakshmi force is good. It is not an expression of greed or lust — only into these things a perversion can always come if one allows it, as into the Mahakali experience there may come rajasic anger and violence, so here there may come vital passion for possession and enjoyment. One must look at the beauty as the artist does without desire of possession or vital



enjoyment of the lower kind." 8 October 1933 (CWSA 27:705)

#### **X — G. 4. In the unification of the world there will be no greed of nations**

"The present arrangement of the world has been worked out by economic forces, by political diplomacies, treaties and purchases and by military violence without regard to any moral principle or any general rule of the good of mankind. It has served roughly certain ends of the World-Force in its development and helped at much cost of bloodshed, suffering, cruelty, oppression and revolt to bring humanity more together. Like all things that, though in themselves unideal, have been and have asserted themselves with force, it has had its justification, not moral but biological, in the necessity of the rough methods which Nature has to use with a half-animal mankind as with her animal creation. But the great step of unification once taken, the artificial arrangements which have resulted would no longer have any reason for existence. It would be so in the first place because the convenience and good of the world at large and not the satisfaction of the egoism, pride and greed of particular nations would be the object to be held in view, in the second because whatever legitimate claim any nation might have upon others, such as necessities of economic well-being and expansion,

would be arranged for in a soundly organised world-union or world-state no longer on the principle of strife and competition, but on a principle of cooperation or mutual adjustment or at least of competition regulated by law and equity and just interchange." (CWSA 25:428)

## **X — G. 5. In Auroville and the Ashram there will be no greed**

"Everybody has to progress and become more sincere.

Auroville has been created not for the satisfaction of the egos and their greeds, but for the creation of a new world, the supramental, expressing the divine perfection."

12 December 1972 (CWM 13:218)

*"Q: X plucks coconuts from our trees. This time when he wanted to pluck, I told him the very fine ones I want to keep for visitors and Ashram children, and not to pluck them.*

A: People in the Ashram receive all they truly need. I do not approve of any distribution of fruits and flowers to the visitors. It is only an encouragement to greed and desire and indiscipline. And if each one goes on doing what he thinks best, the whole organisation will end in a chaos." (CWM 13:153)

## **X — H. Right attitude to replace greed**

### **X — H. 1. What comes, we take but always ready to let it go, if it goes**

*"Q: I have heard from his wife that he wants to put a ceiling fan in my room also. My first reaction is "No, I don't want luxuries." But it seems a greed is lurking somewhere. What is your advice? (I am not asking for sanction.)*

A: The room is small. A fan would be good. You can take it and see if it helps.

What is bad is slavery — *slavery* to abstinence as well as slavery to needs. What comes, we take but always ready to let it go, if it goes...

Blessings." 24 June 1963 (CWM 17:226)

### **X — H. 2. Unaffected in vital being by the presence or absence of things that satisfy desire**

"A sadhak should not have demands and ask for things for his personal use from people outside, but if they of their own accord and without any request or suggestion send them to him, he can receive them. The most important point is that he shall not indulge any spirit of greed or desire under any excuse or colour and should be unaffected in his vital being by the presence or absence of

these things that satisfy desire." 5 March 1931 (CWSA 35:761-762)

### **X — H. 3. Possesses things without attachment or desire in harmony with the Divine Will**

*"Q. What should be the true necessities of a sadhak? Should he buy things from outside? With what idea is pocket money given to us?"*

A: The idea, when the arrangement was made, was simply to see how and in what spirit the sadhaks dealt with money when they had any at their disposal.

The *necessities* of a sadhak should be as few as possible; for there are only a very few things that are real necessities in life. The rest are either utilities or things decorative to life or luxuries. These a Yogi has a right to possess or enjoy only on one of two conditions —

- (1) if he uses them during his sadhana solely to train himself in possessing things without attachment or desire and learn to use them rightly, in harmony with the Divine Will, with a proper handling, a just organisation, arrangement and measure—or,
- (2) if he has already attained a true freedom from desire and attachment and is not in the least moved or affected in any way by loss or withholding or deprivation. If he has any greed, desire, demand, claim for possession or enjoyment, any anxiety, grief,

anger or vexation when denied or deprived, he is not free in spirit and his use of the things he possesses is contrary to the spirit of sadhana. Even if he is free in spirit, he will not be fit for possession if he has not learned to use things not for himself, but for the Divine Will, as an instrument, with the right knowledge and action in the use for the proper equipment of a life lived not for oneself but for and in the Divine.” 7 March 1932 (CWSA 35:759)

#### **X — H. 4. The time of egoistic greed is over**

“It is a great mistake to believe that I would agree to the unselfish movement of some people only to satisfy the demands of those who remain selfish and full of desires. The time of egoistic greed is over; each one will have to share in the effort towards economy.” (CWM 13:151) {In the chapter Finance and Economy}

## **XI — Rejection of the vital nature's greed for food**

### **XI — A. Getting rid of greed for food is purification of the vital in the physical**

**XI — A. 1.** "As for food, well, that is not so much a purification of the heart as of the vital in the physical, but it is of course very helpful to get control there. The purification of the heart is the central necessity, but a purification of the mind, vital and physical is also called for. But the most important thing for purification of the heart is an absolute sincerity." (CWSA 30:43)

**XI — A. 2.** "Another difficulty that the transformation of the body has to face is its dependence for its very existence upon food, and here too are involved the gross physical instincts, impulses, desires that are associated with this difficult factor, the essential cravings of the palate, the greed of food and animal gluttony of the belly, the coarsening of the mind when it grovels in the mud of sense, obeys a servitude to its mere animal part and hugs its bondage to Matter." (CWSA 13:544)

## **XI — B. Greed for food is a serious obstacle to sadhana**

**XI — B. 1.** "Greed for anything concerning physical consciousness, so-called necessities and comfort of whatever nature — this is one of the most serious obstacles to sadhana." (CWM 14: 251)

**XI — B. 2.** "Each little satisfaction you get through greed is one step backward from the goal." (CWM 14: 251)

**XI — B. 3.** "When you have a desire you are governed by the thing you desire, it takes possession of your mind and your life, and you become a slave. If you have greed for food you are no more the master of food, it is the food that masters you." (CWM 14: 251) (CWM 16:113)

**XI — B. 4.** "But if a man seeks to restrain and get rid of his greed for food or attachment, (not by starvation, though), then he is doing something useful to his sadhana." (CWSA 30:42)

**XI — B. 5.** "Sadhana in this Yoga at least is a matter of the inner consciousness mainly. One has to get over greed of food but not abandon food, ... To injure the body by excessive physical tapasya is forbidden in this Yoga." (CWSA 35: 775)

**XI — B. 6.** "If you prefer the pleasures of the palate to the union with the Divine, it is your own look-out and I have nothing to say, except that I do not approve, but each one must be free to choose whether he will rise above his lower nature or sink down in the material pit. My help is always for those who choose the higher path. " (CWM 14: 251)

**XI — B. 7.** "But what if people were to remember that they were here for Yoga, make that the salt and savour of their existence and acquire *samata* of the palate! My experience is that if they did that, all the trouble would disappear and even the kitchen difficulties and the defects of the cooking would vanish." 28 August 1930 (CWSA 35: 773)

**XI — B. 8.** " Q. *I was speaking to X about the dining hall, past and present. ...*

A: ... But people here do not seem to realise that desire consciousness and Yoga consciousness are two different things. They seem to want to make a happy amalgamation of the two." 1 June 1934 (CWSA 35: 774)

**XI — B. 9.** "Q: *Mother, According to a good many diners the quality of the Dining Room vegetable has improved very much. The quantity of milk has also increased. Still, every alternate day I am getting demands for vegetables, oil, spices, etc. and extra*



*milk. The demands are made in matter of course as a right. How to deal with this? I give fruits freely when I have them.*

A: Most of the people are simply *greedy* and their case deserves no consideration. It is only if, because of health, their case deserves consideration that you can be lenient. Blessings." 16 May 1969 (CWM 17:318-319)

**XI — B. 10.** Q.I sometimes have a desire to eat nice things, and now I feel this desire as I have never felt it before. What to do for it?

A: The only thing to do for it is to throw the desire away. It is absurd to allow small animal greeds like this to come up and obscure the whole consciousness. You have not come here to eat nice things and Mother is under no obligation to give them. In fact, if you have such desires as that, it is a very good reason for not giving them to you, as it would only feed the desire. Get rid of these movements once for all. Let the true consciousness grow and reject these things." 22 September 1934 (CWSA 32:400)

**XI — B. 11.** "Q. *My complaint about X is his attitude towards the Dining Room workers — he is simply too harsh with most of them. With all his experience it should be possible for him to be a little more generous in speech and expression. Why should he make a wry face when*

*someone asks for an extra piece of bread? It does not remove the person's greed; rather it gives rise to eating bazaar food. When Y breaks down weeping, could X not bend a little to indulge her?*

A: With a more pleasant mood and face, he could satisfy so many people and avoid the clashes which have been continuous under his regime. I do not agree. It is impossible to maintain order if one is indulgent to everybody and strictness is indispensable. That is what Mother found when she was herself looking after the work; indulgence only brought absolute disorder, people became entirely selfish, undisciplined, taking every advantage they could. I do not see either how a system of indulgence to the moods of the women is likely to help their sadhana,—it is likely rather to nourish what is wayward and exacting in them. If they do not learn discipline and self-control, on what basis can they build their sadhana and character?" 21 November 1934 (CWSA 32: 428)

**XI — B. 12.** "It is the attachment to food, the greed and eagerness for it, making it an unduly important thing in the life, that is contrary to the spirit of yoga. To be aware that something is pleasant to the palate is not wrong; only one must have no desire nor hankering for it, no exultation in getting it, no displeasure or regret at not getting it. One must be calm and equal, not getting upset or dissatisfied

when the food is not tasty or not in abundance—eating the fixed amount that is necessary, not less or more. There should be neither eagerness nor repugnance.

To be always thinking about food and troubling the mind is quite the wrong way of getting rid of the food-desire. Put the food element in the right place in the life, in a small corner, and don't concentrate on it but on other things. (SABCL 24: 1465)

**XI — B. 13.** “Animals in their natural state do not ever overeat, they eat according to their hunger and if some food is left over and they do not want it to be eaten by others, they hide it, bury it; they hide it with great care so that they may find it again when they are hungry. But an animal living with man loses this instinct and eats not only all that is given but all that’s left within its reach.” (CWM 5: 273)

**XI — B. 14.** “It is not necessary to have desire or greed of food in order to eat. The yogi eats not out of desire, but to maintain the body.” (SABCL 24: 1468)

## **XI — C. Example of atmosphere of greed, gluttony**

**XI — C. 1.** "Q: *In the temples people offer animals to the Divine. In this case can it be called cruelty?*

....Close by here, near the seashore, there is a fishermen's temple — Virampatnam, I think; when you go as far as Ariancoupam and from there turn to the left and go towards the sea, at the end of the road there is a temple. It is the temple of a strange godhead... it is one of the Kalis. Well, extraordinary stories are told about this Kali, but in any case, the custom is to kill a fairly large number of chickens every year in her honour. I happened to go down there—I believe it was the day after the festival had been celebrated: one could still see all the feathers scattered on the sands—and, above all, there was in that place an atmosphere of creepy dread and total ignorance, and also (I don't know the practice—who eats the chickens? whether it is the one who kills them or the priests—but here truly there were too many! If the priests ate all that they would be quite sick! So it must probably have been also the people who had killed the chickens), **there was that atmosphere of greed, not only greed but of gluttony, of people who think about eating.** And there was that Kali who was particularly satisfied with all the vital forces of all those poor little chickens; they had been killed off by hundreds and each one had a little vital force which escaped when its throat was cut, and so that

Kali was feeding upon all that: she was very happy. And there was evidently — I don't know if it could be called cruelty, it was rather greed, — greed of vital forces, of a very unconscious vital force, for these poor chickens don't have anything very conscious. And the whole thing created a very low, very heavy, very unconscious and painful atmosphere, yet not of the intensity of cruelty." (CWM 6:65)

**XI — C. 2.** "... those who eat through greediness, who think all the time about food. You see, for them eating is the most important thing; all their thoughts are concentrated on it, and they eat not because they need to eat but through desire and greed and gluttony." (CWM 7: 57-58)

**XI — C. 3.** "I shall tell you about an experience I had which will help you to understand better. It was shortly after the supramental experience of the third of February, and I was still in the state in which things of the physical world seemed so far off, so absurd. A group of visitors had asked permission to come to me and one evening they came to the Playground. They were rich people, that is, they had more money than they needed to live on. Among them there was a woman in a sari; she was very fat, her sari was arranged so as to hide her body. As she was bending down to receive my blessings, one corner of the sari came open,

uncovering a part of her body, a naked belly —an enormous one. I felt a real shock. ... There are corpulent {plump} people who have nothing repugnant {repulsive} about them, but I suddenly saw the perversion, the rottenness that this belly concealed, it was like a huge abscess, expressing greed, vice, depraved taste, sordid desire, which finds its satisfaction as no animal would, in grossness and especially in perversity. I saw the perversion of a depraved mind at the service of the lowest appetites. Then, all of a sudden, something sprang up from me, a prayer, like a Veda: "O Lord, this is what must disappear!" (CWM 9: 299-300)

## **XI — D. Difference between greed and taste for food**

**XI — D. 1.** *"Sweet Mother, from the beginning man ate because he needed food in order to live. Then why did taste for food develop? One eats what one likes to, and doesn't eat what one doesn't like!"*

I think primitive man was very close to the animal and lived more by instinct than by intelligence, you see. He ate when he was hungry, without any rule of any kind. Perhaps he had his tastes and preferences too, we know nothing much about it, but he lived much more materially, much less mentally and vitally than now.

Surely primitive man was very material, very near the animal. And as the centuries pass, man becomes more mental and more vital; and as he becomes more vital and mental, naturally refinement is possible, intelligence grows, but also the possibility of perversion and distortion. You see, there is a difference between educating one's senses to the point of being able to bring in all kinds of refinements, developments, knowledge, all the possibilities of appreciation, taste, and all that — there is a difference between this, which is truly a development and progress of consciousness, and attachment or greediness.

One can, for example, very well make a very deep study of taste and have a very detailed knowledge of the different tastes of things, of the association between ideas

and taste, in order to acquire a full development — not positively vital, but a development of the senses. There is a great difference between this and those who eat through greediness, who think all the time about food. You see, for them eating is the most important thing; all their thoughts are concentrated on it, and they eat not because they need to eat but through desire and greed and gluttony.

In fact people who work in order to develop their taste, to refine it, are rarely very much attached to food. It is not through attachment to food that they do it...

...Education is certainly one of the best means of preparing the consciousness for a higher development. There are people with very crude and very simple natures, who can have great aspiration and attain a certain spiritual development, but the base will always be of an inferior quality, and as soon as they return to their ordinary consciousness they will find obstacles in it, because the stuff is too thin, there are not enough elements in their vital and material consciousness to enable them to bear the descent of a higher force.

