

BHAKTI YOGA

THE YOGA OF DEVOTION

Second Edition



A compilation from the works of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother

Compiled by Jamshed M Mavalwalla

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Sri Aurobindo and the Mother**



Sri Aurobindo Society

AUROPUBLICATIONS

POWERFUL THOUGHTS, INSPIRING VISION

Bhakti Yoga: The Yoga of Devotion

Second Edition

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Vijaybhai's Note on Comprehensive Compilation

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 that confront us all, and for ways in which we can contribute to evolutionary change and progress.

In this search, more and more people are turning to Sri Aurobindo and the Mother for guidance and enlightenment. But in their voluminous writings, 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 several compilations are now available, many sincere spiritual seekers have felt the need for Comprehensive Compilations from Sri Aurobindo and the Mother on specific subjects, in which the contents are further organised into sub-topics, so that one can find everything one is looking for in one place.

This compilation is an effort to fulfil this need and thus help spiritual seekers in their journey and sadhana. We hope that this compilation will help us gain 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 receive suggestions and feedback from the readers.

Vijay

Preface

This compilation, *Bhakti Yoga: The Yoga of Devotion*, is the second book in the series of books on Love. One can call this book Part II of *Love for the Divine*.

The Mother also emphasizes that, if one wishes always to progress, one must understand more completely what one already knows.

“For those who want always to progress, there are three major ways of progressing:

- (1) To widen the field of one’s consciousness.
 - (2) To understand ever better and more completely what one knows.
 - (3) To find the Divine and surrender more and more to His Will.”
- (CWM 16: 435–436)

The purpose of this comprehensive compilation is to help the reader understand Bhakti, or the path of devotion to the Divine, more completely and in greater depth. The headings and subheadings are intended to guide the reader towards a clearer and deeper understanding. However, it is important to read the quotations themselves, for Sri Aurobindo’s and the Mother’s words are infused with a consciousness infinitely higher than our own. Therefore, reading these quotations will help the reader not only

understand all aspects of Bhakti but also, and most importantly, elevate his or her consciousness.

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

While the passages from Sri Aurobindo are in the original English, most of the passages from the Mother (selections from her talks and writings) are translations from the original French. We must also bear in mind that the excerpts have been taken out of their original context and that a compilation, by its very nature, is likely to have a personal and subjective approach. A sincere attempt, however, has been made to remain faithful to the vision of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother. Those who would like to read the fuller text are advised to consult *The Complete Works of Sri Aurobindo* (CWSA) and the *Collected Works of the Mother* (CWM), Second Edition.

The section headings and subheadings have also been provided by the compiler to bring clarity to the selected topic.

Jamshed M. Mavalwalla

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I—Bhakti Is an All-Embracing Devotion to the Divine

"... a supreme bhakti, an all-embracing devotion to the Divine..." (CWSA 19: 283)

"...Bhaktiyoga, adoration and seeking of the supreme Self as the Divine Being, and here the insistence is on devotion..." (CWSA 19: 38)

"Bhakti and the heart's call for the Divine have a truth—it is the truth of the divine Love and Ananda." (CWSA 29: 456)

"The nature of bhakti is adoration, worship, self-offering to what is greater than oneself ..." (CWSA 29: 356)

"... absolute adoration, submission, ecstasy, love, tenderness which is the Indian idea of *bhakti*." (CWSA 1: 583)

"Bhakti is not an experience, it is a state of the heart and soul." (CWSA 29: 95) (CWSA 29: 352)

"...but bhakti is the very soul and heart and summit of this richer, completer, more intimate union." (CWSA 19: 344)

I—Bhakti is an All-Embracing Devotion to the Divine
“...in bhakti there is always the element, the foundation even of personality, since its motive-power is the love and adoration of the individual soul, the Jiva, turned towards the supreme and universal Being.” (CWSA 19: 283)

“Here is the place of bhakti in the scheme of the Yoga of an integral self-liberation. It is an adoration and aspiration towards that which is greater than imperishable self or changing Nature.” (CWSA 19: 307)

“The inner bhakti is the main thing and without it the external becomes a form and mere ritual, but the external has its place and use when it is straightforward and sincere.” (CWSA 29: 355)

“Bhakti should be for the Divine only—the sadhaks are sadhaks, trying to reach the Divine, but still full of faults and struggles.” (CWSA 29: 355)

“BHAHTI in itself is as wide as the heart-yearning of the soul for the Divine and as simple and straightforward as love and desire going straight towards their object.” (CWSA 24: 571)

“Q: *The day before yesterday I saw in a dream: The Mother is standing in a high place; before her there is a pillar with the Tulsi plant on it. What does it signify?*

I—Bhakti is an All-Embracing Devotion to the Divine
A: That she has brought down and planted Bhakti, I suppose.” (CWSA 32: 271)

“In some countries (particularly here) certain plants are used as the media for worship, offering, devotion. Certain plants are given on special occasions. And I have often seen that this identification was quite in keeping with the nature of the plant, because spontaneously, without knowing anything, I happened to give the same meaning as that given in religious ceremonies. The vibration was really there in the flower itself...” (CWM 4: 167)

“Hanuman stands for Bhakti.” (CWSA 30: 157)

“Hanuman = complete bhakti.” (CWSA 30: 157)

“Hanuman is a symbol of Shakti and devotion.” (CWSA 30: 157–158)

II—The Importance of Bhakti in Integral Yoga

“The realisation of the Supreme, the Ishwara, is certainly the essential thing; but to approach him with love and devotion and bhakti, to serve him with one’s works and to know him, not necessarily by the intellectual cognition, but in a spiritual experience, is also essential in the path of the integral Yoga.” (CWSA 29: 375)

“You are no doubt right about asking for the bhakti, for I suppose it is the master-claim of your nature: for that matter, it is the strongest motive force that sadhana can have and the best means for all else that has to come. It is why I said that it is through the heart that spiritual experience must come to you.” (CWSA 29: 352)

“The loyalty and the rest that you have for me and the Mother may not, as you say, be part of the bhakti itself, but they could not be there were not the bhakti deep inside. It is its coming out in full force into the surface consciousness that is to be brought about and it seems to me that it is inevitable that it should come as the outer coverings fall off. What is within must surely make its way to the surface.” (CWSA 29: 352–353)

“It is rather the fact that in my writings on Yoga I have given Bhakti the highest place. ... the deeper the emotion,

II—The Importance of Bhakti in Integral Yoga

the more intense the Bhakti, the greater is the force for realisation and transformation. It is oftenest through intensity of emotion that the psychic being awakes and there is an opening of the inner doors to the Divine.” (CWSA 29: 357)

“The Gita now lays down another and greater necessity for the Karmayogin who has unified his Yoga of works with the Yoga of knowledge. Not knowledge and works alone are demanded of him now, but *bhakti* also, devotion to the Divine, love and adoration and the soul’s desire of the Highest.” (CWSA 19: 282)

“What you are experiencing is the true foundation of the spiritual life and realisation. It has three elements—first, the love which is the heart of Bhakti; then the descent of peace and equanimity ... thirdly, the feeling of a guiding presence or power...” (CWSA 30: 320)

“It is true that devotion here is very insufficient—but these cannot be the reasons, for psychic emotion is not discouraged by us and the integral Sadhana is not integral without bhakti. And yet it is a fact that those who come here full of bhakti lose much of it after a time—with a few exceptions. I think it is because of the prevalence of a too positive mind and the habit of criticizing everything from a

II—The Importance of Bhakti in Integral Yoga
quite external point of view which is rife in the
atmosphere.” (CWSA 35: 660–661)

“This Yoga [Integral Yoga] too is not a Yoga of knowledge
alone—knowledge is one of its means, but its base being
self-offering, surrender, bhakti, it is based on the heart and
nothing can be eventually done without this base.” (CWSA
29: 226)

III—The Way of Devotion Seeks the Divine through Love and Delight

“THE WAY of devotion in the integral synthetic Yoga will take the form of a seeking after the Divine through love and delight and a seizing with joy on all the ways of his being. It will find its acme in a perfect union of love and a perfect enjoyment of all the ways of the soul’s intimacy with God.” (CWSA 24: 593)

“The yoga of devotion is the path that leads to union with the Divine through perfect, total and eternal love.” (CWM 16: 236)

“Sweet Mother, can one realise the Divine through love alone?”

Oh! yes, my child, certainly. It is even the most direct way.