To eat through greediness and a passion for food is something completely different from studying the different tastes and knowing how to compare them, combine them and appreciate them." (CWM 7:57-59)

**XI — D. 2.** "As for particular foods the palate likes, the attitude of the mind and vital should be, "If I get, I take; if



I don't get, I shall not mind." One should not think too much of food either to indulge or unduly to repress—that is the best." (SABCL 24: 1467)

**XI — D. 3.** "It is no part of this yoga to suppress taste, rasa, altogether. What is to be got rid of is vital desire and attachment, the greed of food, being overjoyed at getting the food you like, sorry and discontented when you do not have it, giving an undue importance to it. Equality is here the test as in so many other matters. (SABCL 24: 1475)

**XI — D. 4.** "No—it [taste] is not a bondage, if there is no attachment. Taste is natural and quite permissible so long as one is not the slave of the palate. Certainly, the enjoyment of taste can be offered up." (SABCL 24: 1475)

## **XI — E. Right attitude towards food**

### **XI — E. 1. Moderate use of food**

**XI — E. 1. a.** “The rule to be followed is that laid down by the Gita which says that “Yoga is not for one who eats too much or who does not eat”; a moderate use of food sufficient for the maintenance and health and strength of the body.” (CWSA 28:575-576)

**XI — E. 1. b.** “The higher human in us seeks refuge in a temperate moderation, in abstemiousness and abstinence or in carelessness about the body and its wants and in an absorption in higher things.” (CWSA 13:544)

**XI — E. 1. c.** “Too much eating makes the body material and heavy, eating too little makes it weak and nervous—one has to find the true harmony and balance between the body's need and the food taken.” (SABCL 24: 1467)

**XI — E. 1. d.** “Perhaps with regard to the greed for food, your attitude has not been quite correct. Greed for food has to be overcome, but it has not to be given too much thought. The proper attitude to food is a certain equality. Food is for the maintenance of the body and one should take enough for that – what the body needs; if one gives

less body feels the need and hankers; if you give more, then that is indulging the vital." (SABCL 24: 1466-1467)

**XI — E. 1. e.** "I doubt whether fatness or thinness of a healthy kind depends on the amount of food taken—there are people who eat well and remain thin and others who take only one meal a day and remain fat. By underfeeding (taking less than the body really needs) one may get emaciated, but that is not a healthy state. The doctors say it depends mostly on the working of certain glands." (SABCL 24: 1469)

**XI — E. 2.** Eat in order to give strength and health to the body and not to enjoy the pleasures of the palate

**XI — E. 2. a.** "From one's very childhood, one should know that one eats in order to give strength and health to the body and not to enjoy the pleasures of the palate. Children should be given food that suits their temperament, prepared in a way that ensures hygiene and cleanliness, that is pleasant to the taste and yet very simple. This food should be chosen and apportioned according to the age of the child and his regular activities. It should contain all the chemical and dynamic elements that are necessary for his development and the balanced growth of every part of his body." (CWM 12: 14)

**XI — E. 2. b.** "A sadhak must eat to satisfy the needs of his body and not to meet the demands of his greed." 4 April 1937" (CWM 14: 251)

**XI — E. 3.** Eat according to one's hunger

**XI — E. 3. a.** "The body in its normal state, that is to say, when there is no intervention of mental notions or vital impulses, also knows very well what is good and necessary for it; but for this to be effective in practice, one must educate the child with care and teach him to distinguish his desires from his needs. He should be helped to develop a taste for food that is simple and healthy, substantial and appetising, but free from any useless complications. In his daily food, all that merely stuffs and causes heaviness should be avoided; and above all, he must be taught to eat according to his hunger, neither more nor less, and not to make his meals an occasion to satisfy his greed or gluttony." (CWM 12: 13-14)

**XI — E. 3. b.** "Do not trouble your mind about food. Take it in the right quantity (neither too much nor too little), without greed or repulsion, as the means given you by the Mother for the maintenance of the body, in the right spirit, offering it to the Divine in you; then it need not create *tamas*." (SABCL 24: 1466)

**XI — E. 3. c.** "What is necessary is to take enough food and think no more about it, taking it as a means for the maintenance of the physical instrument only. But just as one should not overeat, so one should not diminish unduly – it produces a reaction which defeats the object – for the object is not to allow either the greed for food or the heavy tamas of the physical which is the result of excessive eating to interfere with the concentration on the spiritual experience and progress." (SABCL 24: 1466)

**XI — E. 4.** Eating and drinking must be put in their right place - minor value in the human life

**XI — E. 4. a.** "But for that these things of eating and drinking must be put in their right place, which is a very small one. You say that many have left the Asram because they did not like the food. I do not know who are the many; certainly, those who came here for serious sadhana and left, went for much more grave reasons than that. But if any did go because of an offended palate, then certainly they were quite unfit for Yoga and this was not the place for them. For it means that a mutton chop or a tasty plate of fish was more important for them than the seeking of the Divine! It is not possible to do Yoga if values are so topsy-turvy in the consciousness. Apart from such extravagance, these things which ought to be only among the most minor values even in the human life, are

promoted by many here to a rank they ought not to have.”  
(CWSA 35: 772)

**XI — E. 4. b.** “The ordinary life is a round of various desires and greeds. As long as one is preoccupied with them, there can be no lasting progress. Away out of the round must be discovered. Take, as an instance, that commonest preoccupation of ordinary life—the constant thinking by people of what they will eat and when they will eat and whether they are eating enough. ... Get the idea of food out of your consciousness, do not attach the slightest importance to it.” (CWM 3:123)

**XI — E. 4. c.** “Q: *Sweet Mother,*

*I have again received an invitation for dinner. One cannot refuse if one is invited, can one?*

No, unless there are serious reasons for doing so. I am not speaking of the outward act—whether one eats here or there comes to the same thing—I am speaking of the inner attitude, of the excessive importance one gives to food, and of greediness.” 21 September 1963 (CWM 16:288)

**XI — E. 4. d.** “Suppose that you want to make a progress regarding attachment to food, for example; well, almost constantly there will come to you thoughts particularly interested in food, about what should be taken, what should not be taken, how it should be taken, how it should

not be taken; and these ideas will come to you, they will seem quite natural to you. And the more you say within yourself, “Oh! how I would like to be free from all that, what a hindrance to my progress are all these preoccupations”, the more will they come, quietly, until the progress is truly made within and you have risen to a level of consciousness where you can see all these things from above and put them *in their place*— which is not a very big place in the universe!” (CWM 8: 208)

## **XI — E. 5.** The attitude of detachment and equality

**XI — E. 5. a.** “It is certainly not very Yogic to be so much harassed by the importunity of the palate. I notice that these petty desires, which plenty of people who are not Yogis at all nor aspirants for Yoga know how to put in their proper place, seem to take an inordinate importance in the consciousness of the sadhaks here — not all, certainly, but many. In this as in many other matters they do not seem to realise that, if you want to do Yoga, you must take more and more in all matters, small or great, the Yogic attitude. In our path that attitude is not one of forceful suppression, but of detachment and equality with regard to the objects of desire. ... It is only when one stands back, separates oneself from the lower vital, refusing to regard its desires and clamours as one’s own, and cultivates an entire equality and equanimity in the consciousness with respect

to them that the lower vital itself becomes gradually purified and itself also calm and equal. Each wave of desire as it comes must be observed, as quietly and with as much unmoved detachment as you would observe something going on outside you, and must be allowed to pass, rejected from the consciousness, and the true movement, the true consciousness steadily put in its place.” (CWSA 35: 771-772)

**XI — E. 5. b.** “It is not you but I who look on the Asram as a failure [*in regard to food*]. I was speaking not of you in person, but of the general spirit of the sadhaks with regard to food which is as unYogic as possible. In regard not only to food, but to personal comforts it differs in no way from that of ordinary men; it is an attitude of demand, claim and desire and of anger, vexation, grudging, complaint if they do not get their desire. They justify their position by saying that this is not an ascetic Yoga. But neither is it a Yoga of the satisfaction of desire. In this Yoga quite as much as any other, one must be free from servitude to the mind, the vital and the body. It is to be done by the growth of an inner consciousness free from demand and desire, not by the principle of an outer suppression of the objects of desire. It is to be done by having a perfect equality with regard to food as to other things. But this very few seem to recognise.” 17 March 1936 (CWSA 35: 775)



**XI — E. 5. c.** "To conquer the greed for food an equanimity in the being must be developed such that you are perfectly indifferent towards food. If food is given you, you eat it; if not, it does not worry you in the least; above all, you do not keep thinking about food. And the thinking must not be negative, either. To be absorbed in devising methods and means of abstinence as the *sannyasis* do is to be almost as preoccupied with food as to be absorbed in dreaming of it greedily. Have an attitude of indifference towards it: that is the main thing." (CWM 3:123)

**XI — E. 5. d.** "Neither neglect this turn of the nature (food-desire) nor make too much of it; it has to be dealt with, purified and mastered but without giving it too much importance. There are two ways of conquering it—one of detachment, learning to regard food as only a physical necessity and the vital satisfaction of the stomach and the palate as a thing of no importance; the other is to be able to take without insistence or seeking any food given and to find in it (whether pronounced good or bad by others) the equal *rasa*, not of the food for its own sake, but of the universal Ananda." (SABCL 24: 1468)

**XI — E. 5. e.** "The attachment to good food must be given up as also the personal attachment to position and service; but it is not indispensably necessary for that purpose to take to an ascetic diet or to give up all means of action

such as money and service. The yogin has to become *nihsva* in this sense that he feels that nothing belongs to him but all to the Divine and he must be ready at any time to give up all to the Divine. But there is no meaning in throwing away everything in order to be externally *nihsva* without any imperative cause." (SABCL 24: 1468-1469)

**XI — E. 5. f.** "Not to eat as the method of getting rid of the greed of food is the ascetic way. Ours is equanimity and non-attachment." (SABCL 24: 1471)

**XI — E. 6.** Wrong food and the poisons created by wrong assimilation is an obstacle to the prolongation of life

**XI — E. 6.** "Mother meant that wrong food and the poisons created by wrong assimilation were a great obstacle to the prolongation of life." 14 January 1935 (CWSA 35: 774)

**XI — E. 7.** Taking outward things only as a means for the inner progress

**XI — E. 7. a.** "All these [*outward restraints such as moderation in eating food and drinking tea*] are external things that have their use, but what I mean [*by "the complete attitude of the sadhak"*] is something more inward. I mean not to be interested in outward things for their own sake, following after them with desire, but at all

times to be intent on one's soul, living centrally in the inner being and its progress, taking outward things and action only as a means for the inner progress." (CWSA 30:26)

**XI — E. 7. b.** "It is an inner attitude of freedom from attachment and from greed for food and desire of the palate that is needed, not undue diminution of the quantity taken or any self-starvation. One must take sufficient food for the maintenance of the body and its strength and health, but without attachment or desire." 27 April 1937 (CWM 14: 251)

**XI — E. 8.** Consecrating one's food to God before taking it

**XI — E. 8. a.** "Physically, we depend upon food to live—unfortunately. For with food, we daily and constantly take in a formidable amount of inconscience, of *tamas*, heaviness, stupidity. One can't do otherwise—unless constantly, without a break, we remain completely aware and, as soon as an element is introduced into our body, we immediately work upon it to extract from it only the light and reject all that may darken our consciousness. This is the origin and rational explanation of the religious practice of consecrating one's food to God before taking it. When eating one aspires that this food may not be taken for the

little human ego but as an offering to the divine consciousness within oneself." (CWM 4: 333)

**XI — E. 8. b.** "Q: *I quote several types of prayers which I offer and shall be grateful to know which of them are outer or inner, right or wrong, helpful or hindrance, or what amendment to them can make them pure: ...*

*When I go for food, I pray for the Mother's Force to help me to offer every morsel to the Mother, to get everything easily digested, to make a growth of complete equality and detachment in my consciousness enabling me to take any food with equal Rasa of universal Ananda without any insistence or seeking or greed or desire.*

A: This is again part of the sadhana." (CWSA 32:315-316)

**XI — E. 8. c.** "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." (SABCL 20: 103) (CWSA 23: 111)

**XI — E. 8. d.** "And then again, even when this has been done, there is still the problem of food; as long as our body is compelled to take in foreign matter in order to subsist, it will absorb at the same time a considerable amount of inert

and unconscious forces or those having a rather undesirable consciousness, and this alchemy must take place inside the body. We were speaking of the kinds of consciousness absorbed with food, but there is also the inconstancy that's absorbed with food—quite a deal of it. And that is why in many yogas there was the advice to offer to the Divine what one was going to eat before eating it (*Mother makes a gesture of offering, hands joined, palms open*). It consists in calling the Divine down into the food before eating it. One offers it to Him—that is, one puts it in contact with the Divine, so that it may be under the divine influence when one eats it. It is very useful, it is very good. If one knows how to do it, it is very useful, it considerably reduces the work of inner transformation which has to be done. But, you see, in the world as it is, we are all interdependent. You cannot take in the air without taking in the vibrations, the countless vibrations produced by all kinds of movements and all kinds of people, and you must—if you want to remain intact—you must constantly act like a filter, as I was saying. That is to say, nothing that is undesirable should be allowed to enter, as when one goes to infected areas, one wears a mask over the face so that the air may be purified before one breathes it in. Well, something similar has to be done. One must have around oneself so intense an atmosphere in a *total* surrender to the Divine, so intensified around oneself that everything that passes through is automatically

filtered. Anyhow, it is very useful in life, for there are—we spoke about this too—there are bad thoughts, bad wills, people who wish you ill, who make formations. There are all kinds of absolutely undesirable things in the atmosphere.” (CWM 6: 213-214)

“O divine Light, supramental Reality:

With this food, penetrate the whole body, enter into every cell, establish Thyself in every atom; may everything become perfectly sincere and receptive, free from all that obstructs the manifestation, in short, open to Thee all the parts of my body that are not already Thyself.” (CWM 13: 57)

### **XI — E. 9.** Do not conceal from the Mother

**XI — E. 9.** “It is not the eating or the not eating of *mohan* bhoga that is the important point—(actually when I gave X what you call his permit, I was thinking of X and not of anybody else). What is important is how that or any of these food matters affects you, what is your inner condition and how any such indulgence, cooking or eating, stands or does not stand in the way of its progress and change, what is best for you as a Yogic discipline. One rule for you I can lay down, “Do not do, say or think anything which you would want to conceal from the Mother.” And that answers the objections that rose within you—from your vital, is it

not?—against bringing “these petty things” to the Mother’s notice. Why should you think that the Mother would be bothered by these things or regard them as petty? If *all* the life is to be Yoga, what is there that can be called petty or of no importance? Even if the Mother does not answer, to have brought any matter of your action and self-development before her in the right spirit means to have put it under her protection, in the light of the Truth, under the rays of the Power that is working for the transformation—for immediately those rays begin to play and to act on the thing brought to her notice. Anything within that advises you not to do it when the spirit in you moves you to do it, may very well be a device of the vital to avoid the ray of the Light and the working of the Force. It may also be observed that if you open yourself to the Mother by putting the movements of any part of you under her observation, that of itself creates a relation, a personal closeness with her other than that which her general, silent or not directly invited action maintains with all the sadhaks.” (CWSA 35: 474-475)

**XI — E. 10.** Active and awake psychic brings right attitude

**XI — E. 10. a.** “You can see yourself, as in the matter of the food, that with the psychic active and awake the right attitude comes naturally and whatever difficulty there was soon diminishes or even disappears.” (CWSA 30:322)

**XI — E. 10. b.** "Your new attitude towards food and outward things is the true attitude, the psychic attitude and shows that the psychic is already controlling the vital physical as well as the other parts of the vital nature." (CWSA 30:377)

**XI — E. 10. c.** "You see, I have such a strong penchant for the inner working and am so persuaded that if you give the psychic a chance, it will get rid of the vital bonds without all this sternness and trouble." (CWSA 29:383)

**XI — E. 10. d.** "You must learn to unite what you call your individual self with your true psychic individuality. Your present individuality is a very mixed thing, a series of changes which yet preserves a certain continuity, a certain sameness or identity of vibration in the midst of all flux. It is almost like a river which is never the same and yet has a certain definiteness and persistence of its own. Your normal self is merely a shadow of your true individuality which you will realise only when this normal individual which is differently poised at different times, now in the mental, then in the vital, at other times in the physical, gets into contact with the psychic and feels it as its real being. Then you will be one, **nothing will shake or disturb you, you will make steady and lasting progress and be above such petty things as greed for food.**" (CWM 3:125)



**XI — E. 10. e.** "There is a sort of association between the physical and the psychic and between the mental and the vital being. A mental being is very often a very vital being. A psychic being is very often a physical being. Children — just because this psychic consciousness is in the front — live also altogether in their body. But as soon as one begins to develop the mind, the need for association also develops, with all the deformations that go with it. People who make very strict distinctions between man and woman (I don't know why, for one is as good as the other), say that man is mental and vital and woman physical and psychic. There is some truth in it. But naturally it involves all possible exceptions and complications. These are arbitrary simplifications. In fact the physical being has a simplicity and even a goodwill (which is not always very enlightened, far from it), but still a simplicity and goodwill which put it in a closer relation with the psychic than the passions of the vital or the pretensions of the mind. And it is probably because of that also that in children the psychic can feel more at ease, being less constantly jostled by mental and vital contradictions." (CWM 6: 5-6)

**XI — E. 11.** The food given from the Dining Room has the Mother's force

**XI — E. 11. a.** "The food given from the Dining Room has the Mother's force behind it. It contains everything that is

necessary to keep you in good health to do the sadhana. Keep that attitude and eat. Everything will go well.” (This message has hung in the dining room of the Ashram for many years.—Ed.) (CWSA 35: 771)

**XI — E. 11. b.** “I am afraid you have spoiled your stomach and made it nervous by irregular eating. The food of the Asram is quite plain and healthy and unless one eats too much it ought not to give indigestion.” (CWSA 35: 775-776)

**XI — E. 11. c.** “At the same time it is better, if it is possible, to have well-cooked rather than badly-cooked food. The idea that the Mother wants tasteless food to be served because tasty food is bad form Yoga, is one of the many absurdities that seem so profusely current among the sadhaks in this Asram about her ways and motives. The Mother is obliged to arrange for neutral (plain and simple), not *tasteless* food, for the reason that any other course has been proved to be impracticable. There are ninety people here, from different countries and provinces whose tastes are as the poles asunder. What is tasty food to the Gujarati is abomination to the Bengali and *vice versa*. The European cannot stand an avalanche of tamarind or chillies; the Andhra accustomed to a fiery diet would find French dishes tasteless. Experiments have been tried before you came, but they were disastrous in their results; a few enjoyed,

the majority starved, and bad stomachs began to be the rule. On the other hand, neutral food can be eaten by all and does not injure the health,—that at least is what we have found,—even if it does not give any ecstasy to the palate.

Only, the food, if neutral, should not be tasteless. A certain amount of fluctuation is inevitable; no one can cook daily for 80 or 90 people and yet do always well. But if it is too much, a remedy is to be desired and the Mother is willing to consider any practicable and effective suggestion. If any practicable suggestion is made, it will be considered,—keeping always in view the difficulty I have pointed out of the ninety people and the three continents and half a dozen provinces that are represented here, apart from individual idiosyncracies and fancies, which, of course, it is absolutely impossible even to try to satisfy unless we want to land ourselves in chaos.

But what if people were to remember that they were here for Yoga, make that the salt and savour of their existence and acquire *samata* of the palate! My experience is that if they did that, all the trouble would disappear and even the kitchen difficulties and the defects of the cooking would vanish." 28 August 1930 (CWSA 35: 772-773)

**XI — E. 11. d.** "What are the habits which the physical must throw off? It is this *terrible, frightful* preference for the food you were used to when you were very young, the

food you ate in the country where you were born and about which you feel when you no longer get it that you have not anything at all to eat, that you are miserable.

I don't know, I believe there won't be a dozen people here who have come to the Ashram and eaten the food of the Ashram without saying, "Oh! I am not used to this food. It is very difficult." And how many, how many hundreds of people who prepare their own food because they cannot eat the food of the Ashram! (*Mother slams the book down on the stool.*) And then, they justify this! So it is here that these ideas begin to come, and they say, "My health! I can't digest well!" All this is only in their head. There is not a word of truth in it. NOT ONE WORD OF TRUTH. It is a perpetual lie in which everybody lives, and in this matter, indeed, I may tell you what I think, you have not advanced any farther than the mass of human beings. I make an exception for the very, very, very rare ones who are not like that. They could be counted on one's fingers. (CWM 6: 158)

**XI — E. 12.** Never use food as a means of coercion, {compulsion} and punishment

**XI — E. 12.** "Since the child will be given only the food that helps to keep him healthy and provide him with the energy he needs, one must be very careful not to use food as a means of coercion and punishment. The practice of

telling a child, "You have not been a good boy, you won't get any dessert," etc., is most harmful. In this way you create in his little consciousness the impression that food is given to him chiefly to satisfy his greed and not because it is indispensable for the proper functioning of his body." (CWM 12: 14)

### **XI — E. 13.** Never waste food

**XI — E. 13.** "It would be a hundred times more effective to *never* waste food than to cut down one meal as a show and to eat more before and after.

A strong, ardent, sincere campaign against the waste of food is essential and full-heartedly I approve of it.

Let the inmates of the Ashram show their goodwill and collaboration in never eating *more* than they can digest and never ask for more than they can eat. " (CWM 14: 252)

**XI — E. 14.** Illness can be prevented by control of food

**XI — E. 14. a.** "Your readings are correct.

In my last note I was referring to food desires. Unless you control the food you take, you will always be ill." 14 September 1959 {On Control of Desires} (CWM 15:148)

**XI — E. 14. b.** "Conquest over the greed for food: a promise of good health." (CWM 15:148)

**XI — E. 14. c.** *Q. I was invited by friends to go to a restaurant and accepted. Later I learned that you were opposed to the idea. What should we — those of us who live outside the Ashram —do?*

A: The Mother has made an arrangement with a view to all the occult forces and the best possible conditions for the protection of the sadhaks from certain forces of death and disease etc. It cannot work perfectly because the sadhaks themselves have not the right attitude towards food and kindred vital-physical things. But still there is a protection. If however the sadhaks go outside her formation, it must be on their own responsibility — the Mother does not and cannot sanction it. But this arrangement is for the Asram and not for those who are outside. 14 July 1933 (CWSA 35: 773-774)

**XI — E. 15.** Obstinate perseverance can succeed over greed

*"Q: Kindly suggest some simple way by which one can slowly diminish one's abject dependence on ordinary material food and open oneself more and more to the universal vital energy.*

A: There is no easy way to get over physical animality and vital greed. It is only an obstinate perseverance that can succeed." (CWM 14: 252)

**XI — E. 16.** Dreams of food could be old impressions from the subconscient material

**XI — E. 16.** "Q: *For the last few days I am having frequent dreams of eating. Does it indicate greed for food or a need in the body, or is it a sign of coming illness as they believe in the villages?*

A: I don't think so—it is probably old impressions from the subconscient material (not vital—therefore a memory rather than a desire) rising up in sleep. I remember a time when I was always seeing dishes of food even though I did not care a hang about food at the time." 2 April 1934 (CWSA 35:380)

**XI — E. 17.** Vegetarian and non-vegetarian food

**XI — E. 17. a.** "Vegetarian food is a rule for the Asram, it is not incumbent on anyone outside." 30 October 1933 (CWSA 35: 774)

**XI — E. 17. b.** "The Mother and I do not take meat or fish and it is not allowed to the members of the Asram. We cannot give the sanction you ask for. You should rise

superior to passing ideas and desires; to allow them to take hold of the mind and push towards action is not good for your sadhana." 15 November 1932 (CWSA 35: 773)

**XI — E. 17. c.** "If animal food (e.g. eggs or soup) is absolutely for health in convalescence, it can be taken. But it is *samskara* to suppose that vegetarian food makes people weak—if the food is nourishing and of the right kind, one can be as strong on vegetable food as on meat." 30 January 1935 (CWSA 35: 774)

**XI — E. 17. d.** "Q. *If my physician asks me to take a diet of rice, meat, fish, eggs etc. (as I used to eat these before) ... should I follow his instructions?*

A: You [*Sri Aurobindo's secretary*] can tell him that to live on fruits and milk, not to shave, not to take rice etc. is absolutely unnecessary for the sadhana. It does not depend on these things. In the Asram we take only milk and vegetarian diet,—but that rule is not imposed on those outside, it is left to their choice. If it is thought necessary for his health to take fish, meat or eggs he can do it." (CWSA 35: 775)

**XI — E. 17. e.** "Q: *Why were eggs forbidden in the Ashram formerly? Now you give eggs.*

Eggs were forbidden?



...I don't remember ever refusing an egg to someone who needed it from the point of view of health. But if people come and ask for something just out of greediness, for pleasure, I always refuse, as much now as before. It is only from the point of view of health, you know, of the physical equilibrium, that certain things are allowed. Everything is allowed. I haven't refused meat to one who needed it. There were people who ate it because they needed it. But if someone comes asking me for something just in order to satisfy a desire, I say "No", whatever it may be, even ice-cream! (*Laughter*)" (CWM 6:180-181)

**XI — E. 17. f.** "But if one wishes to pass from this ordinary life to a higher one, the problem begins to become interesting; and if, after having come to a higher life, one tries to prepare oneself for the transformation, then it becomes very important. For there certainly are foods which help the body to become subtle and others which keep it in a state of animality. But it is only at that particular time that this becomes very important, not before; and before reaching that moment, there are many other things to do. Certainly it is better to purify one's mind and purify one's vital before thinking of purifying one's body. For even if you take all possible precautions and live physically taking care not to absorb anything except what will help to subtilise your body, if your mind and vital remain in a state of desire, inconstancy, darkness, passion and so on, that

won't be of any use at all. Only, your body will become weak, dislocated from the inner life and one fine day it will fall ill.

One must begin from inside, I have already told you this once. One must begin from above, first purify the higher and then purify the lower. I am not saying that one must indulge in all sorts of degrading things in the body. That's not what I am telling you. Don't take it as an advice not to exercise control over your desires! It isn't that at all. But what I mean is, do not try to be an angel in the body if you are not already just a little of an angel in your mind and vital; for that would dislocate you in a different way from the usual one, but not one that is better. We said the other day that what is most important is to keep the equilibrium. Well, to keep the equilibrium everything must progress at the same time. You must not leave one part of your being in darkness and try to bring the other into light. You must take great care not to leave any corner dark." (CWM 6: 179-180)

## **XI — F. Fasting and ascetic method**

**XI — F. 1.** "Forceful suppression (Fasting comes under the head; it is of no use for this purpose. Abandon that idea altogether.) , stands on the same level as free indulgence; in both cases, the desire remains; in the one it is fed by indulgence, in the other it lies latent and exasperated by suppression." (CWSA 35: 772)

**XI — F. 2.** "The spiritual seeker often, like the Jain ascetics, seeks refuge in long and frequent fasts which lift him temporarily at least out of the clutch of the body's demands and help him to feel in himself a pure vacancy of the wide rooms of the spirit. But all this is not liberation and the question may be raised whether, not only at first but always, the divine life also must submit to this necessity. But it could only deliver itself from it altogether if it could find out the way so to draw upon the universal energy that the energy would sustain not only the vital parts of our physicality but its constituent matter with no need of aid for sustenance from any outside substance of Matter. It is indeed possible even while fasting for very long periods to maintain the full energies and activities of the soul and mind and life, even those of the body, to remain wakeful but concentrated in Yoga all the time, or to think deeply and write day and night, to dispense with sleep, to walk eight hours a day, maintaining all these activities

separately or together, and not feel any loss of strength, any fatigue, any kind of failure or decadence. At the end of the fast one can even resume at once taking the normal or even a greater than the normal amount of nourishment without any transition or precaution such as medical science enjoins, as if both the complete fasting and the feasting were natural conditions, alternating by an immediate and easy passage from one to the other, of a body already trained by a sort of initial transformation to be an instrument of the powers and activities of Yoga. But one thing one does not escape and that is the wasting of the material tissues of the body, its flesh and substance.” (CWSA 13:544-545)

**XI — F. 3.** “But I have noticed about the ascetics by rule that when you remove the curb they become just like others—with a few exceptions, of course,—which proves that the transformation was not real. A more subtle method used by some is to give up for a time, then try the object of desire again and so go on till you have thoroughly tested yourself! E.g. you give up your potatoes and eat only Asram food for a time—if a call comes for the potatoes or from them, then you are not cured; if no call comes, still you cannot be sure till you have tried the potatoes again and seen whether the desire, attachment or sense of need revives. If it does not and the potatoes fall away from you

of themselves, then there is some hope that the thing is done!

However, all this will make you think that I am hardly fit to be a guru in the path of asceticism and you will probably be right. You see, I have such a strong penchant for the inner working and am so persuaded that if you give the psychic a chance, it will get rid of the vital bonds without all this sternness and trouble." (CWSA 29:383)

**XI — F. 4.** "As for Sannyasis and food, Sannyasis put a compulsion on these desires in this and other matters—they take ascetic food as a principle; but this does not necessarily kill the greed for food, it remains compressed and, if the compulsion or principle is removed, it can come up again stronger than before — for compression without removal often increases the force of these things instead of destroying them." (SABCL 24: 1469-1470)

**XI — F. 5.** "When there is this suppression [of the desire to eat] I have always noticed that there comes for a time a strong eagerness or necessity for eating largely as if the body were taking its compensation for the past want." (SABCL 24: 1470)

**XI — F. 6.** "The first thing I tell people when they want not to eat or sleep is that no yoga can be done without sufficient food and sleep (see the Gita on this point).

Fasting or sleeplessness make the nerves morbid and excited and weaken the brain and lead to delusions and fantasies. The Gita says, yoga is not for one who eats too much or sleeps too much, neither is it for one who does not eat or does not sleep, but if one eats and sleeps suitably—*yuktahariyuktanidrah* – then one can do it best. It is same with everything else. How often have I said that excessive retirement was suspect to me and that to do nothing but meditate was a lop-sided and therefore unsound sadhana?" (SABCL 24: 1470)

**XI — F. 7.** "These generalisations on either side are not of much value. One does not need to get a hatred for food in order to get rid of the greed for food. On the other hand, to develop a dislike for certain things may help to reject them – but that too is not always the cure, for they may remain in spite of the dislike." (SABCL 24: 1468)

## **XI — G. At the summit of the evolution of life**

**XI — G.** "Conceivably, if a practicable way and means could only be found, this last invincible obstacle too might be overcome and the body maintained by an interchange of its forces with the forces of material Nature, giving to her her need from the individual and taking from her directly the sustaining energies of her universal existence. Conceivably, one might rediscover and re-establish at the summit of the evolution of life the phenomenon we see at its base, the power to draw from all around it the means of sustenance and self-renewal. Or else the evolved being might acquire the greater power to draw down those means from above rather than draw them up or pull them in from the environment around, all about it and below it. But until something like this is achieved or made possible we have to go back to food and the established material forces of Nature." (CWSA 13:545)

## **XII — Rejection of the vital nature's jealousy, envy**

### **XII — A. Jealousy, envy is a part of the lower vital**

**XII — A. 1.** "It is not possible to give a name to all the energies that act in the being. They are put into several classes. ... the lower vital (all the small egoistic movements of desire, enjoyment, lust, greed, jealousy, envy, vanity etc. etc.); ..." (CWSA 28: 167)

**XII — A. 2.** "As against them stands the lower vital which is concerned with the pettier movements of action and desire and stretches down into the vital physical where it supports the life of the more external activities and all physical sensations, hungers, cravings, satisfactions. ... For although this part of the nature in earthly beings tends to be very obscure and is full of perversions,—lust, greed of all kinds, vanity, small ambitions, petty anger, envy, jealousy are its ordinary guests,— ..." (CWSA 28: 188)

**XII — A. 3.** "Anger, fear, jealousy touch the heart no doubt just as they touch the mind but they rise from the navel region and entrails (i.e. the lower or at highest the middle vital)." (CWSA 28: 193)



**XII — A. 4.** "Jealousy is the common movement of the human egoistic lower vital with its grasping possessive instinct and it cannot be anything else." (CWSA 32: 384)

**XII — A. 5.** "The gift of rajas is kinetic force, ... but it moves in the wrong lights or the half-lights of the Ignorance ... the jealousy, envy and bottomless ingratitude that disfigure the earth-nature are the natural children of this indispensable but strong and dangerous turn of Nature." (CWSA 23: 234)

## **XII — B. Jealousy comes from**

### **XII — B. 1. A narrowness of the mind and a weakness of the heart**

"Jealousy comes from a narrowness of the mind and a weakness of the heart. It is a great pity that so many are attacked by it." (CWM 14: 261)

"Jealousy with its escort of slanders is the output of the weak and the small.

It deserves more pity than anger, and must leave us perfectly indifferent to it, enjoying the bliss of our unshakable certitude." (CWM 14: 261)

### **XII — B. 2. Surrounding obscurity of the forces of the lower nature**

"It is the same with all the lower impulses, jealousy or envy, hatred or violence. These too are movements that seize you, waves that overwhelm and invade; they deform, they do not belong to the true character or the true nature; they are no intrinsic or inseparable part of yourself, but come out of the sea of surrounding obscurity in which move the forces of the lower nature." (CWM 3: 117)

### **XII — B. 3. Very low, mean and ignorant movement**

"Q: *I do not understand why my vital is always jealous of X. Apparently there is no valid reason.*

A: There is never any reason for jealousy. It is a very low and ignorant movement." 20 April 1934 (CWM 14: 261)

"My dear little child,

I fully agree with you that egoism, vanity and jealousy must disappear; they are indeed ugly, mean and ignorant things that stop all progress.

My force is with you to conquer these things. And my love never leaves you." 25 September 1934 (CWM 16: 128)

## **XII — B. 4. Arising from unsatisfied and repressed desires**

"But the second part of your letter made me see that, without justifying the aggression, for an aggression cannot be justified, at least your state of mind warrants it. I have rarely seen such a display of hatred and envy, bitter criticism and commonplace morality arising from unsatisfied and repressed desires.