One can realise the Divine, that is to say, identify oneself with the Divine, become fully conscious of the Divine and be an instrument of the Divine. But naturally, one does not realise the integral yoga, for it is only along one line. But from the point of view of identification with the Divine it is even the most direct path.” (CWM 8: 190)

“Bhakti and love are not quite the same thing, but love is one of the elements of bhakti. There are different kinds of

III—The Way of Devotion Seeks the Divine through Love and Delight

bhakti and that which is of the nature of love is the strongest and is considered the highest, most intense and ecstatic of all. Also in love itself that form of it which is made of self-giving; surrender, absolute adoration, urge towards a selfless union is the true kind of bhakti that is love. 'Conquering love' or 'Love the victor' means love prevailing over all that stands in the way of its reign, over ignorance, falsehood, selfishness, ego, passion and lust, outward or self-regarding desires and all else till it reigns alone and victorious, bringing down all the other gifts of the Divine Consciousness. It is by force of love and selflessness and self-giving that the sadhak can help Love to conquer." (CWSA 29: 356)

['Conquering love' or 'Love the victor'—These are probably the names of two roses named by the Mother according to their significance.]

IV—To Approach God by Love Is to Prepare Oneself for the Greatest Possible Spiritual Fulfilment

“Love is the power and passion of the divine self-delight and without love we may get the rapt peace of its infinity, the absorbed silence of the Ananda, but not its absolute depth of richness and fullness. Love leads us from the suffering of division into the bliss of perfect union, but without losing that joy of the act of union which is the soul’s greatest discovery and for which the life of the cosmos is a long preparation. Therefore to approach God by love is to prepare oneself for the greatest possible spiritual fulfilment.” (CWSA 24: 547)

“Will, knowledge and love are the three divine powers in human nature and the life of man, and they point to the three paths by which the human soul rises to the divine. The integrality of them, the union of man with God in all the three, must therefore, as we have seen, be the foundation of an integral Yoga.” (CWSA 24: 545)

“When the devotee has grasped the power that shall raise him, has really laid hold on love, that in the end purifies and enlarges him as effectively as knowledge can; they are equal powers, though their methods of arriving at the same goal are different.” (CWSA 24: 548)

IV—To Approach God by Love is to Prepare Oneself for the
Greatest Possible Spiritual Fulfilment

“So Krishna in the Gita says that none is dear to him, none hated, to all he is equal in spirit; yet is the God-lover the special receiver of his grace, because the relation he has created is different and the one impartial Lord of all yet meets each soul according to its way of approach to him.”
(CWSA 19: 189)

V—What Bhakti Does...

“If one has bhakti and aspires in the heart’s silence, if there is the true love for the Divine, then the nature will open of itself, there will be the true experience and the Mother’s power working within you, and the necessary knowledge will come.” (CWSA 29: 227)

“Everyone who is turned to the Mother is doing my Yoga. It is a great mistake to suppose that one can ‘do’ the Purna Yoga—i.e. carry out and fulfil all the sides of the Yoga by one’s own effort. No human being can do that. What one has to do is to put oneself in the Mother’s hands and open oneself to her by service, by bhakti, by aspiration; then the Mother by her light and force works in him so that the sadhana is done. ... The right attitude is to be devoted and given to the Mother and to wish to be whatever she wants you to be. The rest is for the Mother to decide and do in you.” (CWSA 32: 151–152)

“Thus by fixing the mind on the idea of Divine Love, we can come to the knowledge of that principle and its workings, put ourselves into communion with it, create it in ourselves and impose its law on the heart and the senses.” (CWSA 13: 446)

“Yoga of Bhakti is a matter of the heart and not of the intellect. For even for the knowledge which comes on this way, we set out from the heart and not from the intelligence.” (CWSA 24: 559)

“The desire for the Divine or bhakti for the Divine is the one desire which can free one from all the others—at the core it is not a desire, but an aspiration, a soul need, the breath of existence of the inmost being, and as such it cannot be counted among desires.” (CWSA 31: 255–256)

“Vital power is necessary for work and you have an exceptional amount of it. Of course, to make a full Yogic use of it and of its force for action, the ego must gradually fade out and vital attachments and impulses be replaced by the spiritual motive. Bhakti, devotion to the Divine, and the spirit of service to the Divine are among the most powerful means for this change.” (CWSA 29: 245–246)

“Freedom from ego is spiritually valuable because then one can be centred, no longer in one’s personal self, but in the Divine, and that too is the condition of bhakti.” (CWSA 29: 95)

“Human nature has always been egoistic in its basis and so it brings in the ego motive into the work for the Divine also. That can only be overcome slowly, for what is ingrained in

the human vital nature and has been active through hundreds of lives cannot disappear at once. To be conscious and to have the steady will to change and make the inner motive of bhakti and self-giving prevail over the outer motives is the one thing necessary." (CWSA 31: 219)

"There are two things that make it impossible for them [*the hostile forces*] to succeed even temporarily in any attack on the mind or the vital—first, an entire love, devotion and confidence that nothing can shake, secondly, a calm and equality in the vital as well as in the mind which has become the fundamental character of the inner nature." (CWSA 31: 796)

"If it is the way of *ahaitukī bhakti* [motiveless devotion] that you want to follow, that can be no obstacle; for there can be none better. For in that way everything can be made a means—poetry and music for instance become not merely poetry and music and not merely even an expression of bhakti, but themselves a means of bringing the experience of love and Bhakti. Meditation itself becomes not an effort of mental concentration, but a flow of love and adoration and worship. If simply and sincerely followed, the way of *ahaitukī bhakti* [motiveless devotion] can lead as far as any other." (CWSA 29: 355)

"Indian bhakti has given to this divine love powerful forms, poetic symbols which are not in reality so much symbols as intimate expressions of truth which can find no other expression." (CWSA 24: 576)

"But, ordinarily, if one can follow wholeheartedly any one of these lines, one arrives at the result of all the four.[a fourfold path, a Yoga of knowledge for the mind, a Yoga of bhakti for the heart, a Yoga of works for the will and a Yoga of perfection for the whole nature] For instance, by bhakti one becomes close to the Divine, becomes intensely aware of Him and arrives at knowledge, for the Divine is the Truth and the Reality; by knowing Him, says the Upanishads, one comes to know all. By bhakti also the will is led into the road of the works of love and the service of the Divine and the government of the nature and its acts by the Divine, and that is Karmayoga. By bhakti also comes spiritual change of the consciousness and the action of the nature which is the first step towards its transformation. So it is with all the other lines of the fourfold path." (CWSA 31: 687)

"When there is the approach through the heart, through Love and Bhakti, its highest culmination is in a transcendent Ananda, an unspeakable Bliss or Beatitude of union with the Divine through Love." (CWSA 29: 483)

VI—The Methods of Bhakti Yoga

1. The stages and movements of bhakti

“The integral Yoga of Devotion proceeds through seven stages each of which opens out from the one that precedes it:

Aspiration and self-consecration;

devotion;

adoration and worship;

love;

possession of the whole being and life by the Divine;

joy of the Divine Love and the beauty and sweetness of the Divine;

the absolute Bliss of the Absolute.” (CWSA 12: 347)

[Breaking of the sentences done by the compiler.]

“Three are the words that sum up the first state of the Yoga of devotion,

faith, worship, obedience.

Three are the words that sum up the second state of the Yoga of devotion,

adoration, delight, self-giving.

Three are the words that sum up the supreme state of the Yoga of devotion,

love, ecstasy, surrender.” (CWSA 12: 348)

[Breaking of the sentences done by the compiler.]

“Really, however, the more intimate yoga of Bhakti resolves itself simply into these four movements, the desire of the Soul when it turns towards God and the straining of its emotion towards him, the pain of love and the divine return of love, the delight of love possessed and the play of that delight, and the eternal enjoyment of the divine Lover which is the heart of celestial bliss.” (CWSA 24: 571)
[Breaking of the sentences done by the compiler.]

2. In the yoga of bhakti, the emotional nature is made the instrument

“In the Yoga of Bhakti it is the emotional nature that is made the instrument. Its main principle is to adopt some human relation between man and the Divine Being by which through the ever intenser flowing of the heart’s emotions towards him the human soul may at last be wedded to and grow one with him in a passion of divine Love. It is ... the ecstatic joy of union which the devotee seeks by his Yoga. Every feeling that can make the heart ready for this ecstasy the Yoga admits; everything that detracts from it must increasingly drop away as the strong union of love becomes closer and more perfect.” (CWSA 24: 561)

“...our human consciousness must certainly originate and have been derived from the Divine; though the forms which it takes in us may and must be other than the divine because we are limited by ego, not universal, not superior to our nature, not greater than our qualities and their workings, as he is, still our human emotions and impulses must have behind them a Truth in him of which they are the limited and very often, therefore, the perverse or even the degraded forms. By approaching him through our emotional being we approach that Truth, it comes down to us to meet our emotions and lift them towards it; through it our emotional being is united with him.” (CWSA 24: 557–558)

3. The intensity of passion that loves but does not yet know the Divine is an initial stage of bhakti

“The Gita distinguishes between three initial kinds of Bhakti, that which seeks refuge in the Divine from the sorrows of the world, *ārta*, that which, desiring, approaches the Divine as the giver of its good, *arthārthī*, and that which attracted by what it already loves, but does not yet know, yearns to know this divine Unknown, *jijñāsu*, but it gives the palm to the Bhakti that knows. Evidently the intensity of passion which says, ‘I do not understand, I love,’ and, loving, cares not to understand, is not love’s last

self-expression, but its first, nor is it its highest intensity.”
(CWSA 24: 550)

4. With inner adoration real bhakti begins

“All Yoga is a turning of the human mind and the human soul, not yet divine in realisation, but feeling the divine impulse and attraction in it, towards that by which it finds its greater being. Emotionally, the first form which this turning takes must be that of adoration.” (CWSA 24: 571–572)

“But worship is only the first step on the path of devotion. Where external worship changes into the inner adoration, real Bhakti begins; that deepens into the intensity of divine love; that love leads to the joy of closeness in our relations with the Divine; the joy of closeness passes into the bliss of union.” (CWSA 24: 549)

“This pure wideness is brought into the intensity of the sacrifice of love when into all our activities there is poured the spirit and power of a divine infinite joy and the whole atmosphere of our life is suffused with an engrossing adoration of the One who is the All and the Highest.” (CWSA 23: 158)

VI—The Methods of Bhakti Yoga

"All Religion begins with the conception of some Power or existence greater and higher than our limited and mortal selves, a thought and act of worship done to that Power, and an obedience offered to its will, its laws or its demands. But Religion, in its beginnings, sets an immeasurable gulf between the Power thus conceived, worshipped and obeyed and the worshipper. Yoga in its culmination abolishes the gulf; for Yoga is union. ... We arrive at union with it also by worship; for the thought and act of a distant worship develops into the necessity of close adoration and this into the intimacy of love, and the consummation of love is union with the Beloved. It is from this development of worship that the Yoga of devotion starts and it is by this union with the Beloved that it finds its highest point and consummation." (CWSA 24: 552)

"The aim of Yoga being union, its beginning must always be a seeking after the Divine, a longing after some kind of touch, closeness or possession. When this comes on us, the adoration becomes always primarily an inner worship; we begin to make ourselves a temple of the Divine, our thoughts and feelings a constant prayer of aspiration and seeking, our whole life an external service and worship. It is as this change, this new soul-tendency grows, that the religion of the devotee becomes a Yoga, a growing contact and union. It does not follow that the outward worship will necessarily be dispensed with, but it will increasingly

become only a physical expression or outflowing of the inner devotion and adoration, the wave of the soul throwing itself out in speech and symbolic act.” (CWSA 24: 572)

“Adoration, before it turns into an element of the deeper Yoga of devotion, a petal of the flower of love, its homage and self- uplifting to its sun, must bring with it, if it is profound, an increasing consecration of the being to the Divine who is adored. And one element of this consecration must be a self-purifying so as to become fit for the divine contact, or for the entrance of the Divine into the temple of our inner being, or for his self revelation in the shrine of the heart.” (CWSA 24: 572–573)

5. In the yoga of devotion, the supreme Existence is a conscious being

“Therefore that there may be at all any possibility of a Yoga of devotion, we must assume first that the supreme Existence is not an abstraction or a state of existence, but a conscious Being; secondly, that he meets us in the universe and is in some way immanent in it as well as its source,—otherwise, we should have to go out of cosmic life to meet him; thirdly, that he is capable of personal relations with us and must therefore be not incapable of personality; finally, that when we approach him by our

human emotions, we receive a response in kind.” (CWSA 24: 557)

“But ordinarily the way of devotion ... starts from and it rises and widens to its issue by adoration of the divine Personality. The Divine is a Being and not an abstract existence or a status of pure timeless infinity; the original and universal existence is He, but that existence is inseparable from consciousness and bliss of being, and an existence conscious of its own being and its own bliss is what we may well call a divine infinite Person,—Purusha. Moreover all consciousness implies power, Shakti; where there is infinite consciousness of being, there is infinite power of being, and by that power all exists in the universe. All beings exist by this Being; all things are the faces of God; all thought and action and feeling and love proceed from him and return to him, all their results have him for source and support and secret goal. It is to this Godhead, this Being that the Bhakti of an integral Yoga will be poured out and uplifted. Transcendent, it will seek him in the ecstasy of an absolute union; universal, it will seek him in infinite quality and every aspect and in all beings with a universal delight and love; individual, it will enter into all human relations with him that love creates between person and person.” (CWSA 24: 600)

“To all of them he answers, taking us in the stage of progress in which we are; for if we met no kind of response or help to our imperfect approach, the more perfect relations could never be established. Even as men approach him, so he accepts them and responds too by the divine Love to their bhakti, *tathaiva bhajate*. Whatever form of being, whatever qualities they lend to him, through that form and those qualities he helps them to develop, encourages or governs their advance and in their straight way or their crooked draws them towards him. What they see of him is a truth, but a truth represented to them in the terms of their own being and consciousness, partially, distortedly, not in the terms of its own higher reality, not in the aspect which it assumes when we become aware of the complete Divinity. This is the justification of the cruder and more primitive elements of religion and also their sentence of transience and passing. They are justified because there is a truth of the Divine behind them and only so could that truth of the Divine be approached in that stage of the developing human consciousness and be helped forward; they are condemned, because to persist always in these crude conceptions and relations with the Divine is to miss that closer union towards which these crude beginnings are the first steps, however faltering.” (CWSA 24: 558)

“It may not be possible to seize from the beginning on all the complete integrality of that which the heart is seeking; in fact, it is only possible if the intelligence, the temperament, the emotional mind have already been developed into largeness and fineness by the trend of our previous living. That is what the experience of the normal life is meant to lead to by its widening culture of the intellect, the aesthetic and emotional mind and of our parts too of will and active experience. It widens and refines the normal being so that it may open easily to all the truth of That which was preparing it for the temple of its self manifestation. Ordinarily, man is limited in all these parts of his being and he can grasp at first only so much of the divine truth as has some large correspondence to his own nature and its past development and associations. Therefore God meets us first in different limited affirmations of his divine qualities and nature; he presents himself to the seeker as an absolute of the things he can understand and to which his will and heart can respond; he discloses some name and aspect of his Godhead. This is what is called in Yoga the *iṣṭa-devatā*, the name and form elected by our nature for its worship. In order that the human being may embrace this Godhead with every part of himself, it is represented with a form that answers to its aspects and qualities and which becomes the living body of God to the adorer. These are those forms of Vishnu, Shiva, Krishna, Kali, Durga, Christ, Buddha, which

the mind of man seizes on for adoration. Even the monotheist who worships a formless Godhead, yet gives to him some form of quality, some mental form or form of Nature by which he envisages and approaches him. But to be able to see a living form, a mental body, as it were, of the Divine gives to the approach a greater closeness and sweetness." (CWSA 24: 600–601)

6. The motives of devotion

"Even popular religion is a sort of ignorant Yoga of devotion. But it does not become what we specifically call Yoga until the motive becomes in a certain degree clairvoyant, until it sees that union is its object and that love is the principle of union, and until therefore it tries to realise love and lose its separative character in love. When that has been accomplished, then the Yoga has taken its decisive step and is sure of its fruition. Thus the motives of devotion have first to direct themselves engrossingly and predominantly towards the Divine, then to transform themselves so that they are rid of their more earthy elements and finally to take their stand in pure and perfect love. All those that cannot coexist with the perfect union of love, must eventually fall away, while only those that can form themselves into expressions of divine love and into means of enjoying divine love, can remain." (CWSA 24: 559)

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“This Yoga of love will give you a highest potential force for spiritual largeness and unity and freedom. But it must be a love which is one with God-knowledge. ... But when the God lover is also the God-knower, the lover becomes one self with the Beloved; for he is the chosen of the Most High and the elect of the Spirit. Develop in yourself this God-engrossed love; the heart spiritualised and lifted beyond the limitations of its lower nature will reveal to you most intimately the secrets of God’s immeasurable being, bring into you the whole touch and influx and glory of his divine Power and open to you the mysteries of an eternal rapture. It is perfect love that is the key to a perfect knowledge.