All this is not very nice and immediately takes away the sympathy one could have felt because of the blows you received.

I thank you for reminding me that my position gives me duties and responsibilities, but it is better to call the Grace rather than justice, for if it were to come into action

very few would be those who could stand before it." (CWM 13: 118)

## **XII — B. 5. The possessive instinct**

"They {quarrels and jealousy} both spring from the same primary impulse, the possessive instinct which is at the base of ordinary vital love." (SABCL 24: 1418-1419)

## **XII — B. 6. Ugly form of self-love**

"It is selfishness that makes one jealous ..." (CWM 16: 401)

"Jealousy is only an ugly form of self-love. That is what people do not understand—they even think that demands and jealousy and wounded vanity are signs of love or at least natural attendants of it." (SABCL 23: 810) (CWSA 31: 245)

"These movements are part of man's ignorant vital nature. The love which human beings feel for one another is also usually an egoistic vital love and these other movements, claim, demand, jealousy, *abhimana*, anger, etc., are its common accompaniments." (SABCL 23: 810)

## **XII — B. 7. Distorted form of love**

"... so instead of completely ceasing to love—which, besides, is very difficult as Sri Aurobindo says, which would simply dry up the heart and serve no end—one must learn how to love better: to love with devotion, with self-giving, self abnegation, and to struggle, not against love itself, but against its distorted forms: against all forms of monopolising, of attachment, possessiveness, jealousy, and all the feelings which accompany these main movements. Not to want to possess, to dominate; and not to want to impose one's will, one's whims, one's desires; not to want to take, to receive, but to give; not to insist on the other's response, but be content with one's own love; not to seek one's personal interest and joy and the fulfilment of one's personal desire, but to be satisfied with the giving of one's love and affection; and not to ask for any response. Simply to be happy to love, nothing more." (CWM 8: 301-302)

## **XII — C. Wrong ideas about jealousy**

**XII — C. 1.** "You seem to say in one passage of a letter that the Mother had said to you that jealousy is inevitable in true love (in ordinary life) and if it is not there when one sees the other loving elsewhere, then they don't love each other! You must have strangely misheard and misunderstood the Mother. It is just the opposite of what the Mother has always said and thought and the very contrary of all her knowledge and experience. It is the idea of the ordinary mind about jealousy and love, not hers. She remembers very well having told you just the opposite that, even in ordinary life, one is *not* jealous if one has the true love. Jealousy is the common movement of the human egoistic lower vital with its grasping possessive instinct and it cannot be anything else. I thought it better to make this clear so that there might be no misleading impression that such movements of the lower vital nature have any sanction or support in the truth of the soul; they belong to the vital Ignorance, they are fruits of the vital ego." 1 February 1933 (CWSA 32: 384)

**XII — C. 2.** "*These last two days I have been feeling sad about my jealousy.*

Feeling sad is of no use. All the energy you waste in feeling sad would better be used in transforming the wrong movement." (CWM 17: 45)

**XII — C. 3.** "Vital bhakti is usually full of desires and demands,—it expects a return for what it gives; it loves the Divine more for its own sake than for the sake of the Divine. If it does not get what it wants, it is capable of revolting or turning elsewhere. It is often pursued by jealousy, misunderstanding, unfaithfulness, anger etc.,—the usual imperfections of human love, and can turn these against its object of bhakti. On the other hand, if there is vital bhakti governed by the psychic, these defects disappear and the vital gives an ardour and enthusiasm to the love and bhakti which gives it a greater push for effectuation in action and life." (CWSA 29: 358)

Not unfit for Yoga

**XII — C. 4.** "What you say about yourself—the jealousy etc.—is already known; you have yourself written it all before to the Mother. In spite of that we did not consider you unfit for the Yoga. Every sadhak has by nature certain characteristics which are a great obstacle in the way of the sadhana; these remain with obstinacy and can only be overcome after a very long time by an action of the Divine from within. Your mistake is ... to accept it as a reason for despair and the wish to go away from here. There is absolutely no meaning in going away, for nothing would be gained by it. One does not escape from what is within oneself by changing place; it follows and reproduces itself under other circumstances and among other surroundings.

To go away and die does not solve anything either; for one's being and nature do not end with death, they continue. The only way to get rid of them is to throw them out and the only place where you can get rid of them is here. Here, if you remain, a time is sure to come when these things will go out of you. The suffering it causes cannot cease by going out—it can only cease by the *inner* cause being removed or else by your drawing back from them and realising your true self which even if they rose would not be troubled by them and could refuse to regard them as part of itself—this liberation too can only come here by sadhana." 24 May 1937 (CWSA 35: 625)



## **XII — D. True love for the Divine indulges in no jealousy**

**XII — D. 1.** "The true love for the Divine is self-giving, free of demand, full of submission and surrender. It makes no claim, imposes no condition, strikes no bargain, indulges in no violences of jealousy or pride or anger—for these things are not in its composition." (CWM 14: 130)

## **XII — E. Jealousy has no place in spiritual life**

**XII — E. 1.** "There is no need to understand—for there is only one thing that is necessary to understand—that, reason or no reason, desire, selfishness, jealousy, demand, anger have no place in the spiritual life. (SABCL 24: 1752)

**XII — E. 2.** "The love which human beings feel for one another is also usually an egoistic vital love and ... other movements, ... jealousy, *abhimana*, ... are its common accompaniments. There is no place for them in yoga — nor in true love, psychic or divine. In yoga all love should be turned towards the Divine and to human or other beings only as vessels of the Divine —*abhimana* and the rest should have no place in it." (SABCL 23: 810)

**XII — E. 3.** "Jealousy and envy are things common to human nature, but these are the very things that a sadhak ought to throw out of himself. Otherwise why is he a sadhak at all? He is supposed to be here for seeking the Divine—but in the seeking for the Divine, jealousy, envy, anger, etc. have no place. They are movements of the ego and can only create obstacles to the union with the Divine." (CWSA 32: 533-534)

**XII — E. 4.** "*Divine Mother,*

*About Mahalakshmi, Sri Aurobindo has said: "If she finds herself in men's hearts surrounded with selfishness and hatred and jealousy and malignance and envy and strife, if treachery and greed and ingratitude are mixed in the sacred chalice, if grossness of passion and unrefined desire degrade devotion, in such hearts the gracious and beautiful Goddess will not linger. A divine disgust seizes upon her and she withdraws, for she is not one who insists or strives. ..."* (CWM 13: 235)

## **XII — F. The problems of jealousy**

**XII — F. 1.** "It is because rancour, along with jealousy, is one of the most widespread causes of human misery." (CWM 3: 186) rancor: resentment

**XII — F. 2.** "It is jealousy, selfish dissatisfaction and hurt vanity that open the doors of the consciousness to the hostile attacks by pulling one out of the Divine's protection. It is only by refusing to allow these wrong movements to take place in oneself that one can hope to get rid of the adverse influence and its disastrous effects." (CWM 15: 20)

**XII — F. 3.** "Jealousy is no doubt a great defect of the nature, but many here have it; almost everyone has some serious defect in his nature which stands in his way and gives trouble." (CWSA 32: 369)

**XII — F. 4.** "But when the mind is clouded by some impurity, —say, anger, jealousy or pride or some unreasonable desire,— you at once become ignorant and mistake and misunderstand everything." (CWSA 29: 49)

**XII — F. 5.** "This is a very common disease with the sadhaks — making comparisons with feelings of jealousy and envy — in some it leads to revolt and self-assertion, in others to self-depreciation and depression. Naturally, these

feelings are quite out of place and the judgments created are out of focus. Each sadhak has his own movement, his own relation with the Divine, his own place in the work or the general sadhana and to compare with others immediately brings in a wrong standard. It is on the truth of his own inner movement that he has to take his base – *swadharma*.” (CWSA 31: 244)

**XII — F. 6.** *"My little mother, Why does this difficulty come? Do I open myself to it or is it something else? Mother, after having come so close to you, why does it come?"*

You should not speak to others about what I write or say to you, because they become jealous and their jealousy creates a bad atmosphere which falls back on you and brings back the difficulty to you; because you spoke, you opened yourself and received it, perhaps without even being aware of it.

Love from your mother.” 17 March 1934 (CWM 16: 116)

**XII — F. 7.** “Q: I feel no interest in sadhana or even in the outer work. Whatever help or protection you send stops before it can enter me. What is the reason for all that?

A: The reason is quite clear from what you write in the next para. There is something in the consciousness that wanted the letters and answers not simply for help in sadhana but

as a personal satisfaction with egoistic elements in it—pride, jealousy of others (X, Y), desire to be equal with them, demand for special consideration etc. Also it wanted nice, pleasing and elaborate answers. All that is the usual wrong attitude of the vital which is the stumbling-block for so many sadhaks and prevents true psychic love from developing, replacing it by the vital kind full of demand, ego, jealousy, revolt etc.—and it has been the ruin of some. All that you had thrown out of the higher parts, and quieted it elsewhere, but it remained sticking somewhere and when correspondence was suspended, the hostile forces took advantage of the fact that you were not allowed to write every day as before to raise up these feelings and you did not repel them with sufficient force to put an end to the attack. Hence they continue.” 25 February 1935 (CWSA 35: 463)

**XII — F. 8.** “As for ill-will, jealousy, quarrels and reproaches, one must *sincerely* be above all that and reply with a benevolent smile to the bitterest words; and unless one is absolutely sure of himself and his reactions, it would be better, as a general rule, to keep silent.” 6 October 1960 (CWM 15: 51)

**XII — F. 9.** “The communistic principle of society is intrinsically as superior to the individualistic as is brotherhood to jealousy and mutual slaughter; but all the

practical schemes of Socialism invented in Europe are a yoke, a tyranny and a prison." (CWSA 12: 465)

**XII — F. 10.** "There is absolutely no hope of mutual harmony and confidence in Chittagong and it is idle to talk of it when the hearts of the sadhaks are full of all kinds of egoism, mutual dislike, jealousy, rivalry, suspicion, fault-finding and all sorts of uncleanness. It is only through the psychic and in a psychic atmosphere that harmony can come; a sadhana based entirely on the vital ego cannot create it. X is right in drawing back and keeping to himself." (CWSA 35: 816)

**XII — F. 11.** "You can at least know that anger, jealousy, envy, ... are not divine things ..." (CWSA 32: 63)

**XII — F. 12.** "Jealousy ... is a sentiment lacking in nobility and quite un-yogic." (SABCL 24: 1416-1417) (CWSA 31: 244)

## **XII — G. Rejecting Jealousy**

### **XII — G. 1. Resolve and strive to conquer**

*"My most beloved Mother, an introspection has revealed to me many things. There is a jealousy in me which blinds me; another part in me is very vain, it gives me the idea that I have already reached my goal.*

You have just given a very correct description, but it becomes useful only from the moment you resolve that it is no longer going to be like this, and that you will strive to conquer your two great enemies: jealousy and vanity. The more we advance on the road, the more modest we become, and the more we find that we have done nothing in comparison with what remains to be done." (CWM 16: 176)

"Desire and envy have to be thrown out of the consciousness – there is no other way to deal with them." (CWSA 31: 261) (SABCL 24: 1402)

### **XII — G. 2. Reject in all sincerity**

*"A part of my being has developed the bad habit of feeling miserable after Pranam. It gets jealous of certain people. Don't you think I should have the strength to reject this obstacle?"*



Certainly—but then you must do it in all sincerity and not accept these movements of jealousy in any way." 16 April 1934 (CWM 14: 261)

## **XII — G. 3. Does not belong to the true character or the true nature**

"It is the same with all the lower impulses, jealousy or envy, hatred or violence. ... they do not belong to the true character or the true nature; they are no intrinsic or inseparable part of yourself, but come out of the sea of surrounding obscurity in which move the forces of the lower nature." (CWM 3: 117)

## **XII — G. 4. Become conscious of it - cut the links which attach it to your consciousness**

"For that, first of all, you must become conscious of it, you see, put it right in front of you, and cut the links which attach it to your consciousness. It is a work of inner psychology, you know.

One can see, when one studies oneself very attentively.... For example, if you observe yourself, you see that one day you are very generous. ... generous in your feelings, generous in your sensations, generous in your thoughts ...

... The next day—or perhaps an hour later ... you have all the feelings of jealousy, envy, narrowness, you see, just the very opposite of the other feeling.

This is the dark side.” (CWM 6: 262-263)

## **XII — G. 5. One compels it to remain quiet**

**- then one flings it very far away so that it can no longer return**

**- putting a great light on it**

“And so, the moment one sees it, {jealousy} if one looks at it and doesn’t say, “It is I”, if one says, “No, it is my shadow, it is the being I must throw out of myself”, one puts on it the light of the other part, one tries to bring them face to face; and with the knowledge and light of the other, one doesn’t try so much to convince—because that is very difficult—but one compels it to remain quiet... first to stand farther away, then one flings it very far away so that it can no longer return—putting a great light on it. There are instances in which it is possible to change, but this is very rare. There are instances in which one can put upon this being—or this shadow—put upon it such an intense light that it transforms it, and it changes into what is the truth of your being” (CWM 6: 263)

## **XII — G. 6. Draw back from them - turn back again to the true consciousness**

"I do not see why you make such a big difference between the quarrels and jealousy ... It is the getting rid of the instinct itself that matters, whether from the psychological point of view or from that of a spiritual change. ...

Draw back from them and, having seen what is there in the nature, dismiss them quietly and turn back again to the true consciousness, opening yourself to receive once more the Truth that is creating you anew and let it come down into all your nature." (SABCL 24: 1418-1419)

"It is of course the old reaction—jealousy is certainly there, or you would not feel this violent sorrow. That it subsists still in the recesses and rises with such vehemence shows how deeply rooted this movement was in your physical consciousness. ... You must have the strength to stand back from it in that part of your nature which is free – only then you will be able to push it away from you; and it is only if it is pushed away from you each time it rises that it will consent to disappear and return no more. As for our support and help it is there, but you must remain conscious of it. (SABCL 24: 1418)

## **XII — G. 7. Sports played as fair play can bring self control and detachment**

*"Mother, are sports competitions essential to our progress?"*

From the point of view of moral education they are rather essential, for if one can take part in them in the right spirit, it is a very good opportunity for mastering one's ego. If one does it without trying to overcome one's weaknesses and lower movements, one obviously doesn't know how to profit by them, and it does no good; but if one has the will to play in the right spirit, without any movement of a lower kind, without jealousy or ambition, keeping an attitude which could be called "fair play", that is, doing one's best and not caring about the result; if one can put in the utmost effort without being upset because one has not met with success or things have not turned out in one's favour, then it is very useful. One can come out of all these competitions with a greater self-control and a detachment from results which are a great help to the formation of an exceptional character." (CWM 9: 97)

## **XII — G. 8. Have the aspiration to get rid - and the Mother's force acting**

"This jealousy (which is a very common affliction of the vital) will go like the rest. If you have the aspiration to get rid of it, it can only come by force of habit, and with the psychic growing in you and the Mother's force acting the power of the habit is sure to diminish and fade away." (CWSA 32: 386) (CWSA 31: 244-245)

*"My jealousy must be destroyed, Sweet Mother! Let me become aware of the jealousy and reject it immediately.*

If you could just understand that what I do is always for the good of each and every one and never for the good of a few at the expense of others, you would very soon overcome your jealousy and be delivered from this painful sore spot.

Be convinced that what I do for you is always exactly what you need in order to advance on the way; then all jealousy and envy will disappear." 20 March 1934 (CWM 17: 26)

## **XII — G. 9. Cure by an inner change**

"The human vital everywhere, in the Asram also, is full of unruly and violent forces—anger, pride, jealousy, desire to dominate, selfishness, insistence on one's own will, ideas, preferences, indiscipline—and it is these things that are the cause of the disorder and difficulty in the D. R. [*Dining Room*] and elsewhere also in the Asram work. The rule established in order to control or combat these tendencies is that the Mother's will and the rule and discipline established by her shall be followed and not each worker be led by his own ego. But there are many who insist on their own ego and resent discipline. They are ready to follow the Mother's will and rule and discipline only in name and so far as it agrees with their own ideas and preferences. There is no cure for this except by an inner

change. In outside life discipline is enforced because refusal of discipline is visited by severe penalties or else results in so much discomfort of various kinds that the indisciplined man has either to submit or to go. But here in the Asram it is not possible to enforce the rule in this way. An inner obedience has to be given as the source of the outer obedience. The only remedy is the descent into the consciousness of that golden lotus which you saw in your vision. Everyone in whom it is established or even who feels its influence will become a centre of the true consciousness and true action which will change life in the Asram." 14 February 1936 (CWSA 32: 387-388)

## **XII — G. 10. Live in the serenity of an unshakable trust**

"My dear little X,

When the demon of jealousy whispers a suggestion in your ear, you must be very careful not to listen to it.