This integral God-love demands too an integral work for the sake of the Divine in yourself and in all creatures. ... Love is the crown of works and the crown of knowledge.” (CWSA 19: 589–590)

“In the transformation of ordinary religious worship into the Yoga of pure Bhakti we see this development from the motivated and interested worship of popular religion into a principle of motiveless and self-existent love. This last is in fact the touchstone [standard] of the real Bhakti and shows whether we are really in the central way or are only upon one of the bypaths leading to it.” (CWSA 24: 553)

7. The human soul has to come freely to the Divine and offer itself through love

“It is the human soul that has freely to come to the Divine and offer itself to his overpowering force that he may seize and uplift it towards his own divine levels, and give it that joy of mastery of the finite nature by the Infinite and of service to the Highest by which there comes freedom from the ego and the lower nature. Love is the key of this relation, and this service, *dāsyam*, is in Indian Yoga the happy service of the divine Friend or the passionate service to the divine Beloved.” (CWSA 24: 565)

“Consecration becomes in its fullness a devoting of all our being to the Divine; therefore also of all our thoughts and our works. Here the Yoga takes into itself the essential elements of the Yoga of works and the Yoga of knowledge, but in its own manner and with its own peculiar spirit. It is a sacrifice of life and works to the Divine, but a sacrifice of love more than a tuning of the will to the divine Will. The bhakta offers up his life and all that he is and all that he has and all that he does to the Divine.” (CWSA 24: 573)

“This surrender may take the ascetic form, as when he leaves the ordinary life of men and devotes his days solely to prayer and praise and worship or to ecstatic meditation, gives up his personal possessions and becomes the monk

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or the mendicant whose one and only possession is the Divine, gives up all actions in life except those only which help or belong to the communion with the Divine and communion with other devotees, or at most keeps the doing from the secure fortress of the ascetic life of those services to men which seem peculiarly the outflowing of the divine nature of love, compassion and good. But there is the wider self-consecration, proper to any integral Yoga, which, accepting the fullness of life and the world in its entirety as the play of the Divine, offers up the whole being into his possession; it is a holding of all one is and has as belonging to him only and not to ourselves and a doing of all works as an offering to him. By this comes the complete active consecration of both the inner and the outer life, the unmutilated self-giving.” (CWSA 24: 573–574)

“... the sacrifice of love is not less demanded of us for our spiritual perfection; it is even more intense and rich in its singleness and can be made not less vast and pure. This pure wideness is brought into the intensity of the sacrifice of love when into all our activities there is poured the spirit and power of a divine infinite joy and the whole atmosphere of our life is suffused with an engrossing adoration of the One who is the All and the Highest. For then does the sacrifice of love attain its utter perfection when, offered to the divine All, it becomes integral, catholic and boundless, and when, uplifted to the Supreme, it

ceases to be the weak, superficial and transient movement men call love and becomes a pure and grand and deep uniting Ananda.” (CWSA 23: 158)

“The way of the integral Yoga of bhakti will be to universalize this conception of the Deity, to personalise him intimately by a multiple and an all-embracing relation, to make him constantly present to all the being and to devote, give up, surrender the whole being to him, so that he shall dwell near to us and in us and we with him and in him.” (CWSA 24: 601)

8. The consecration of the thoughts to the Divine—devotion of the mind

“There is also the consecration of the thoughts to the Divine. In its inception this is the attempt to fix the mind on the object of adoration,—for naturally the restless human mind is occupied with other objects and, even when it is directed upwards, constantly drawn away by the world,—so that in the end it habitually thinks of him and all else is only secondary and thought of only in relation to him. This is done often with the aid of a physical image or, more intimately and characteristically, of a mantra or a divine name through which the divine being is realised.” (CWSA 24: 574)

“There are supposed by those who systematise to be three stages of the seeking through the devotion of the mind, first, the constant hearing of the divine name, qualities and all that has been attached to them, secondly, the constant thinking on them or on the divine being or personality, thirdly, the settling and fixing of the mind on the object; and by this comes the full realisation. And by these, too, there comes when the accompanying feeling or the concentration is very intense, the Samadhi, the ecstatic trance in which the consciousness passes away from outer objects. But all this is really incidental; the one thing essential is the intense devotion of the thought in the mind to the object of adoration.” (CWSA 24: 574)

“Although it seems akin to the contemplation of the way of knowledge, it differs from that in its spirit. It is in its real nature not a still, but an ecstatic contemplation; it seeks not to pass into the being of the Divine, but to bring the Divine into ourselves and to lose ourselves in the deep ecstasy of his presence or of his possession; and its bliss is not the peace of unity, but the ecstasy of union. Here, too, there may be the separative self consecration which ends in the giving up of all other thought of life for the possession of this ecstasy, eternal afterwards in planes beyond, or the comprehensive consecration in which all the thoughts are full of the Divine and even in the occupations of life every thought remembers him. As in the other

Yogas, so in this, one comes to see the Divine everywhere and in all and to pour out the realisation of the Divine in all one's inner activities and outward actions. But all is supported here by the primary force of the emotional union: for it is by love that the entire self-consecration and the entire possession is accomplished, and thought and action become shapes and figures of the divine love which possesses the spirit and its members." (CWSA 24: 574–575)

"*Manana and darśana*, a constant thinking of him in all things and seeing of him always and everywhere is essential to this way of devotion. When we look on the things of physical Nature, in them we have to see the divine object of our love; when we look upon men and beings, we have to see him in them and in our relation with them to see that we are entering into relations with forms of him; when breaking beyond the limitation of the material world we know or have relations with the beings of other planes, still the same thought and vision has to be made real to our minds. The normal habit of our minds which are open only to the material and apparent form and the ordinary mutilated relation and ignore the secret Godhead within, has to yield by an unceasing habit of all-embracing love and delight to this deeper and ampler comprehension and this greater relation. In all godheads we have to see this one God whom we worship with our heart and all our

being; they are forms of his divinity. So enlarging our spiritual embrace we reach a point at which all is he and the delight of this consciousness becomes to us our normal uninterrupted way of looking at the world. That brings us the outward or objective universality of our union with him.” (CWSA 24: 601–602)

9. The intimate yoga of love is attained by the intensity of its longing

“But there is the more intimate Yoga which from the first consists in this love and attains only by the intensity of its longing without other process or method. All the rest comes, but it comes out of this, as leaf and flower out of the seed; other things are not the means of developing and fulfilling love, but the radiations of love already growing in the soul. This is the way that the soul follows when, while occupied perhaps with the normal human life, it has heard the flute of the Godhead behind the near screen of secret woodlands and no longer possesses itself, can have no satisfaction or rest till it has pursued and seized and possessed the divine fluteplayer. This is in essence the power of love itself in the heart and soul turning from earthly objects to the spiritual source of all beauty and delight.” (CWSA 24: 575)

“There live in this seeking all the sentiment and passion, all the moods and experiences of love concentrated on a supreme object of desire and intensified a hundredfold beyond the highest acme of intensity possible to a human love. There is the disturbance of the whole life, the illumination by an unseized vision, the unsatisfied yearning for a single object of the heart’s desire, the intense impatience of all that distracts from the one preoccupation, the intense pain of the obstacles that stand in the way of possession, the perfect vision of all beauty and delight in a single form.” (CWSA 24: 575)

“And there are all the many moods of love, the joy of musing and absorption, the delight of the meeting and fulfilment and embrace, the pain of separation, the wrath of love, the tears of longing, the increased delight of reunion. The heart is the scene of this supreme idyll of the inner consciousness, but a heart which undergoes increasingly an intense spiritual change and becomes the radiantly unfolding lotus of the spirit. And as the intensity of its seeking is beyond the highest power of the normal human emotions, so also the delight and the final ecstasy are beyond the reach of the imagination and beyond expression by speech. For this is the delight of the Godhead that passes human understanding.” (CWSA 24: 575–576)

10. By love we seek unity with the Divine in all the delight of His being

"By knowledge we seek unity with the Divine in his conscious being: by works we seek also unity with the Divine in his conscious being, not statically, but dynamically, through conscious union with the divine Will; but by love we seek unity with him in all the delight of his being. For that reason the way of love, however narrow it may seem in some of its first movements, is in the end more imperatively all-embracing than any other motive of Yoga." (CWSA 24: 588)

"It [Indian bhakti] uses human relations and sees a divine person, not as mere figures, but because there are divine relations of supreme Delight and Beauty with the human soul of which human relations are the imperfect but still the real type, and because that Delight and Beauty are not abstractions or qualities of a quite impalpable metaphysical entity, but the very body and form of the supreme Being." (CWSA 24: 576)

"For love is the one emotion in us which can be entirely motiveless and self-existent; love need have no other motive than love. For all our emotions arise either from the seeking after delight and the possession of it, or from the baffling of the search, or from the failure of the delight we

have possessed or had thought to grasp; but love is that by which we can enter directly into possession of the self-existent delight of the divine Being.” (CWSA 24: 559)

“He is sought within in the heart and therefore apart from all by an inward-gathered concentration of the being in the soul itself; but he is also seen and loved everywhere where he manifests his being. All the beauty and joy of existence is seen as his joy and beauty; he is embraced by the spirit in all beings; the ecstasy of love enjoyed pours itself out in a universal love; all existence becomes a radiation of its delight and even in its very appearances is transformed into something other than its outward appearance. The world itself is experienced as a play of the divine Delight, a Lila, and that in which the world loses itself is the heaven of beatitude of the eternal union.” (CWSA 24: 576)

“But what is the aim of that evolution? ... the continual growth towards a divine knowledge, strength, love and purity. These things alone are real virtue and this virtue is its own reward. The one true reward of the works of love is to grow ever in capacity and delight of love up to the ecstasy of the spirit’s all-seizing embrace and universal passion; the one reward of the works of right Knowledge is to grow perpetually into the infinite Light; the one reward of the works of right Power is to harbour more and more of the Force Divine, and of the works of purity to be freed

more and more from egoism into that immaculate wideness where all things are transformed and reconciled into the divine equality.” (CWSA 13: 267)

“The general power of Delight is love and the special mould which the joy of love takes is the vision of beauty. The God lover is the universal lover and he embraces the All-blissful and All-beautiful. When universal love has seized on his heart, it is the decisive sign that the Divine has taken possession of him; and when he has the vision of the All-beautiful everywhere and can feel at all times the bliss of his embrace, that is the decisive sign that he has taken possession of the Divine. Union is the consummation of love, but it is this mutual possession that gives it at once the acme and the largest reach of its intensity. It is the foundation of oneness in ecstasy.” (CWSA 24: 591–592)

“So too in all happenings we have to come to see the dealings with us of the divine Lover and take such pleasure in them that even grief and suffering and physical pain become his gifts and turn to delight and disappear finally into delight, slain by the sense of the divine contact, because the touch of his hands is the alchemist of a miraculous transformation.” (CWSA 24: 602)

“Some reject life because it is tainted with grief and pain, but to the God-lover grief and pain become means of

meeting with him, imprints of his pressure and finally cease as soon as our union with his nature becomes too complete for these masks of the universal delight at all to conceal it. They change into the Ananda.” (CWSA 24: 602)

“The aim of this synthetic or integral Yoga which we are considering, is union with the being, consciousness and delight of the Divine through every part of our human nature separately or simultaneously, but all in the long end harmonised and unified, so that the whole may be transformed into a divine nature of being.” (CWSA 24: 587)

“This delight which is so entirely imperative, is the delight in the Divine for his own sake and for nothing else, for no cause or gain whatever beyond itself. It does not seek God for anything that he can give us or for any particular quality in him, but simply and purely because he is our self and our whole being and our all. It embraces the delight of the transcendence, not for the sake of transcendence, but because he is the transcendent; the delight of the universal, not for the sake of universality, but because he is the universal; the delight of the individual not for the sake of individual satisfaction, but because he is the individual. ... To possess him absolutely indeed is necessarily the aim of this delight in his being, but this comes when we possess him utterly and are utterly possessed by him and need be limited to no particular

status or condition. To seek after him in some heaven of bliss is to seek him not for himself, but for the bliss of heaven; when we have all the true delight of his being, then heaven is within ourselves, and wherever he is and we are, there we have the joy of his kingdom. So too to seek him only in ourselves and for ourselves, is to limit both ourselves and our joy in him. The integral delight embraces him not only within our own individual being, but equally in all men and in all beings. And because in him we are one with all, it seeks him not only for ourselves, but for all our fellows. A perfect and complete delight in the Divine, perfect because pure and self-existent, complete because all-embracing as well as all-absorbing, is the meaning of the way of Bhakti for the seeker of the integral Yoga.” (CWSA 24: 589–590)

11. When the lotus of the heart breaks open

“Brahman always reveals himself to us in three ways, within ourselves, above our plane, around us in the universe. Within us, there are two centres of the Purusha, the inner Soul through which he touches us to our awakening; there is the Purusha in the lotus of the heart which opens upward all our powers and the Purusha in the thousand-petalled lotus whence descend through the thought and will, opening the third eye in us, the lightnings of vision and the fire of the divine energy. The bliss

existence may come to us through either one of these centres.

When the lotus of the heart breaks open, we feel a divine joy, love and peace expanding in us like a flower of light which irradiates the whole being. They can then unite themselves with their secret source, the Divine in our hearts, and adore him as in a temple; they can flow upwards to take possession of the thought and the will and break out upward towards the Transcendent; they stream out in thought and feeling and act towards all that is around us. But so long as our normal being offers any obstacle or is not wholly moulded into a response to this divine influence or an instrument of this divine possession, the experience will be intermittent and we may fall back constantly into our old mortal heart; but by repetition, *abhyāsa*, or by the force of our desire and adoration of the Divine, it will be progressively remoulded until this abnormal experience becomes our natural consciousness.” (CWSA 24: 596)

12. In our inner living we shall grow conscious of ourselves as a part of His being

“Inwardly, the image of the Beloved has to become visible to the eye within, dwelling in us as in his mansion, informing our hearts with the sweetness of his presence, presiding over all our activities of mind and life as the

friend, master and lover from the summit of our being, uniting us from above with himself in the universe.” (CWSA 24: 602)

“A constant inner communion is the joy to be made close and permanent and unfailing. This communion is not to be confined to an exceptional nearness and adoration when we retire quite into ourselves away from our normal preoccupations, nor is it to be sought by a putting away of our human activities. All our thoughts, impulses, feelings, actions have to be referred to him for his sanction or disallowance, or if we cannot yet reach this point, to be offered to him in our sacrifice of aspiration, so that he may more and more descend into us and be present in them all and pervade them with all his will and power, his light and knowledge, his love and delight.” (CWSA 24: 602)

“In the end all our thoughts, feelings, impulses, actions will begin to proceed from him and change into some divine seed and form of themselves; in our whole inner living we shall have grown conscious of ourselves as a part of his being till between the existence of the Divine whom we adore and our own lives there is no longer any division.” (CWSA 24: 602)

“... it is not possible for the tongue of human speech to tell all the utter unity and all the eternal variety of the ananda

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of divine love. Our higher and our lower members are both flooded with it, the mind and life no less than the soul: even the physical body takes its share of the joy, feels the touch, is filled in all its limbs, veins, nerves with the flowing of the wine of the ecstasy, *amṛta*. Love and Ananda are the last word of being, the secret of secrets, the mystery of mysteries.” (CWSA 24: 605)

VII—The Highest and the Greatest Relation with the Divine Is the Passion of the Lover and the Beloved

1. Wherever there is the desire of the soul for its utter union with God, this form of the Divine yearning makes its way

“The relations which arise out of this attitude towards the Divine, are that of the divine Father and the Mother with the child and that of the divine Friend. ...

But the highest and the greatest relation is that which starts from none of the ordinary religious motives, but is rather of the very essence of Yoga, springs from the very nature of love itself; it is the passion of the Lover and the Beloved. Wherever there is the desire of the soul for its utter union with God, this form of the divine yearning makes its way even into religions which seem to do without it and give it no place in their ordinary system. Here the one thing asked for is love, the one thing feared is the loss of love, the one sorrow is the sorrow of separation of love; for all other things either do not exist for the lover or come in only as incidents or as results and not as objects or conditions of love. ... But here the beginning is love and the end is love and the whole aim is love. There is indeed the desire of possession, but even this is overcome in the fullness of the self-existent love and the final demand of the Bhakta is simply that his bhakti may never cease nor

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diminish. He does not ask for heaven or for liberation from
birth or for any other object, but only that his love may be
eternal and absolute.” (CWSA 24: 568–569)

“All the relations by which this union comes about, become
on this path intensely and blissfully personal. That which in
the end contains, takes up or unifies them all, is the
relation of lover and beloved, because that is the most
intense and blissful of all and carries up all the rest into its
heights and yet exceeds them.” (CWSA 24: 603)

“Indian devotion has especially seized upon the most
intimate human relations and made them stepping-stones
to the supra-human. God the Guru, God the Master, God
the Friend, God the Mother, God the Child, God the Self,
each of these experiences—for to us they are more than
merely ideas,—it has carried to its extreme possibilities.
But none of them has it pursued, embraced, sung with a
more exultant passion of intimate realisation than the
yearning for God the Lover, God the Beloved. It would
seem as if this passionate human symbol were the natural
culminating point for the mounting flame of the soul’s
devotion: for it is found wherever that devotion has
entered into the most secret shrine of the inner temple.”
(CWSA 13: 465)

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2. The lover and the beloved enjoy their union in difference and they throw themselves into each other and become one Self

"... love has necessarily a twofold fulfilment by its very nature, that by which the lover and the beloved enjoy their union in difference and all too that enhances the joy of various union, and that by which they throw themselves into each other and become one Self. That truth is quite sufficient to start with, for it is the very nature of love, and since love is the essential motive of this Yoga, as is the whole nature of love, so will be too the crown and fulfilment of the movement of the Yoga." (CWSA 23: 560)

3. The yoga of devotion is complete only when the lover and the Beloved are unified and difference is abolished in the ecstasy of a divine oneness