When the war broke out, I told you that until it was over I would not give any interviews to sadhaks. I am doing what I said. All the regular interviews have been stopped. Occasionally, not always, I see a visitor before he leaves. Other than that, in all these months I have made only two or three exceptions, *including one for you* about your affairs. If someone told you otherwise, why believe him? You must quickly chase these shadows far away from you

and live constantly in the serenity of an unshakable trust."  
(CWM 17: 195)

## **XII — G. 11. By widening one's consciousness and making it universal**

'Q: *Sweet Mother,*

*There are moments when, in spite of myself, a little black cloud of jealousy comes and upsets my activities during my working hours. I dispel it immediately by reasoning, but all the same its effect remains and makes me a little sullen and very touchy. How can one get rid of this?*

A: By widening one's consciousness and making it universal.

There is another way, but it is still more difficult. It is by realising the supreme Unity." 14 October 1964 (CWM 16: 305)

## **XII — G. 12. Uniting with the Divine Love which is eternal and universal**

Thoughts and Aphorisms

"451. Is love only a daughter or handmaid of jealousy? If Krishna loves Chandrabali, why should I not love her also? [Sri Krishna loved Radha best among the gopis, but he loved Chandrabali and the other gopis also.]

452. Because thou lovest God only, thou art apt to claim that He should love thee rather than others; but this is a false claim contrary to right & the nature of things. For He is the One but thou art of the many. Rather become one in heart & soul with all beings, then there will be none in the world but thou alone for Him to love.

453. My quarrel is with those who are foolish enough not to love my Lover, not with those who share His love with me.

454. In those whom God loves, have delight; on those whom He pretends not to love, take pity." (CWSA 12: 486)  
This is the most charming criticism one can make of jealousy and also the best way to cure it by overcoming the limits of the ego and by uniting with the Divine Love which is eternal and universal." 6 April 1970 (CWM 10: 338)

"As Sri Aurobindo tells us so well, individualism is a kind of self justified jealousy, the reign of each one for himself.

But the only true remedy is the exclusive and universal reign of the Supreme Lord, present and conscious in all beings, with a transitional government by those who are truly conscious of Him and entirely surrendered to His will." 7 February 1970 (CWM 10: 304)

**XII — G. 13. Doing the sadhana with the Mother's aid behind you - Persevere and rely on the Mother**



"Jealousy is no doubt a great defect of the nature, but many here have it; almost everyone has some serious defect in his nature which stands in his way and gives trouble. But it is not a remedy for this to give up work and sadhana and abandon the Mother. You have to go on working and doing the sadhana with the Mother's aid behind you until this and all other obstacles are got rid of. We have told you already that these things cannot be got rid of in a day, but if you persevere and rely on the Mother they will yet disappear. Do not allow an adverse Force to mislead you; reject all depression and go straight forward till you reach the goal." 17 July 1935 (CWSA 32: 369)

## **XII — G. 14. Through the psychic consciousness**

"For yourself what you must have with other sadhaks (including your sisters) is a harmonious relation free from any vital attachment (indifference is not asked from you) and free from any indulgence in wrong vital movements of the opposite kind (such as dislike, jealousy or ill-will). It is through the psychic consciousness that you have found it possible to be in a true constant relation with the Mother and your aim is to make that the basis of all your life, action and feelings; all in you, all you feel, say and do should be consistent with that basis." (CWSA 32: 323) (CWSA 35: 706)

"These things, anger, jealousy, desire, are the very stuff of the ordinary human vital consciousness. They could not be changed if there were not a deeper consciousness within which is of quite another character. There is within you a psychic being which is divine, directly a part of the Mother, pure of all these defects." (CWSA 30: 24)

## **XII — G. 15. Conscious union with the Divine**

*"Sweet Mother,*

*How can one get rid of, or rather correct, jealousy and laziness?*

It is selfishness that makes one jealous; it is weakness that makes one lazy.

In either case the only truly effective remedy is conscious union with the Divine. Indeed, as soon as one becomes conscious of the Divine and is united with Him, one learns to love with the true love: *the love that loves for the joy of loving* and has no need to be loved in return; one also learns to draw Force from the inexhaustible source and one knows by experience that by using this Force in the service of the Divine one receives from Him all that one has spent and much more. All the remedies suggested by the mind, even the most enlightened mind, are only palliatives and not a true cure.

Blessings." 16 November 1969 (CWM 16: 401)

## **XII — H. Jealousy be changed into**

**XII — H. 1.** "*Sweet Mother! When will the vital yearn for the Divine?*

*May its passion be changed into psychic love, its anger into*  
Equanimity

*its jealousy into*  
Trust

*its vanity into*  
Modesty

*its selfishness into*  
Self-giving." 26 May 1934 (CWM 17: 41)

## **XII — H. 2. Change...**

1. Hatred into harmony

2. Jealousy into generosity ...

9 October 1951 (CWM 15: 223)

## **XIII – Rejection of the physical nature's *tamas***

### **XIII – A. What is *tamas*?**

**XIII – A. 1.** "The *tamas* is part of the general physical Nature ..." (CWSA 28: 49)

**XIII – A. 2.** "The idea of the three essential modes of Nature is a creation of the ancient Indian thinkers ... These modes are termed in the Indian books qualities, *gunas*, and are given the names *sattva*, *rajas*, *tamas*. ... *tamas* is the force of inconscience and inertia and translates in quality as obscurity and incapacity and inaction. Ordinarily used for psychological self-analysis, these distinctions are valid also in physical Nature." (CWSA 23: 232-233)

**XIII – A. 3.** "For Prakriti is constituted of three *gunas* or essential modes of energy; *sattwa*, the seed of intelligence, conserves the workings of energy; *rajas*, the seed of force and action, creates the workings of energy; *tamas*, the seed of inertia and non intelligence, the denial of *sattwa* and *rajas*, dissolves what they create and conserve." (CWSA 19: 71)

**XIII – A. 4.** "The three forms of consciousness are the three sides of Nature represented by the three *gunas*—force of subconscious *tamas*, Inertia, which is the law of

Matter, force of half-conscious desire, Kinesis, which is rajas, which is the law of Life, force of sattwic Prakasha, which is the law of Intelligence." (CWSA 28: 42)

**XIII – A. 5.** "In the Puranas it is stated that the tamasic animal creation was the first in time. Tamas is the Indian word for the principle of inertia of consciousness and force: a consciousness dull and sluggish and incompetent in its play is said to be tamasic; a force, a life-energy that is indolent and limited in its capacity, bound to a narrow range of instinctive impulses, not developing, not seeking farther, not urged to a greater kinetic action or a more luminously conscious action, would be assigned to the same category." (CWSA 22: 869)

**XIII – A. 6.** "Tamas, the principle of inertia, is a passive and inert nescience which suffers all shocks and contacts without any effort of mastering response and by itself would lead to a disintegration of the whole action of the energy and a radical dispersion of substance. ... Material energy appears to be tamasic in its basic action, jada, nescient, mechanic and in movement disintegrative." (CWSA 19: 427-428)

**XIII – A. 7.** "Tamas, finally, is born of inertia and ignorance and its fruit too is inertia and ignorance. It is the darkness of tamas which obscures knowledge and causes

all confusion and delusion. Therefore it is the opposite of sattwa, for the essence of sattwa is enlightenment, *prakasa*, and the essence of tamas is absence of light, nescience, *aprakasa*. But tamas brings incapacity and negligence of action as well as the incapacity and negligence of error, inattention and misunderstanding or non-understanding; indolence, languor and sleep belong to this guna. Therefore it is the opposite too of rajas; for the essence of rajas is movement and impulsion and kinesis, *pravrtti*, but the essence of tamas is inertia, *apravrtti*. Tamas is inertia of nescience and inertia of inaction, a double negative." (CWSA 19: 429-430)

**XIII – A. 8.** Tamasic quality is represented by Rudra (the member of cosmic Trinity)

"If we look for a more general definition, we shall perhaps catch a glimpse of it in the symbolic idea of Indian religion which attributes each of these qualities respectively to one member of the cosmic Trinity, sattwa to the preserver Vishnu, rajas to the creator Brahma, tamas to the destroyer Rudra." (CWSA 19: 426-427)

**XIII – A. 9.** "Tamas corresponds to Nature's power of nescience (jada): since consciousness is always there even in an apparently inconscient Force, we must find a corresponding psychological power of these three modes which informs their more outward executive action. On

their psychological side the three qualities may be defined, *tamas* as Nature's power of nescience, *rajas* as her power of active seeking ignorance enlightened by desire and impulsion, *sattwa* as her power of possessing and harmonising knowledge." (CWSA 19: 427)

**XIII – A. 10.** "Tamas is a purely material thing; it is very rare to have a vital or mental *tamas* (it may occur but through contagion), I believe it is more a *tamas* of the nerves or the brain than vital or mental *tamas*." (CWM 4: 366)

**XIII – A. 11.** "It is obvious that the most dominant characteristic of matter is inertia, ..." (CWM 9: 34)

**XIII – A. 12.** "... *sama*—the rest, calm, peace of the eternal Self which has finally to replace *tamas*, the physical inertia. Tamas is the degradation of *sama*, ..." (CWSA 28: 49)

**XIII – A. 13.** "... but the inertia (*tamas*) is a degradation of peace or rest ..." (CWSA 29: 154)

**XIII – A. 14.** "*The correspondent wrote to Sri Aurobindo, 'You have said, 'The inertia (tamas) is a degradation of peace or rest.' What sort of rest do you mean?'*"—Ed.

Rest of the being from effort, disturbance etc. The Spirit is eternally at rest even in the midst of action—peace gives this spiritual rest. Tamas is a degradation of it and leads to inaction.” (CWSA 29: 154-155)

**XIII – A. 15.** “... the disintegrating power of tamas with death and decay and inertia, its ignorant action ...” (CWSA 19:428)

**XIII – A. 16.** “For tamas is a double principle; it contradicts rajas by inertia, it contradicts sattwa by narrowness, obscurity and ignorance and, if either is depressed, it pours in to occupy its place.” (CWSA 23: 237)

**XIII – A. 17.** “Sattwa, it says, attaches to happiness, rajas attaches to action, tamas covers up the knowledge and attaches to negligence of error and inaction. Or again, “sattwa binds by attachment to knowledge and attachment to happiness, rajas binds the embodied spirit by attachment to works, tamas binds by negligence and indolence and sleep.” (CWSA 19: 431)

**XIII – A. 18.** “This tamas is an obscurity which mistranslates, we may say, into inaction of power and inaction of knowledge the Spirit’s eternal principle of calm and repose—the repose which the Divine never loses even while he acts, the eternal repose which supports his



integral action of knowledge and the force of his creative will both there in its own infinities and here in an apparent limitation of its working and self awareness." (CWSA 19: 465)

**XIII – A. 19.** *"Can't the love and peace that come from above get distorted when they enter the mind and vital? Indeed they very often are; the love gets changed into a kind of passion and the peace into inertia."* (CWM 17: 86)

**XIII – A. 20.** "Red is the colour of rajas, black is the colour of tamas." (CWSA 30: 134)

**XIII – A. 21.** "Tobacco is associated with tamas and incense sticks with adoration." (CWSA 30: 186)

**XIII – A. 22.** "The running away [in dream] is a symbol of the inertia in part of the being which allows the forces to invade, drawing back from them and losing ground instead of facing and destroying them." (CWSA 30: 163)

**XIII – A. 23.** "The ass is the symbol of the inertia and obstruction in the body." (CWSA 30: 167)

**XIII – A. 24.** "Grey = tamasic in tendency, therefore not aggressive, but obstinate in persistence. But these are not

symbols, they are the temperamental figure of the ego." 5 November 1935 (CWSA 35: 662-663)

**XIII – A. 25.** In inconscient or subconscient

"And even, by an entire immersion in Prakriti, this soul becomes inconscient or subconscient, asleep in her forms as in the earth and the metal or almost asleep as in plant life. There, in that inconscience, it is subject to the domination of *tamas*, the principle, the power, the qualitative mode of obscurity and inertia: *sattwa* and *rajas* are there, but they are concealed in the thick coating of *tamas*. Emerging into its own proper nature of consciousness but not yet truly conscious, because there is still too great a domination of *tamas* in the nature, the embodied being becomes more and more subject to *rajas*, the principle, the power, the qualitative mode of action and passion impelled by desire and instinct." (CWSA 23: 99)

**XIII – A. 26.** "Q: It seems to me that my sadhana has come to a standstill. Is it because of the physical *tamas*?

A: It is probable that you have come in contact with a new layer of the physical consciousness which is more material than the rest, perhaps with the subconscient itself (it is with the subconscient that the sadhana is now concerned in the Asram itself). The first result is the purely negative or stand-still condition you describe. You have to call down

the Force and the Light here, so that this too may become a part of the Divine Consciousness. If it is the subconscious, then you must be on your guard against all negative feelings such as the sense that all is gone, or the uselessness of life or the frustration or uselessness of sadhana, helplessness, incapacity etc. These things come naturally to one who does not understand. But they are false appearances. Remaining quiet and keeping the faith that there is the Divine Guidance behind, one has to do what is needed till the phase is over." 27 May 1935 (CWSA 35:342)

### **XIII – A. 27.** Example of tamas in handling material things

"The difficulty is that most people in the Asram have no training in handling physical things ... no propensity to take care of them, to give them their full use and time of survival. This is partly due to ignorance and inexperience, but partly also to carelessness, rough, violent and unseeing handling, indifference; there is also in many a feeling that it does not matter if things are quickly spoilt, they will be replaced; one worker was even heard to say to another, "why do you care? it is not your money." To take one instance only. Taps in Europe will last for many years—here in a few months, sometimes in a few weeks they are spoilt and call for repairs or replacement. People ask for new provisions before the old are exhausted or even near

exhaustion, not because they need them, but because they have a right (?) to a new supply; some have even been known to throw away what remains with them in order to have a new stock. And so on, ad infinitum. All this is tamas and the end of tamas is disintegration, dispersal of forces, failure of material." (CWSA 35: 764)

**XIII – A. 28.** "Wanton waste, careless spoiling of physical things in an incredibly short time, loose disorder, misuse of service and materials due either to vital grasping or to tamasic inertia are baneful to prosperity and tend to drive away or discourage the Wealth- Power." (CWSA 29: 288) (CWSA 35: 763)

### **XIII – B. What is not *tamas*?**

**XIII – B. 1.** "Quiet does not mean inert and *tamasic*."  
(CWSA 29: 144)

**XIII – B. 2.** "Surely to be quiet is not *tamas*. In fact it is only in quietness that the proper thing can be done. What I call quietness is to do work without being disturbed by anything and to observe everything without being disturbed by anything." (CWM 14: 135)

**XIII – B. 3.** "The Peace is not of the nature of inertia, ... So when the physical is invited to peace and cannot receive it, it brings up inertia instead." (CWSA 29: 154)

**XIII – B. 4.** "One must never mistake inertia or a somnolent passivity for calm." (CWM 8: 329)

**XIII – B. 5.** "Do not confuse calm with inertia. Calm is self-possessed strength, quiet and conscious energy, mastery of the impulses, control over the unconscious reflexes. In work calm is the source of efficiency and an indispensable condition for perfection." (CWM 14: 134)

**XIII – B. 6.** To have a higher standard

"As regards waste, I must point out that in our view free expenditure is not always waste, to have a higher standard than is current in this very tamasic and backward place is not necessarily waste. In matters of building and maintenance of buildings as in others of the same order the Mother has from the beginning set up a standard which is not that current here—the usual system being to use the cheapest possible materials, the cheapest labour and to disregard appearance, allowing things to go shabby or making only patchwork to keep them up. I suppose "thrifty" minds would consider the local principle to be sound and a higher standard to be waste." (CWSA 32: 379)