4. In the unification of the lover and the Beloved there is no extinction or absorption of the lover

"As the servant and instrument of the Divine he works, but the crown of his labour and its perfect base or motive is oneness with that which he serves and fulfils. The Yoga of devotion too is complete only when the lover and the Beloved are unified and difference is abolished in the

VII—The Highest and the Greatest Relation with the Divine is the Passion of the Lover and the Beloved ecstasy of a divine oneness; and yet in the mystery of this unification there is the sole existence of the Beloved but no extinction or absorption of the lover.” (CWSA 23: 362)

5. In the relation of the lover and the Beloved, yearning is satisfied in the vision and the joy of the All-Beautiful

“Love is a seeking for mutual possession, and it is here that the demand for mutual possession becomes absolute. Passing beyond desire of possession which means a difference, it is a seeking for oneness, and it is here that the idea of oneness, of two souls merging into each other and becoming one finds the acme of its longing and the utterness of its satisfaction. Love, too, is a yearning for beauty, and it is here [the relation of the Lover and Beloved] that the yearning is eternally satisfied in the vision and the touch and the joy of the All-beautiful.” (CWSA 24: 569)

6. By turning the human emotion Godwards, all love's essential instincts are divinised, raised, and satisfied in bliss

“Moreover, this relation [the relation of the Lover and Beloved] is that which as between human being and human being demands the most and, even while reaching

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the greatest intensities, is still the least satisfied, because
only in the Divine can it find its real and its utter
satisfaction. Therefore it is here most that the turning of
human emotion Godwards finds its full meaning and
discovers all the truth of which love is the human symbol,
all its essential instincts divinised, raised, satisfied in the
bliss from which our life was born and towards which by
oneness it returns in the Ananda of the divine existence
where love is absolute, eternal and unalloyed.” (CWSA 24:
570)

**7. In Integral Yoga, the relation of the lover and
Beloved will not be exclusive**

**8. From the beginning Integral Yoga takes into
itself something of the hues of the other
relations**

“From the beginning even it is possible to have this closest
relation of the lover and beloved, but it will not be as
exclusive for the integral Yogin as for certain purely
ecstatic ways of Bhakti. It will from the beginning take into
itself something of the hues of the other relations, since he
follows too knowledge and works and has need of the
Divine as teacher, friend and master. The growing of the
love of God must carry with it in him an expansion of the
knowledge of God and of the action of the divine Will in his
nature and living. The divine Lover reveals himself; he

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9. Other relationships with the Divine are

a. Divine Father, Divine Mother, Divine Friend

"The relations which arise out of this attitude towards the Divine, are that of the divine Father and the Mother with the child and that of the divine Friend. ... In these things we find there is a certain gradation. For the relation of fatherhood is always less close, intense, passionate, intimate, and therefore it is less resorted to in the Yoga which seeks for the closest union. That of the divine Friend is a thing sweeter and more intimate, admits of an equality and intimacy even in inequality and the beginning of mutual self-giving; at its closest when all idea of other giving and taking disappears, when this relation becomes motiveless except for the one sole all-sufficing motive of love, it turns into the free and happy relation of the playmate in the Lila of existence. But closer and more intimate still is the relation of the Mother and the child, and

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that therefore plays a very large part wherever the
religious impulse is most richly fervent and springs most
warmly from the heart of man. The soul goes to the
Mother-Soul in all its desires and troubles and the divine
Mother wishes that it should be so, so that she may pour
out her heart of love. It turns to her too because of the
self-existent nature of this love and because that points us
to the home towards which we turn from our wanderings
in the world and to the bosom in which we find our rest.”
(CWSA 24: 568)

b. The teacher and guide

“He is the teacher and guide and leads us to knowledge;
at every step of the developing inner light and vision, we
feel his touch like that of the artist moulding our clay of
mind, his voice revealing the truth and its word, the
thought he gives us to which we respond, the flashing of
his spears of lightning which chase the darkness of our
ignorance. Especially, in proportion as the partial lights of
the mind become transformed into lights of gnosis, in
whatever slighter or greater degree that may happen, we
feel it as a transformation of our mentality into his and
more and more he becomes the thinker and seer in us. We
cease to think and see for ourselves, but think only what
he wills to think for us and see only what he sees for us.
And then the teacher is fulfilled in the lover; he lays hands

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on all our mental being to embrace and possess, to enjoy
and use it.” (CWSA 24: 603)

“To the Divine as these things the human soul comes for help, for protection, for guidance, for fruition,—or if knowledge be the aim, to the Guide, Teacher, Giver of light, for the Divine is the Sun of knowledge,—or it comes in pain and suffering for relief and solace and deliverance, it may be deliverance either from the suffering itself or from the world-existence which is the habitat of the suffering or from all its inner and real causes.” (CWSA 24: 568)

c. The Master

“He is the Master; but in this way of approach all distance and separation, all awe and fear and mere obedience disappear, because we become too close and united with him for these things to endure and it is the lover of our being who takes it up and occupies and uses and does with it whatever he wills. Obedience is the sign of the servant, but that is the lowest stage of this relation, *dāśya*.” (CWSA 24: 603)

d. The slave of God

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"Afterwards we do not obey, but move to his will as the string replies to the finger of the musician. To be the instrument is this higher stage of self-surrender and submission. But this is the living and loving instrument and it ends in the whole nature of our being becoming the slave of God, rejoicing in his possession and its own blissful subjection to the divine grasp and mastery. With a passionate delight it does all he wills it to do without questioning and bears all he would have it bear, because what it bears is the burden of the beloved being." (CWSA 24: 603)

e. The friend, the comrade and eternal companion

"He is the friend, the adviser, helper, saviour in trouble and distress, the defender from enemies, the hero who fights our battles for us or under whose shield we fight, the charioteer, the pilot of our ways. And here we come at once to a closer intimacy; he is the comrade and eternal companion, the playmate of the game of living. But still there is so far a certain division, however pleasant, and friendship is too much limited by the appearance of beneficence." (CWSA 24: 603–604)

"The lover can wound, abandon, be wroth with us, seem to betray, yet our love endures and even grows by these oppositions; they increase the joy of reunion and the joy

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of possession; through them the lover remains the friend,
and all that he does we find in the end has been done by
the lover and helper of our being for our soul's perfection
as well as for his joy in us. These contradictions lead to a
greater intimacy." (CWSA 24: 604)

f. All these things the lover takes up

"He is the father and mother too of our being, its source
and protector and its indulgent cherisher and giver of our
desires. He is the child born to our desire whom we cherish
and rear. All these things the lover takes up; his love in its
intimacy and oneness keeps in it the paternal and maternal
care and lends itself to our demands upon it. All is unified
in that deepest many-sided relation." (CWSA 24: 604)

"We may seek after him passionately and pursue the
unseen beloved; but also the lover whom we think not of,
may pursue us, may come upon us in the midst of the
world and seize on us for his own whether at first we will
or no. Even, he may come to us at first as an enemy, with
the wrath of love, and our earliest relations with him may
be those of battle and struggle." (CWSA 24: 605)

10. There is nothing that is beyond the reach of the God-lover or denied to him

VII—The Highest and the Greatest Relation with the Divine is the
Passion of the Lover and the Beloved

“Love and Ananda are the last word of being, the secret of secrets, the mystery of mysteries.

Thus universalised, personalised, raised to its intensities, made all-occupying, all-embracing, all-fulfilling, the way of love and delight gives the supreme liberation. Its highest crest is a supracosmic union. But for love complete union is *mukti*; liberation has to it no other sense; and it includes all kinds of *mukti* together, nor are they in the end, as some would have it, merely successive to each other and therefore mutually exclusive. We have the absolute union of the divine with the human spirit, *sāyujya*; in that reveals itself a content of all that depends here upon difference,—but there the difference is only a form of oneness, —ananda too of nearness and contact and mutual presence, *sāmīpya*, *sālokya*, ananda of mutual reflection, the thing that we call likeness, *sādrśya*, and other wonderful things too for which language has as yet no name. There is nothing which is beyond the reach of the God-lover or denied to him; for he is the favourite of the divine Lover and the self of the Beloved.” (CWSA 24: 605–606)

VIII—Mental, Vital and Psychic Bhakti

“In the mind one may have a strong admiration or appreciation for the intellectual or spiritual greatness of the Guru,— follow him and mentally accept his dictates. But if it is merely mental, that does not carry you very far. Of course, there is no harm in having that also. But by itself it does not open the whole of the inner being; it only establishes a mental contact.

The vital Bhakti demands and demands. It imposes its own conditions. It surrenders itself to God, but conditionally. It says to God, ‘You are so great,’ ‘I worship you,’—‘and now you must satisfy this desire of mine or that ambition’; ‘make me great; make me a great sadhaka, a great yogin’ etc.

The unillumined mind also surrenders to the Truth, but makes its own conditions. It says to the Truth, ‘Satisfy my judgment, and my opinion’; it demands the Truth to cast itself in the mind’s own forms.