## **XIII – C. Characteristics of the *tamasic* man**

**XIII – C. 1.** "Each one of us is sattwic in some directions of his energy of Nature or in some parts of his mind or character, in others rajasic, tamasic in others. According as one or other of the modes usually dominates his general temperament and type of mind and turn of action, it is said of him that he is the sattwic, the rajasic or the tamasic man; but few are always of one kind and none is entire in his kind. ... The dominant gunas are not the essential soul-type of the embodied being but only the index of the formation he has made for this life or during his present existence and at a given moment of his evolution in Time." (CWSA 23: 235)

**XIII – C. 2.** "Dominated by *tamas*, man does not so much meet the rush and shock of the world-energies whirling about him and converging upon him as he succumbs to them, is overborne by them, afflicted, subjected; or at the most, helped by the other qualities, the tamasic man seeks only somehow to survive, to subsist so long as he may, to shelter himself in the fortress of an established routine of thought and action in which he feels himself to a certain extent protected from the battle, ..." (CWSA 19:53)

**XIII – C. 3.** "Inert and inapt, he may suffer them without any responsive reaction, any motion of self-defence or any

capacity of assimilation and adjustment; this is the mode of tamas, the way of inertia. The stigmata of tamas are blindness and unconsciousness and incapacity and unintelligence, sloth and indolence and inactivity and mechanical routine and the mind's torpor and the life's sleep and the soul's slumber. Its effect, if uncorrected by other elements, can be nothing but disintegration of the form or the poise of the nature without any new creation or new equilibrium or force of kinetic progress. At the heart of this inert impotence is the principle of ignorance and an inability or slothful unwillingness to comprehend, seize and manage the stimulating or assailing contact, the suggestion of environing forces and their urge towards fresh experience." (CWSA 23: 233)

**XIII – C. 4.** "All have their tamasic states and constant obscure parts, their moments or points of unconsciousness, their long habit or their temporary velleities of weak resignation or dull acceptance, their constitutional feeblenesses or movements of fatigue, negligence and indolence and their lapses into ignorance and incapacity, depression and fear and cowardly recoil or submission to the environment and to the pressure of men and events and forces." (CWSA 23: 235)

**XIII – C. 5.** "The gunas affect every part of our natural being. They have indeed their strongest relative hold in the



three different members of it, mind, life and body. Tamas, the principle of inertia, is strongest in material nature and in our physical being. The action of this principle is of two kinds, inertia of force and inertia of knowledge. Whatever is predominantly governed by Tamas, tends in its force to a sluggish inaction and immobility or else to a mechanical action which it does not possess, but is possessed by obscure forces which drive it in a mechanical round of energy; equally in its consciousness it turns to an inconstancy or enveloped subconsciousness or to a reluctant, sluggish or in some way mechanical conscious action which does not possess the idea of its own energy, but is guided by an idea which seems external to it or at least concealed from its active awareness. Thus the principle of our body is in its nature inert, subconscious, incapable of anything but a mechanical and habitual self-guidance and action: ...” (CWSA 24:684)

**XIII – C. 6.** “The three qualities mingle, combine and strive in every fibre and in every member of our intricate psychology. The mental character is made by them, the character of our reason, the character of our will, the character of our moral, aesthetic, emotional, dynamic, sensational being. Tamas brings in all the ignorance, inertia, weakness, incapacity which afflicts our nature, a clouded reason, nescience, unintelligence, a clinging to habitual notions and mechanical ideas, the refusal to think

and know, the small mind, the closed avenues, the trotting round of mental habit, the dark and the twilit places. Tamas brings in the impotent will, want of faith and self-confidence and initiative, the disinclination to act, the shrinking from endeavour and aspiration, the poor and little spirit, and in our moral and dynamic being the inertia, the cowardice, baseness, sloth, lax subjection to small and ignoble motives, the weak yielding to our lower nature. Tamas brings into our emotional nature insensibility, indifference, want of sympathy and openness, the shut soul, the callous heart, the soon spent affection and languor of the feelings, into our aesthetic and sensational nature the dull aesthesis, the limited range of response, the insensibility to beauty, all that makes in man the coarse, heavy and vulgar spirit." (CWSA 24: 685-686)

**XIII – C. 7.** "Tamas in its own right produces the coarse, dull and ignorant type of human nature, ..." (CWSA 24: 686)

**XIII – C. 8.** "The Tamasic intelligence has its seat in the physical mind: it is inert to ideas, — except to those which it receives inertly, blindly, passively from a recognised source or authority,— obscure in their reception, unwilling to enlarge itself, recalcitrant to new stimulus, conservative and immobile; it clings to its received structure of

knowledge and its one power is repetitive practicality, but it is a power limited by the accustomed, the obvious, the established and familiar and already secure; it thrusts away all that is new and likely to disturb it." (CWSA 21: 642-643)

**XIII – C. 9.** "The tamasic man does not offer his sacrifice to the gods, but to inferior elemental powers or to those grosser spirits behind the veil who feed upon his works and dominate his life with their darkness." (CWSA 19: 486)

**XIII – C. 10.** "The tamasic ignorant knowledge is a small and narrow, a lazy or dully obstinate way of looking at things which has no eye for the real nature of the world or of the thing done or its field or the act or its conditions. The Tamasic mind does not look for real cause and effect, but absorbs itself in one movement or one routine with an obstinate attachment to it, can see nothing but the little section of personal activity before its eyes and does not know in fact what it is doing but blindly lets natural impulsion work out through its deed results of which it has no conception, foresight or comprehending intelligence." (CWSA 19: 499)

**XIII – C. 11.** "Tamasic action is that done with a confused, deluded and ignorant mind, in mechanical obedience to the instincts, impulsions and unseeing ideas, without regarding the strength or

capacity or the waste and loss of blind misapplied effort or the antecedent and consequence and right conditions of the impulse, effort or labour." (CWSA 19: 501)

**XIII – C. 12.** "The tamasic doer of action is one who does not put himself really into the work, but acts with a mechanical mind, or obeys the most vulgar thought of the herd, follows the common routine or is wedded to a blind error and prejudice. He is obstinate in stupidity, stubborn in error and takes a foolish pride in his ignorant doing; a narrow and evasive cunning replaces true intelligence; he has a stupid and insolent contempt for those with whom he has to deal, especially for wiser men and his betters. A dull laziness, slowness, procrastination, looseness, want of vigour or of sincerity mark his action. The tamasic man is ordinarily slow

to act, dilatory in his steps, easily depressed, ready soon to give up his task if it taxes his strength, his diligence or his patience." (CWSA 19: 502)

**XIII – C. 13.** "The tamasic reason is a false, ignorant and darkened instrument which chains us to see all things in a dull and wrong light, a cloud of misconceptions, a stupid ignoring of the values of things and people. This reason calls light darkness and darkness light, takes what is not the true law and upholds it as the law, persists in the thing which ought not to be done and holds it up to us as the

one right thing to be done. Its ignorance is invincible and its persistence of will is a persistence in the satisfaction and dull pride of its ignorance. That is on its side of blind action; but it is pursued also by a heavy stress of inertia and impotence, a persistence in dullness and sleep, an aversion to mental change and progress, a dwelling on the fears and pains and depressions of mind which deter us in our path or keep us to base, weak and cowardly ways. Timidity, shirking, evasion, indolence, the justification by the mind of its fears and false doubts and cautions and refusals of duty and its lapses and turnings from the call of our higher nature, a safe following of the line of least resistance so that there may be the least trouble and effort and peril in the winning of the fruit of our labour,—rather no fruit or poor result, it says, than a great and noble toil or a perilous and exacting endeavour and adventure,—these are characteristics of the tamasic will and intelligence." (CWSA 19: 503)

**XIII – C. 14.** "Thus the tamasic mind can remain well-pleased in its indolence and inertia, its stupor and sleep, its blindness and its error. Nature has armed it with the privilege of a smug satisfaction in its stupidity and ignorance, its dim lights of the cave, its inert contentment, its petty or base joys and its vulgar pleasures. Delusion is the beginning of this satisfaction and delusion is its consequence; but still there is given a dull, a by no means

admirable but a sufficient pleasure in his delusions to the dweller in the cave. There is a Tamasic happiness founded in inertia and ignorance." (CWSA 19: 505)

**XIII – C. 15.** "... mechanical routine and the mind's torpor and the life's sleep and the soul's slumber. Its effect, if uncorrected by other elements, can be nothing but disintegration of the form or the poise of the nature without any new creation or new equilibrium or force of kinetic progress. At the heart of this inert impotence is the principle of ignorance and an inability or slothful unwillingness to comprehend, seize and manage the stimulating or assailing contact, the suggestion of environing forces and their urge towards fresh experience." (CWSA 20:220-21)

**XIII – C. 16.** "Man in his natural being is a sattwic, rajasic and Tamasic creature of Nature. According as one or other of her qualities predominates in him, he makes and follows this or that law of his life and action. His tamasic, material, sensational mind subject to inertia and fear and ignorance either obeys partly the compulsion of its environment and partly the spasmodic impulses of its desires or finds a protection in the routine following of a dull customary intelligence." (CWSA 19: 591-592)

**XIII – C. 17.** "What the Mother meant was that this meditating on an easy chair which is so common in the Asram is a new thing to her and she finds it a rather tamasic habit. There can be no objection to a long sitting or resting when you need it. 20 September 1934 (CWSA 32: 404)

**XIII – C. 18.** "Therefore tamasic men and tamasic states of society take especial pains to discourage independence of opinion. Their watchword is authority. Few societies have been so tamasic, so full of inertia and contentment in increasing narrowness as Indian society in later times; few have been so eager to preserve themselves in inertia." (CWSA 12: 38)

## **XIII – D. The factors that bring up inertia**

**XIII – D. 1.** "Overstraining brings inertia up. Everybody has inertia in his nature: the question is of its greater or lesser operation." (CWSA 29: 274)

**XIII – D. 2.** "Also, if you slip into depression, you cut every source of energy—from above, from below, from everywhere. That is the best way of falling into inertia. You must absolutely refuse to be depressed." (CWM 4: 10)

**XIII – D. 3.** "There is only one thing the vital abhors; it is a dull life, monotonous, grey, tasteless, worthless. Faced with that, it goes to sleep, falls into inertia." (CWM 5: 255)

**XIII – D. 4.** "*A tamasic surrender refusing to fulfil the conditions*" —*if it refuses to fulfil the conditions, it is no longer surrender, is it?*

Exactly. But there are many who think that they have surrendered and tell you, "I no longer do anything myself, I have given myself to the Divine, the Divine ought to do everything for me." This they call surrender.... That is to say, it is a movement of laziness and tamas which doesn't want to make any effort and would very much like the Divine to do everything for you, because that is much more comfortable!" (CWM 6: 221)



### **XIII – E. What hinders people from consecrating to an inner realisation is *tamas***

**XIII – E. 1.** "At the beginning of my present earthly existence I came into contact with many people who said that they had a great inner aspiration, an urge towards something deeper and truer, but that they were tied down, subjected, slaves to that brutal necessity of earning their living, and that this weighed them down so much, took up so much of their time and energy that they could not engage in any other activity, inner or outer. ...

And I have come to this conclusion, that it is *not* this necessity {necessity of earning their living} which hinders people from consecrating themselves to an inner realisation, but that it is a dullness, a *tamas*, a lack of aspiration, a miserable laxity, an I-don't-care attitude, and that those who face even the hardest conditions of life are sometimes the ones who react most and have the intensest aspiration." (CWM 8: 160-161)

**XIII – E. 2.** "*Sweet Mother, The ardour of making an effort is waning. I feel contented. But time passes so quickly that one feels one has not made the most out of what is given to us.*

That proves that life is too easy here and that for the most part you are all too tamasic to make an effort unless goaded by the difficulties of ordinary life. Only a very

ardent aspiration can remedy this deadly condition. But the aspiration is absent and your soul is asleep!" 2 January 1964 (CWM 16: 292)

**XIII – E. 3.** *"Sweet Mother, I feel it is most shameful on our part to waste the Divine Grace, to misuse this unique privilege granted to us here. But, Mother, why do we do this? For, each one of us has surely felt and enjoyed—at least once in his life, in a blessed moment—the infinite Splendour which is within our reach and awaits us. Yet there are so few of us who take the yoga seriously. Why? It is quite simply unconsciousness, incoercible TAMAS."* 27 July 1966 (CWM 16: 337-338)

## **XIII – F. The problems *tamas* can cause in Yoga**

### **XIII – F. 1. No divine change or divine life is possible**

“An escape from the action of the two inferior gunas is very evidently indispensable if we are to transmute our present nature into a power and form of the divine consciousness and an instrument of its forces. Tamas obscures and prevents the light of the divine knowledge from penetrating into the dark and dull corners of our nature. Tamas incapacitates and takes away the power to respond to divine impulse and the energy to change and the will to progress and make ourselves plastic to a greater Shakti. ... Tamas unenlightened and rajas unconverted, no divine change or divine life is possible.” (CWSA 23-24: 236-237)

### **XIII – F. 2. Long interregnums of obscure consciousness**

“Physical tamas can produce long interregnums of obscure consciousness, but not usually with such a violent obstruction—usually only dull and obstinate.” (CWSA 30: 67)

### **XIII – F. 3. Cannot bear, receive or contain the force**

“It [*how the body receives the higher dynamism*] depends on the condition of the body or rather of the physical and

the most material consciousness. In one condition it is tamasic, inert, unopen and cannot bear or cannot receive or cannot contain the force; in another rajas predominates and tries to seize on the dynamism, but wastes and spills and loses it; in another there is receptivity, harmony, balance and the result is a harmonious action without strain or effort." (CWSA 30: 495)

**XIII – F. 4.** The falling down or sinking of the consciousness

"The falling down [*of the consciousness*] comes usually by some inertia coming in the consciousness through fatigue or through mere habit of relaxation or it comes through some vital reaction which one may or may not notice or it comes through a wrong movement of the mind." (CWSA 30: 66)

"An occasional sinking of the consciousness happens to everybody. The causes are various, ... some inertia or obscurity rising up from the physical parts of nature." (CWSA 30: 66)

**XIII – F. 5.** Does not allow the intensity of the higher consciousness

"For there is an inertia in the physical nature that does not easily allow the intensity natural to the higher consciousness to remain constant,—the physical is always sinking back to something more ordinary; the higher consciousness and its force have to work long and come again and again before they can become constant and normal in the physical nature." (CWSA 30: 69)

### **XIII – F. 6.** Inertia rises and force cannot not come down

"The physical failed to absorb the peace, inertia arose instead; force could not come down; the suggestions from the outer nature proved too strong for you and between their suggestions and the inertia they interrupted the sadhana." (CWSA 30: 439)

"You were not able to remain above because the Peace could not occupy sufficiently the physical and the Force did not descend sufficiently. Meanwhile the inertia arose, you got troubled more and more because of the vital suggestions in the outer nature and the rush of inertia, so you were unable to keep detached and let the Force descend more and more or call it down more and more. Hence the coming down into the physical consciousness." (CWSA 30: 439-440)

"There is no connection between the descent of Peace and depression. Inertia there may be if the physical being feels the pressure for quietude but turns it into mere inactivity—but that cannot be called exactly a descent—at least not a complete one, since the physical does not share in it." (CWSA 30: 485)

**XIII – F. 7.** In meditation gone down into inertia and unconsciousness

"Among people who meditate there are some who know how to meditate, ... Most of the time people try to concentrate and enter into a kind of half sleepy and, in any case, very tamasic state. They become some kind of inert thing; the mind is inert, the feeling is inert, the body is immobile. They can remain like that for hours, for there is nothing more durable than inertia! All this that I am telling you now—these are experiences of people I have met. And these people, when they come out of their meditation, sincerely believe they have done something very great. But they have simply gone down into inertia and unconsciousness. People who know how to meditate are very few in number." (CWM 5: 41-42)

**XIII – F. 8.** Tamasic suggestions can bring depression

“Never allow this idea “I am not able” or “I am not doing enough” to come and vex you; it is a tamasic suggestion and brings depression and depression opens the way to the attacks of the wrong forces. Your position should be, “Let me do what I can; the Mother’s Force is there, the Divine is there to see that in due time all will be done.” 4 November 1935 (CWSA 32: 298)

“The depression is not the only cause of suspension of experiences. There are others such as inertia etc.” (CWSA 30: 68)

**XIII – F. 9.** Gloomy condition, dull and despondent can be due to tamas

“I have explained to you why so many people (not by any means all) are in this gloomy condition, dull and despondent. It is the tamas, the inertia of the Inconscient, that has got hold of them. But also it is the small physical vital which takes only an interest in the small and trivial things of the ordinary daily and social life and nothing else.” (CWSA 35:366)