The vital being also insists on the Truth throwing itself into its own vital movement of force. The vital being pulls at the Higher Power and pulls and pulls at the vital being of the Guru.

Both of them (the mental and the vital) have got an *arrière pensée* (mental reservation) in their surrender.

Psychic Bhakti is not like that. Because it is in communication with the Divinity behind, it is capable of

VIII—Mental, Vital and Psychic Bhakti

true Bhakti. Psychic Bhakti does not make any demand, it makes no reservations. It is satisfied with its own existence. The psychic being knows how to obey the Truth in the right way. It gives itself up truly to God or the Guru, and because it can give itself up truly, therefore it can also receive truly.

When the psychic being comes to the surface it feels sad if it sees that the mental or the vital being is making a fool of itself. That sadness is purity offended.

When the mind is playing its own game, or when the vital being is carried away by its impulses, it is the psychic being which says, 'I don't want these things.' 'What am I here for after all?' 'I am here for the Truth; I am not here for these things.'

The psychic sadness is a quite different thing from mental dissatisfaction or vital sadness or physical depression.

If the psychic being is strong, it makes itself felt on the mental or the vital being, and forces them to change. But if it is weak, the other parts take advantage of it and use the psychic for their own advantage.

In some cases it comes up to the surface and upsets the mental and the vital being and throws all their settled arrangements and habits into disorder, pressing for a new and divine order. But if the mind or the vital being is stronger than the psychic then it casts only an occasional influence and gradually retires behind. All its cry is in the

wilderness; and the mental or the vital being goes on in its own round.

Lastly, the psychic being refuses to be deceived by appearances. It is not carried away by falsehood. It refuses to be oppressed by falsehood—nor does it exaggerate the Truth. For example, even if everything around says, 'There is no God', the psychic being refuses to believe in it. It says,—'I know' and 'I know because I feel.'

And because it knows the thing behind, it is not deceived by appearances. It immediately feels the force.

Also, when the psychic being is awakened, it throws out all the dross from the emotional being and makes it free from sentimentalism or the lower play of emotionalism.

But it does not carry in it the dryness of the mind or the exaggeration of the vital feelings. It gives the just touch to each emotion." (CWSA 36: 380–381)

IX—Psychic and Bhakti

Psychic bhakti is calm, quiet, deep, not noisy, not making demands

“If you refuse to do what I tell you, you cannot have the fulfilment you hope for. You can if you like remain as a Bhakta all your life, but even then you must renounce the vital form of Bhakti. You must bring back the psychic Bhakti, the Bhakti which is calm, quiet, deep, the Bhakti which is not noisy, not making demands, the Bhakti which finds its greatest pleasure in obedience. This is the only Bhakti in which I can take delight; I accept no other.”
(CWSA 36: 320)

Bhakti comes when the psychic being is awake

“Bhakti ... is a state which comes when the psychic being is awake and prominent.” (CWSA 29: 95) (CWSA 29: 352)

“... and it is only the psychic that gives faith and devotion.”
(CWSA 30: 464)

“The contribution of the psychic being to the sadhana is: (1) love and bhakti, a love not vital, demanding and egoistic but without conditions or claims, self-existent...”
(CWSA 30: 339)

“Bhakti and love are part of the psychic movement, a large part of it; in aspiring for the psychic change, you are aspiring for bhakti and love.” (CWSA 30: 362)

“Faith and devotion come from the soul...” (CWSA 31: 136)

Bhakti helps in psychic opening

“The direct opening of the psychic centre is easy only when the ego-centricity is greatly diminished and also if there is a strong bhakti for the Mother. A spiritual humility and sense of submission and dependence is necessary.” (CWSA 30: 352–353)

“Devotion and a more and more complete inner consecration are the best way to open the psychic.” (CWSA 30: 384)

“The first opening is effected by a concentration in the heart, a call to the Divine to manifest within us and through the psychic to take up and lead the whole nature. Aspiration, prayer, bhakti, love, surrender are the main supports of this part of the sadhana—accompanied by a rejection of all that stands in the way of what we aspire for.” (CWSA 30: 328)

“The psychic can be liberated by love and devotion...”
(CWSA 31: 238)

“Remember what I told you that it is the psychic growth and not experiences that are the road for you just now. That means three things—... 3rd, the psychic feeling in sadhana which presses towards the growth of bhakti, feels it a joy simply to think, feel, write, speak of, remember the Divine, grows full of a quiet self-upliftment towards the Divine and lives in that more than in outward things.”
(CWSA 30: 347–348)

“The realisation of the psychic being, its awakening and the bringing of it in front depend mainly on the extent to which one can develop a personal relation with the Divine, a relation of bhakti, love, reliance, self-giving, rejection of the insinuations of the separating and self-asserting mental, vital and physical ego.” (CWSA 30: 360)

“The growth of Bhakti which you feel is the first sign of the psychic development.” (CWSA 30: 321)

“The psychic opening through the heart puts us primarily into connection with the individual Divine, the Divine in his inner relations with us; it is especially the source of love and bhakti.” (CWSA 30: 327)

“The tears probably come from the inner psychic being (behind the heart) which is touched in this state of quietness and peace. It is the sign of an aspiration and devotion in the soul which is trying to come to the surface. If the psychic being can come to the surface and a harmony be established in the nature, all of it being turned towards the Divine, this kind of expression will cease.”
(CWSA 30: 375)

X—Periods of Darkness Can Come Immediately After a Considerable Progress in Bhakti

“Your impression of the dwindling light is also an impression of this mind natural to it especially in its periods of darkness; for that matter when the periods of darkness come to any sadhak they always seem darker than before; that is the nature of the darkness, to give that impression always. It is also quite according to the rule of these reactions that it should have come immediately after a considerable progress in bhakti and the will to surrender in the inner being—for it comes from the spirit of darkness which attacks the sadhak whenever it can, and that spirit resents fiercely all progress made and hates the very idea of progress and its whole policy is to convince him by its attacks and suggestions that he has made none or that what progress he has made is after all null and inconclusive.

The laws of this world as it is are the laws of the Ignorance and the Divine in the world maintains them so long as there is the Ignorance—if He did not, the universe would crumble to pieces, *utsīdeyur ime lokāḥ*, as the Gita puts it. There are also, very naturally, conditions for getting out of the Ignorance into the Light. One of them is that the mind of the sadhak should cooperate with the Truth and that his will should cooperate with the Divine Power which, however slow its action may seem to the vital or to the

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Considerable Progress in Bhakti

physical mind, is uplifting the nature towards the Light. When that cooperation is complete, then the progress can be rapid enough; but the sadhak should not grudge the time and labour needed to make that cooperation fully possible to the blindness and weakness of human nature and effective.

All the call for faith, sincerity, surrender is only an invitation to make that cooperation more easily possible. ... If there is resistance, then it is natural that it should take more time and the work should be done from within or as it might appear underground so as to prepare the nature and undermine the resistance. It seems to me that the demand for patience is not so terribly unreasonable.”
(CWSA 31: 32)

XI—The Misunderstanding and Mutual Depreciation Which Exist Between the Followers of the Three Paths

“Since then in the union of these three powers lies our base of perfection, the seeker of an integral self-fulfilment in the Divine must avoid or throw away, if he has them at all, the misunderstanding and mutual depreciation which we often find existent between the followers of the three paths.”
(CWSA 24: 548)

To follow any of them—knowledge, love, or power—exclusively is to invite His departure from us and His denial

“But God is complex, not simple; and the temptation of the human intellect is to make a short cut to the divine nature by the exclusive worship of one of its principles. Knowledge, Love whose secret word is Delight, Power and Unity are some of the Names of God. But though they are all divine, yet to follow any of them exclusively is to invite, after the first energy is over, His departure from us and denial; for even unity, exclusively pursued, ceases to be a true oneness. Yet this error we perpetually commit. Is it Love in whose temple we adore? Then we shut its gates upon Power as a child of the world and the devil and bid Knowledge carry elsewhere her lack of sweetness and

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remoteness from the heart's fervour. We erect an idol of
Power and would pass all else through the fire of Moloch
before its sombre and formidable image, expelling Love
with scorn as a nurse of weaklings and degrading
Knowledge to the position of a squire or even a groom of
Force. Or we cultivate Knowledge with a severe aloofness
and austerity to find at last the lotus of the heart dulled
and fading—happy if its more divine faculties are not
already atrophied—and ourselves standing impotent with
our science while the thunders of Rudra crash through and
devastate the world we have organised so well by our
victorious and clear-minded efficiency.” (CWSA 13: 155–
156)

The misunderstanding which exists between the path of love and knowledge and its solution