**XIII – F. 10.** Ideas of incapacity and frustration and going away are due to tamas

"But keep steady and don't indulge these ideas of incapacity and frustration and going away; they are stuff of tamas and good only to be flung aside." (CWSA 35: 629)

**XIII – F. 11.** Writers finds it difficult to transcribe the inspiration

"All writers have the difficulty—it is the tamas of the physical mind which finds it difficult to transcribe the inspiration." 29 August 1933 (CWSA 27: 585-586)

**XIII – F. 12.** Clumsiness in the drawing due to tamas

*"Q: Again that clumsiness in the drawing. It is due to want of practice, I suppose.*

Want of practice and some tamas of the body. It is when the consciousness comes in the body that the skill comes—when you shake off the tamas, there is no clumsiness in you." 17 May 1934 (CWSA 27: 689)

**XIII – F. 13.** An attack of the hostile forces

"Like the vital disturbance the physical inertia with all its symptoms is an attack of the hostile forces intended to cut short and prevent the higher opening. ... This inertia, numbness, pain should be thrown off with the same resolution as the vital disturbances." (CWSA 29: 247)



### **XIII – F. 14.** Weakening of Memory

“There is very often a complaint of this kind [*weakening of memory*] made during the course of the sadhana. I suppose that the usual action of memory is for a time suspended by the mental silence or else by the physical *tamas*.” (CWSA 28: 225)

**XIII – F. 15.** Divergence between the progress in the inner being and the inertia of the body often manifests itself as an illness

“The work that would require years in the ordinary course, can be done by Yoga in a few days and even in a few hours. But it is your inner consciousness that obeys this accelerating impulse; for the higher parts of your being readily follow the swift and concentrated movement of Yoga and lend themselves more easily to the continuous adjustment and adaptation that it necessitates. The body, on the other hand, is ordinarily dense, inert and apathetic. And if you have in this part something that is not responsive, if there is a resistance here, the reason is that the body is incapable of moving as quickly as the rest of the being. It must take time, it must walk at its own pace as it does in ordinary life. What happens is as when grown-up people walk too fast for children in their company; they have to stop at times and wait till the child who is lagging

behind comes up and overtakes them. This divergence between the progress in the inner being and the inertia of the body often creates a dislocation in the system, and that manifests itself as an illness. This is why people who take up Yoga frequently begin by suffering from some physical discomfort or disorder. That need not happen if they are on their guard and careful." (CWM 3: 86-87)

### **XIII – G. Why there is a need for *tamas* to be rejected**

**XIII – G. 1.** "The transformation of the gunas is necessary for the *perfection* of the nature, not for liberation. Liberation comes by loss of ego and desire." (CWSA 28: 48)

**XIII – G. 2.** But tamas being the settled habit of the inferior nature tries to persist and keep or get back its place." (CWSA28: 50)

**XIII – G. 3.** "There must be no tamasic (inert, passive) surrender to the Mother—for that will bring as its reaction a passive inert helplessness before the lower or hostile forces or suggestions, an unresisting or helplessly resisting acquiescence or sufferance of these inroads." (CWSA 29: 79)

**XIII – G. 4.** “..... are both of them indications that he has the capacity for Yoga experience and that there is a call of the Divine on his inner being. But capacity is not enough; there must be also the will to seek after the Divine and courage and persistence in following the path. Fear is the first thing that must be thrown away and, secondly, the inertia of the outer being which has prevented him from responding to the call.” (CWSA 29: 36)

**XIII – G. 5.** “Even the most purely physical and mechanical work cannot be properly done if one accepts incapacity, inertia and passivity. The remedy is not to confine yourself to mechanical work, but to reject and throw off incapacity, passivity and inertia and open yourself to the Mother’s force. ... You will not get rid of these things by merely waiting for them to disappear. If you merely wait for things to happen, there is no reason why they should happen at all.” (CWSA 32: 257)

**XIII – G. 6.** “An occasional sinking of the consciousness happens to everybody. The causes are various, ... especially the lower vital, some inertia or obscurity rising up from the physical parts of nature.” (CWSA 32: 303)

**XIII – G. 7.** “... also, all negligence, omission, slipshod ritual,—the tamasic defects, must be avoided.” (CWSA 36:182)

**XIII – G. 8.** "Sadhana in this Yoga at least is a matter of the inner consciousness mainly. One has to get over greed of food but not abandon food, to get over tamas and inertia, but not abandon all rest and sleep." 29 October 1935 (CWSA 35:775)

**XIII – G. 9.** "The gunas have to be transcended if we would arrive at spiritual perfection. Tamas evidently has to be overcome, inertia and ignorance and incapacity cannot be elements of a true perfection; but it can only be overcome in Nature by the force of rajas aided by an increasing force of sattwa." (CWSA 23: 687)

**XIII – G. 10.** "Dominated by *tamas*, man {is} ... able to reject the demand which his higher nature makes upon him, excused from accepting the necessity of farther struggle and the ideal of an increasing effort and mastery." (CWSA 19:53)

## **XIII – H. Methods of rejection of *tamas* in Yoga**

### **XIII – H. 1.** Overcoming physical *tamas* by physical exercise

*"Q: Does exercise help to overcome inertia or physical *tamas*?"*

A: It is quite true that physical exercise is very necessary to keep off the *tamas*. I am glad you have begun it and I trust you will keep it up.

*Q: What should I do when I descend into physical *tamas* or when there is an attack of inertia?"*

Physical *tamas* in its roots can be removed only by the descent and the transformation, but physical exercise and regular activity of the body can always prevent a *tamasic* condition from prevailing in the body." 28 May 1934 (CWSA 35:776)

### **XIII – H. 2.** Growth of inertia is raised up in order to be dealt with and eliminated

"If there is at any time a growth of unconsciousness and inertia, it is because of the resistance of the ordinary nature to the spiritual change. But this is usually raised up in order to be dealt with and eliminated. If it is allowed to remain concealed and not raised up, the difficulty will never be

grappled with and no real transformation will take place."  
(CWSA 28: 405)

**XIII – H. 3.** Detachment is necessary and not consider  
tamas as your own

"You are always expecting the Mother to do it [*remove vital dissatisfaction and revolt*]—and here again the laziness and tamas come in—it is the spirit of tamasic surrender. If the Mother puts you back into a good condition, your vital pulls you down again. How is that to stop so long as you say Yes to the vital and accept its discouragement and restlessness and anguish and the rest of it as your own? Detachment is absolutely necessary." (CWSA 29: 80)

**XIII – H. 4.** Shake off the inertia of the will and persevere

"The help is always there and it has pulled you out of many difficulties and attacks. It is, I suppose, because of the feeling "I do not want to do anything" that you have not been able to receive the help, but that is a temporary inertia of the physical mind and will. I do not see the use of your going back for a few months to a life which could not now satisfy you. The only course is to shake off the inertia of the will and persevere." (CWSA 29: 86)

### **XIII – H. 5.** Consecrating one's food to God before taking it

"Physically, we depend upon food to live—unfortunately. For with food, we daily and constantly take in a formidable amount of inconscience, of tamas, heaviness, stupidity. One can't do otherwise—unless constantly, without a break, we remain completely aware and, as soon as an element is introduced into our body, we immediately work upon it to extract from it only the light and reject all that may darken our consciousness. This is the origin and rational explanation of the religious practice of consecrating one's food to God before taking it. When eating one aspires that this food may not be taken for the little human ego but as an offering to the divine consciousness within oneself." (CWM 4: 333)

### **XIII – H. 6.** Dynamic all-powerful progress

"The dynamic all-powerful progress that liberates from fetters, bondages and inertia." (CWM 15: 185)

### **XIII – H. 7.** Aspiration and self-giving

*"Q: My body is very weak and full of unconsciousness and tamas. How can this body become Your good instrument?"*

A: At the centre of each cell lies the Divine Consciousness. By aspiration and repeated self-giving, the cells must be made transparent." 18 March 1967 (CWM 16: 360)

*"Sweet Mother, Although one part of the being aspires and wants the Divine, the other part is so tamasic and heavy! How can it be awakened? What blows does it need? It is not that this part is against the Divine—it does not even seem to be interested in Him (which is perhaps worse).*

That is indeed an indication of complete inertia. Sri Aurobindo has written: "If you cannot love God, at least find a way to fight with Him so that He may be your enemy" (implying that you are sure to be conquered by Him). It is a humorous remark, but it means that of all conditions, inertia is the worst.

Aspiration is the only remedy—an aspiration that rises constantly like a clear flame burning up all the impurities of the being." 4 November 1964 (CWM 16: 306-307)

"When formerly the sadhana was going on on higher levels (mind, higher vital etc.), there was plenty of vigour and verve and interest in the details of the Asram work and life as well as in an inner life; the physical vital was carried in the stream. But for many this has dropped; they live in the unsatisfied vital physical and find everything desperately dull, gloomy and without interest or issue. In their inner



life the *tamas* from the Inconscient has created a block or a bottleneck and they do not find any way out. If one can keep the right condition and attitude, a strong interest in work or a strong interest in sadhana, then this becomes quiescent. That is the malady. Its remedy is to keep the right condition and to bring gradually or, if one can, swiftly the light of the higher aspiration into this part of the being also, so that whatever the conditions of the environment, it may keep also the right poise. Then the sunlit path should be less impossible." 16 June 1944 (CWSA 35:366)

### **XIII – H. 8. Surrender to the Divine**

"Certainly *tamas* is not good, but it is only through surrender to the Divine Consciousness that *tamas* can be changed." (CWM 14: 249)

"I have read through his experiences and they confirm what I have said about the deficient capacity of his adhar. The mental, vital and physical beings are full of weakness and Tamas and the debility and torpor which he constantly experiences are the result of this deficient adhar trying to bear the pressure of the Sadhana. At the same time he has one thing which can carry him through if he keeps it steadily,—the persistent faith and self-surrender." (CWSA 36:358)

**XIII – H. 9.** By calling the Divine Force the inertia in the physical consciousness can be removed

"The Divine Grace and Power can do everything, but with the full assent of the sadhak. To learn to give that full assent is the whole meaning of the sadhana. It may take time either because of ideas in the mind, desires in the vital or inertia in the physical consciousness, but these things have to be and can be removed with the aid or by calling in the action of the Divine Force." (CWSA 29: 171)

**XIII – H. 10.** Open oneself to the Mother's consciousness

"The tamas is part of the general physical Nature and so long as that is not fully changed and illumined, something of it remains; but one has only to go on opening oneself to the Mother's consciousness and in time the tamas too will change into the inner divine rest and peace." (CWSA 28: 49)

"The remedy is not to confine yourself to mechanical work, but to reject and throw off incapacity, passivity and inertia and open yourself to the Mother's force. ... If it is incapacity and weakness that oppose, still, as one opens oneself truly and more and more to the Mother's force, the strength and capacity necessary for the work will be given and will grow in the adhar." 11 March 1932 (CWSA 32: 257)

"If you desire this transformation, put yourself in the hands of the Mother and her Powers without cavil or resistance and let her do unhindered her work within you. ... All your nature must be plastic to her touch, ... not obstructing and entrenched in incapacity, inertia and tamas as man's physical consciousness obstructs and clinging to its pleasure in smallness and darkness cries out against each touch that disturbs its soulless routine or its dull sloth or its torpid slumber." (CWSA 32: 24)

"These are the two difficulties, one of the vital dissatisfaction and restlessness, the other of the inertia of the physical consciousness which are the chief obstacles to the sadhana. The first thing to do is to keep detached from them, not to identify yourself mentally with these movements—even if you cannot reject them—next to call on the Mother's force quietly but steadily for it to descend and make the obstacles disappear." 31 January 1934 (CWSA 32: 216)

The whole being opening to Yoga shakti

"But also it often happens even in the ordinary course of Yoga that physical strength is replaced by a Yogic strength or Yogic life force which keeps up the body and makes it work, but in the absence of this force the body is denuded of power, inert and tamasic.

This can only be remedied by the whole being opening to Yoga shakti in each of its planes—Yogic mind force, Yogic life force, Yogic body force." (CWSA 29: 273)

"An occasional sinking of the consciousness happens to everybody. The causes are various, some touch from outside, something not yet changed or not sufficiently changed in the vital, especially the lower vital, some inertia or obscurity rising up from the physical parts of nature. When it comes, remain quiet, open yourself to the Mother and call back the true condition, and aspire for a clear and undisturbed discrimination showing you from within yourself the cause or the thing that needs to be set right." (CWSA 30: 66)

*"Q: What I have to see is that my consciousness supports the working of the Mother's Force in me. For example, if my being constantly supported the Mother's work, there would hardly be any halt in sadhana due to the tamas in me; the Tamasic inertia would get transformed into peace without rising up and darkening the other parts of the being.*

A: Yes, that is how it should happen—but it is difficult so long as the inner being is not conscious and receptive at all times and in all conditions—and it is difficult and takes time to establish such a condition." 23 January 1935 (CWSA 32: 202-203)

**XIII – H. 11.** Remain quiet with an inner quietude and as open as possible to the higher Power

"For there is an inertia in the physical nature that does not easily allow the intensity natural to the higher consciousness to remain constant, ... Do not be disturbed or discouraged by these variations or this delay, however long and tedious; remain careful only to be quiet always with an inner quietude and as open as possible to the higher Power, not allowing any really adverse condition to get hold of you. If there is no adverse wave, then the rest is only a persistence of imperfections which all have in abundance; that imperfection and persistence the Force must work out and eliminate, but for the elimination time is needed." (CWSA 30: 69)

**XIII – H. 12.** Become capable of receiving the intuition

*"How to get rid of mental inertia?"*

The cure is not in trying to wake up the mind but in turning it, immobile and silent, upward towards the region of intuitive light, in a steady and quiet aspiration, and to wait in silence, for the light to come down and flood your brain which will, little by little, wake up to this influence and become capable of receiving and expressing the intuition. Love and blessings. 26 September 1967 (CWM 12: 136-137)

**XIII – H. 13.** Develop a double consciousness, the inner concentrated, the outer doing the work

*"Q: During work, the consciousness, however high it was before, falls at once into inertia. Is this condition never to change?"*

A: It is not necessary to fall into inertia, but one always comes into a less intensity of consciousness during work unless one has established in work the conscious contact with the Mother's Force and is aware of that during the work or unless one has developed a double consciousness, the inner concentrated, the outer doing the work." 12 April 1936 (CWSA 32: 244-245)

**XIII – H. 14.** Can disappear when the higher consciousness comes down

"Tamas and rajas disappear only when the higher consciousness not only comes down but controls everything down to the cells of the body. They then change into the divine rest and peace and the divine energy or Tapas; finally sattwa also changes into the divine Light." (CWSA 28: 47)

"The physical inertia from which you suffer is likely to lessen and disappear only when strength from above descends into the system.

Remain quiet, open yourself and call the divine Shakti to confirm the calm and peace, to widen the consciousness and to bring into it as much light and power as it can at present receive and assimilate. Take care not to be over-eager, as this may disturb again such quiet and balance as has been already established in the vital nature." (CWSA 29: 125)

"Inertia comes usually from the ordinary physical consciousness, especially when the vital is not actively supporting the sadhana. These things can only be cured by a persistent bringing down of the higher spiritual consciousness into all the parts of the being." (CWSA 30: 61)

"By the descent the inertia changes its character. It ceases to be a resistance of the physical and becomes only a physical condition to be transformed into the true basic immobility and rest." (CWSA 30: 485)

*"Q: The inertia, physical weakness, endless subconscious recurrences have covered up my sadhana again and made such a confusion that I don't know how to pull myself out of it.*

By calling down the Descent, since the Ascent is impossible. At least that is how I dealt with the situation in my own case." 5 October 1935 (CWSA 35: 373)

"The dullness comes from "tamas"; imaginative activity was shaking off the tamas and thus ridding you of the dullness. But this is not the only way to get rid of it. Opening to the Light and Consciousness from above and allowing them to replace the *tamas* in the external consciousness, is a much better and surer way." 22 November 1932 (CWM 16: 62)

**XIII – H. 15.** The light of the psychic instantly exposes and rejects tamas

"It is the right fundamental consciousness that you have now got. The tamas and other movements of the lower universal Nature are bound to try to come in, but if one has the calm of the inner being which makes them felt as something external to the being, and the light of the psychic which instantly exposes and rejects them, then that is to have the true consciousness which keeps one safe while the more positive transformation is preparing or taking place." (CWSA 30: 450-451)

"As a final result {of psychicisation} of the whole conscious being is made perfectly apt for spiritual experience of every



kind, turned towards spiritual truth of thought, feeling, sense, action, tuned to the right responses, delivered from the darkness and stubbornness of the tamasic inertia ...” (CWSA 22: 941)

**XIII – H. 16.** The physical opening by a true peace

“The physical opening needs a great quietude which replaces the tamasic inertia of body nature by a true peace. Then all else can be done.” (CWSA 28: 246-247)

**XIII – H. 17.** Only when the supramental comes that there is the full change

“As the transformation increases, the gunas change more and more towards their divine equivalents, but it is only when the supramental comes that there is the full change.” (CWSA 28: 48)

It [*tamas*] has to be transformed into *sama*, the peace and rest of the higher Prakriti, and then filled with *tapas* and  *jyotih*. But this can only be done completely in the physical when the physical is finally transformed by the supramental Power.” (CWSA 28: 50)

## **XIII – I. The problems *tamas* can cause in normal life**

### **XIII – I. 1. Cannot not make any effort**

*"Why doesn't effort also come naturally?"*

It is because the physical nature in ordinary men is, as Sri Aurobindo writes, rather tamasic. Naturally it does not make any effort. But the vital makes an effort. Only, it makes the effort usually for its own satisfaction. Yet it is quite capable of making an effort because that is in its nature." (CWM 6: 430)

"Indolence and inaction result in *tamas* which is a fall into inconscience and the very opposite of progress and light." (CWM 13: 212) (CWM 14: 297)

### **XIII – I. 2. Tiredness comes from mental *tamas***

*"Do You think that the tiredness comes from too much mental work?"*

No, it comes from mental *tamas*." 21 January 1941 (CWM 12: 135)

*"About every ten days I have an attack of fatigue and exhaustion which has a tendency to turn into inertia and discouragement."*

Take no notice of it and go on with your programme as usual. It is the quickest way of getting rid of it." (CWM 14: 249)

*"It is quite impossible for me to study, because inertia came.*

If you do not study the inertia will go on increasing." 4 March 1935 (CWM 12: 133)

*"If I work I feel all right, but the fatigue comes after that. Why? What to do?*

It is because you are receptive to the force when you work and that sustains you. But when you are not under the strain of the work you are less receptive. You must learn to be receptive in all circumstances and always—especially when you take rest—it must not be the "rest" of inertia but a true rest of receptivity." (CWM 14: 249)

"If it is (body) fatigued, it can offer a passive resistance to the mind's will. It can cloud the mind with tamas, inertia, dullness, fumes of the subconscious so that the mind cannot act." (CWSA 28: 176)

**XIII – I. 3.** One is cowardly because one is tamasic

"Q: *One is cowardly because of ignorance?*

...

A: That means one can consider ignorance the cause of all bad things. But I think that one is cowardly because one is very tamasic and fears having to make an effort. In order not to be cowardly, one must make an effort, begin by an effort, and afterwards it becomes very interesting. But the best thing is to make the effort to overcome this kind of flight out of oneself. Instead of facing the thing, one recoils, runs away, turns one's back and runs away. For the initial effort is difficult. And so, what prevents you from making an effort is the inert, ignorant nature.(CWM 7: 25-26)

"And at least the one advantage of rajasic people is that they are courageous, whereas tamasic people are cowards. It is the fear of effort which makes one cowardly." (CWM 7: 26)

**XIII – I. 4.** Not liking to learn their lessons, not wanting to listen to the teacher

"It is exactly the same thing which is the cause of some not liking to learn their lessons, not wanting to listen to the teacher; it is tamasic, it is to be asleep, it avoids the effort which must be made in order to catch the thing and then grasp it and keep it. It is half-somnolence. So it is the same thing physically, it is a somnolence of the being, an inertia." (CWM 7: 26)

*"Sometimes I cannot concentrate on my studies. At that time something in my brain prevents me from studying or even reading.*

It is *tamas*." 17 November 1936 (CWM 17: 150)

### **XIII – I. 5.** Despair is a sign of *tamas*

"Despair is never a necessity for progress, it is always a sign of weakness and *tamas*; it often indicates the presence of an adverse force, that is to say, a force that is purposely acting against *sadhana*." (CWM 10: 56)

### **XIII – I. 6.** Justifies one's weaknesses

"To justify one's weaknesses is a kind of laziness and inertia.

Well, when one doesn't want to make an effort to correct oneself, one says, "Oh, it is impossible, I can't do it, I don't have the strength, I am not made of that stuff, I don't have the necessary qualities, I could never do it." It is absolute laziness, it is in order to avoid the required effort. When you are asked to make progress: "Oh, it is beyond my capacity, I am a poor creature, I can do nothing!" That's all. It is almost ill-will. It is extreme laziness, a refusal to make any effort." (CWM 6: 267)

### **XIII – I. 7.** Needs violent and exciting circumstances

"Q: *Why do some children take interest in things only when there is some excitement?*

A: They are tamasic. It is due to the large proportion of *tamas* in their nature. The more tamasic one is, the more does one need something violent and exciting circumstances. When the physical is tamasic, unless one eats spices and highly flavoured food, one does not feel nourished. And yet these are poisons. They act exactly like poison on the nerves. They do not nourish. But it is because people are tamasic, because their body's consciousness is not sufficiently developed. Well, mentally it is the same thing, vitally the same thing.

If they are tamasic, they always need new excitements, dramas, murders, suicides, etc. to feel anything at all, otherwise.... (CWM 5: 413-414)

"The most material consciousness, the most material mind is accustomed to act, to make an effort, to advance through whippings; otherwise, it is *tamas*." (CWM 11: 2)

"My dear child, This craving for strong experiences belongs to the vital; it is a very frequent tendency in those whose vital is insufficiently developed and seeks violent sensations in the hope of escaping from its heaviness and inertia. But it is an ignorant movement, for violent sensations can never be a remedy; on the contrary, they increase the confusion and obscurity." (CWM 16: 147)

### **XIII – I. 8. Makes one more wicked and cruel**

"Well, all these people who are unconscious, the more unconscious they are, the more tamasic they are; the more blunted their sensibility, the more do they need strong sensations to feel something. And usually this is what makes people cruel, for cruelty gives very strong sensations. That kind of nervous tension obtained through suffering imposed upon somebody, that gives a sensation, and they need it in order to feel; otherwise they feel nothing." (CWM 6: 71)

"And there is nothing, nothing that makes one more wicked and cruel than *tamas*. For it is this need of excitement which shakes you up a little, makes you come out of yourself. And one must also learn, there, to distinguish between those who are exclusively tamasic and those who are mixed, and those who are struggling within themselves with their different parts. One can, one *must* know in what proportion their nature is constituted, so as to be able to insist at need on one thing or another. Some people constantly need a whipping from life in order to move, otherwise they would spend their time sleeping. ...

The proportion is very important, this proportion of the three "gunas" the proportion of the three gunas in the nature. And one must know the exact proportion in oneself and how to use one guna to fight the other, and so on. But

there is a moment when one should attain a certain equilibrium, and then be capable of establishing it in oneself a little steadily and facing life without having to fall into holes or struggle against terrible things. From that moment on everything goes well." (CWM 5: 413-414)

"I had always known that cruelty, like sadism, is a need for violent, extremely strong sensation, to penetrate a thick layer of tamas that feels nothing—tamas needs something extreme in order to be able to feel." (CWM 10: 106)

### **XIII – I. 9. Need to read novels in order to wake up**

"People whose minds are insufficiently developed, whose minds are still in a tamasic state and half inert, need to read novels in order to wake up. It is not the sign of a very commendable state or at any rate a very high one. Well, in the field of inner development this corresponds to the same thing. When one is in a very rudimentary state, when one has no intense inner life, one needs to read novels or to create novels for oneself, and then one indulges in experiments of this kind and believes one is doing very interesting things." (CWM 9: 366)

### **XIII – I. 10. Avoid the inertia of inconstancy**

February 9, 1914



"The only thing we must fear and avoid is the inertia of  
inconscience, of blind and heavy ignorance. That state lies  
at the very bottom of the infinite ladder that rises towards  
Thee. And all Thy effort consists in pulling Matter out of  
this primeval darkness so as to awaken it to consciousness.  
Even passion is preferable to inconscience. We must  
therefore go constantly forward to conquer that universal  
bedrock of inconscience and through our own organism  
transform it gradually into luminous consciousness." (CWM  
1: 69)

## **XIII – J. Methods of rejection of *tamas* in normal life**

### **XIII – J. 1. Desire shakes up *tamas***

"For men, it is the same thing. When they have a small desire which they cannot satisfy, they are a little shaken up: they come out of their inertia and try to find a solution to their problem. It is like that. There is no absolute unconsciousness—there is no absolute ignorance, no absolute night. Behind all unconsciousness, behind all ignorance, behind the night, there is always the supreme Light which is everywhere. The least little thing suffices for a beginning of contact to be established." (CWM 4: 348)

*"I am very irregular in my studies, I do not know what to do.*

Shake off your "tamas" a little, otherwise you will become a blockhead!" 27 December 1963 (CWM 12: 395)

*(A teacher wrote that his students did not work very hard.)*  
Continue to be patient—it is some kind of mental *tamas*; one day they will wake up." (CWM 12: 135)

### **XIII – J. 2. The intrusion of the vital in the form of ambition**

"The body is afraid of anything new because its very base is inertia, *tamas*; it is the vital which brings the dominance of *rajas* (activity). That is why, generally, the intrusion of the vital in the form of ambition, emulation and egotism, obliges the body to shake off *tamas* and make the necessary effort to progress. Naturally, those in whom the mind predominates can lecture their body and provide it with all the necessary reasons to enable it to overcome its fear." (CWM 12: 395) (CWM 16: 295)

**XIII – J. 3.** Exert your consciousness, will, force, shake yourself and whip yourself

"If you have a tamasic nature, you must use another procedure. You must exert your consciousness, your will, your force, gather your energy, shake yourself a little and whip yourself and say: "Hup! hup! forward, march." If it is laziness that keeps you back from, say, doing the vaulting, you must immediately do something much more tiring and say: "Well, you don't want to do that? All right, you are going to do 1500 metres running!" Or else: "I don't want to do the weight-lifting today, I don't feel like doing it: good, I shall do skipping 4000 times at a stretch." (CWM 5: 119-120)

**XIII – J. 4.** The March Past has power for overcoming *tamas*

"But the March Past is for stimulating the receptivity of the body to the energies for realisation. It is based upon something which is expressed in all kinds of ways; but it is a kind of admiration... how to put it?... a spontaneous and also charming admiration for heroism, which is in the most material physical consciousness. And this is a tremendous power for overcoming *tamas* and physical inertia. Besides it is upon this that all the fighting capacities of armies in the wars are founded." (CWM 7: 255)

**XIII – J. 5.** A mental exercise of reading, organisation and development

*"How can one get out of this mental laziness and inertia?*  
By wanting to do so, with persistence and obstinacy. By doing daily a mental exercise of reading, organisation and development. This must alternate in the course of the day with exercises of mental silence in concentration." 1 June 1966 (CWM 12: 398) (CWM 16: 336)

**XIII – J. 6.** Solution for waking up tired in the morning due to *tamas*

*"Why does one wake up tired in the morning, and what should one do to have a better sleep?"*

If you wake up tired in the morning, it is because of *tamas*, nothing else, a formidable mass of *tamas*; I myself noticed it when I began to do the yoga of the body. It is inevitable so long as the body is not transformed.

You must lie flat on your back and relax all the muscles and all the nerves—it is an easy thing to learn—to be like what I call a rag on a bed: nothing else remains. And if you can do that with the mind also, you get rid of all those stupid dreams that make you more tired when you get up than when you went to bed. It is the cellular activity of the brain that continues without control, and that tires one much. So, a total relaxation, a sort of complete calm, without tension, in which everything is stopped.

But this is only the beginning.

Afterwards, you make a self-giving as total as possible, of everything, from top to bottom, from outside to inside, and an eradication, as total as possible, of all the resistance of the ego. And you begin repeating your mantra—your mantra, if you have one, or any word which has a power for you, a word leaping forth from the heart spontaneously, like a prayer, a word which sums up your aspiration. After repeating it a certain number of times, if you are accustomed to do so, you enter into trance. And from that trance you pass into sleep. The trance lasts as long as it should and quite naturally, spontaneously, you pass into sleep. But when you come back from this sleep,

you remember everything; the sleep was like a continuation of the trance." (CWM 15: 379)

"Fundamentally, the sole purpose of sleep is to enable the body to assimilate the effect of the trance so that the effect may be received everywhere, and to enable the body to do its natural nocturnal function of eliminating toxins. And when you wake up, there is not that trace of heaviness which comes from sleep: the effect of the trance continues. Even for those who have never been in trance, it is good to repeat a mantra, a word, a prayer before going into sleep. But there must be a life in the words; I do not mean an intellectual significance, nothing of that kind, but a vibration. And its effect on the body is extraordinary: it begins to vibrate, vibrate, vibrate... and quietly you let yourself go, as though you wanted to go to sleep. The body vibrates more and more, more and more, more and more, and away you go. That is the cure for *tamas*.

It is *tamas* which causes bad sleep. There are two kinds of bad sleep: the sleep that makes you heavy, dull, as if you lost all the effect of the effort you put in during the preceding day; and the sleep that exhausts you as if you had passed your time in fighting. I have noticed that if you cut your sleep into slices (it is a habit one can form), the nights become better. That is to say, you must be able to come back to your normal consciousness and normal

aspiration at fixed intervals—come back at the call of the consciousness. But for that you must not use an alarm-clock!

When you are in trance, it is not good to be shaken out of it. When you are about to go to sleep, you can make a formation; say: "I shall wake up at such an hour" (you do that very well when you are a child). For the first stretch of sleep you must count at least three hours; for the last, one hour is sufficient. But the first one must be three hours at the minimum. On the whole, you have to remain in bed at least seven hours; in six hours you do not have time enough to do much (naturally I am looking at it from the point of view of sadhana) to make the nights useful.

To make use of the nights is an excellent thing. It has a double effect: a negative effect, it prevents you from falling backward, losing what you have gained—that is indeed painful —and a positive effect, you make some progress, you continue your progress. You make use of the night, so there is no trace of fatigue any more.

Two things you must eliminate: falling into the stupor of the inconscience, with all the things of the subconscious and inconscient that rise up, invade you, enter you; and a vital and mental superactivity where you pass your time in fighting, literally, terrible battles. People come out of that state bruised, as if they had received blows. And they did receive them—it is not "as if"! And I see only one way out: to change the nature of sleep." (CWM 15: 379-381)

“It is not good to lie in bed when you are awake; it is more tiring than restful and it also increases tamas. It is better to jump out of bed as soon as you wake up; then in the evening you will feel sleepy and can get to sleep earlier. The hours of sleep before midnight are the best and most restful.” 25 March 1933 (CWM 17: 9)



## **XIII – K. The divine equivalent of *tamas***

**XIII – K. 1.** “The three gunas become purified and refined and changed into their divine equivalents: sattwa becomes *jyotih*, the authentic spiritual light; rajas becomes *tapas*, the tranquilly intense divine force; tamas becomes *sama*, the divine quiet, rest, peace.” (CWSA 28: 47)

**XIII – K. 2.** “It is possible that the fatigue or lethargy comes as the wrong condition which has to be replaced by the peace. ... tamas, the obscure inertia, has to be replaced by *sama*, the luminous quietude and peace.” (CWSA 28: 48-49)

**XIII – K. 3.** “The peace (*sama*) is the pure form, tamas is its degraded or perverted form ...” (CWSA 28: 49)

**XIII – K. 4.** “It is a greater and greater descent of peace that brings *sama* ...” (CWSA 28: 49)

**XIII – K. 5.** “All undesirable things are a mistranslation in the Ignorance of something that on a higher plane is or might be desirable. Inertia, tamas, is the mistranslation of the divine ‘sama, rest, quietude, peace; ... It is only when the lower perversions are got rid of that the higher things in their truth can reign.” (CWSA 28: 49)

**XIII – K. 6.** "In the spiritual change inertia has to be replaced by the divine peace and calm, ..." (CWSA 28: 270)

**XIII – K. 7.** "It is human beings who have a psychic being which has been developed upon earth and by earthly life and which is a projection of the divine Consciousness into Matter to awaken Matter out of its inertia so that it takes the path back to the Divine." (CWM 7: 104)

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