Those who have the cult of knowledge look downward on the path of the devotee

“Those who have the cult of knowledge seem often, if not
to despise, yet to look downward from their dizzy eminence
on the path of the devotee as if it were a thing inferior,
ignorant, good only for souls that are not yet ready for the
heights of the Truth.” (CWSA 24: 548)

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“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 ethereal 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)

“If knowledge is the widest power of the consciousness and its function is to free and illumine, yet love is the deepest and most intense and its privilege is to be the key to the most profound and secret recesses of the Divine Mystery. Man, because he is a mental being, is prone to give the highest importance to the thinking mind and its reason and will and to its way of approach and effectuation of Truth and, even, he is inclined to hold that there is no other. The heart with its emotions and incalculable movements is to the eye of his intellect an obscure, uncertain and often a perilous and misleading power which needs to be kept in control by the reason and the mental will and intelligence. And yet there is in the heart or behind

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it a profounder mystic light which, if not what we call
intuition,—for that, though not of the mind, yet descends
through the mind,—has yet a direct touch upon Truth and
is nearer to the Divine than the human intellect in its pride
of knowledge. According to the ancient teaching the seat
of the immanent Divine, the hidden Purusha, is in the
mystic heart,—the secret heart-cave, *hṛdaye guhāyām*, as
the Upanishads put it,—and, according to the experience
of many Yogins, it is from its depths that there comes the
voice or the breath of the inner oracle.” (CWSA 23: 149–
150)

The devotee tends to look down on the sawdust dryness of mere knowledge

“The devotee on the other hand tends to look down on the
sawdust dryness of mere knowledge. And it is true that
philosophy by itself without the rapture of spiritual
experience is something as dry as it is clear and cannot
give all the satisfaction we seek, that its spiritual
experience even, when it has not left its supports of
thought and shot up beyond the mind, lives too much in
an abstract delight and that what it reaches, is not indeed
the void it seems to the passion of the heart, but still has
the limitations of the peaks.” (CWSA 24: 550)

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Love itself is not complete without knowledge

“On the other hand, love itself is not complete without knowledge.” (CWSA 24: 550)

Love without knowledge is blind, crude, and often a dangerous thing

“Love without knowledge is a passionate and intense, but blind, crude, often dangerous thing, a great power, but also a stumbling-block; love, limited in knowledge, condemns itself in its fervour and often by its very fervour to narrowness; ...” (CWSA 24: 547)

“It is true that devotion without knowledge is often a thing raw, crude, blind and dangerous, as the errors, crimes, follies of the religious have too often shown. But this is because devotion in them has not found its own path, its own real principle, has not therefore really entered on the path, but is fumbling and feeling after it, is on one of the bypaths that lead to it; and knowledge too at this stage is as imperfect as devotion, dogmatic, schismatic, intolerant, bound up in the narrowness of some single and exclusive principle, even that being usually very imperfectly seized. When the devotee has grasped the power that shall raise him, has really laid hold on love, that in the end purifies and enlarges him as effectively as knowledge can; they are

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equal powers, though their methods of arriving at the same
goal are different.” (CWSA 24: 548)

When love is fulfilled it does not exclude knowledge

“Love fulfilled does not exclude knowledge, but itself brings knowledge; and the completer the knowledge, the richer the possibility of love. ‘By Bhakti’ says the Lord in the Gita ‘shall a man know Me in all my extent and greatness and as I am in the principles of my being, and when he has known Me in the principles of my being, then he enters into Me.’” (CWSA 24: 547)

Knowledge of the Divine gives to love of the Divine the widest joy of experience

“Evidently the intensity of passion which says, “I do not understand, I love,” and, loving, cares not to understand, is not love’s last self-expression, but its first, nor is it its highest intensity. Rather as knowledge of the Divine grows, delight in the Divine and love of it must increase. Nor can mere rapture be secure without the foundation of knowledge; to live in what we love, gives that security, and to live in it means to be one with it in consciousness, and oneness of consciousness is the perfect condition of knowledge. Knowledge of the Divine gives to love of the Divine its firmest security, opens to it its own widest joy of

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experience, raises it to its highest pinnacles of outlook.”
(CWSA 24: 550–551)

“Once it [Bhakti] is active in us, all other ways of Yoga convert themselves, as it were, to its law and find by it their own richest significance. This integral devotion of our being to God does not turn away from knowledge; the bhakta of this path is the God-lover who is also the God-knower, because by knowledge of his being comes the whole delight of his being; but it is in delight that knowledge fulfils itself, the knowledge of the transcendent in the delight of the Transcendent, the knowledge of the universal in the delight of the universal Godhead, the knowledge of the individual manifestation in the delight of God in the individual, the knowledge of the impersonal in the pure delight of his impersonal being, the knowledge of the personal in the full delight of his personality, the knowledge of his qualities and their play in the delight of the manifestation, the knowledge of the quality-less in the delight of his colourless existence and non-manifestation.”
(CWSA 24: 590)

“Love too as well as knowledge brings us to a highest oneness and it gives to that oneness its greatest possible depth and intensity. It is true that love returns gladly upon a difference in oneness, by which the oneness itself becomes richer and sweeter. But here we may say that the

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heart is wiser than the thought, at least than that thought which fixes upon opposite ideas of the Divine and concentrates on one to the exclusion of the other which seems its contrary, but is really its complement and a means of its greatest fulfilment. This is the weakness of the mind that it limits itself by its thoughts, its positive and negative ideas, the aspects of the Divine Reality that it sees, and tends too much to pit one against the other.” (CWSA 24: 549)

“By Bhakti as by knowledge, as the Gita tells us, we arrive at unity with the Purushottama, the Supreme who contains in himself the impersonal and numberless personalities, the qualitless and infinite qualities, pure being, consciousness and delight and the endless play of their relations.” (CWSA 24: 550)

The misunderstanding which exists between love and will and its solutions

“... it may be difficult for the human will with its many earth-ties to accept, this transformation of the spirit and nature of love from the character of a mixed and limited human emotion to a supreme and all-embracing divine passion. It is when we come to the works of love that a certain perplexity is likely to intervene. It is possible, ... to cut here also the knot of the problem, escape the difficulty

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of uniting the spirit of love with the crudities of the world-
action by avoiding it; it is open to us, withdrawing from
outward life and action altogether, to live alone with our
adoration of the Divine in the heart's silence. It is possible
too to admit only those acts that are either in themselves
an expression of love for the Divine, prayer, praise,
symbolic acts of worship or subordinate activities that may
be attached to these things and partake of their spirit, and
to leave aside all else; the soul turns away to satisfy its
inner longing in the absorbed or the God-centred life of the
saint and devotee." (CWSA 23: 161–162)

"It is possible, again, to open the doors of life more largely
and to spend one's love of the Divine in acts of service to
those around us and to the race; one can do the works of
philanthropy, benevolence and beneficence, charity and
succour to man and beast and every creature, transfigure
them by a kind of spiritual passion, at least bring into their
merely ethical appearance the greater power of a spiritual
motive. This is indeed the solution most commonly
favoured by the religious mind of today and we see it
confidently advanced on all sides as the proper field of
action of the Godseeker or of the man whose life is founded
on divine love and knowledge. But the integral Yoga
pushed towards a complete union of the Divine with the
earth-life cannot stop short in this narrow province or limit
this union within the lesser dimensions of an ethical rule of

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philanthropy and beneficence. All action must be made in
it part of the God-life, our acts of knowledge, our acts of
power and production and creation, our acts of joy and
beauty and the soul's pleasure, our acts of will and
endeavour and struggle and not our acts only of love and
beneficent service. Its way to do these things will be not
outward and mental, but inward and spiritual, and to that
end it will bring into all activities, whatever they are, the
spirit of divine love, the spirit of adoration and worship, the
spirit of happiness in the Divine and in the beauty of the
Divine so as to make all life a sacrifice of the works of the
soul's love to the Divine, its cult of the Master of its
existence." (CWSA 23: 162)

"If the mutual misunderstandings of these two powers
[knowledge and love] are an ignorance, no less so is the
tendency of both to look down on the way of works as
inferior to their own loftier pitch of spiritual achievement.
There is an intensity of love, as there is an intensity of
knowledge, to which works seem something outward and
distracting. But works are only thus outward and
distracting when we have not found oneness of will and
consciousness with the Supreme. When once that is found,
works become the very power of knowledge and the very
outpouring of love. If knowledge is the very state of
oneness and love its bliss, divine works are the living power
of its light and sweetness." (CWSA 24: 551)

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“So too this God-lover will be the divine worker, not for the sake of works or for a self-regarding pleasure in action, but because in this way God expends the power of his being and in his powers and their signs we find him, because the divine Will in works is the outflowing of the Godhead in the delight of its power, of divine Being in the delight of divine Force. He will feel perfect joy in the works and acts of the Beloved, because in them too he finds the Beloved; he will himself do all works because through those works too the Lord of his being expresses his divine joy in him: when he works, he feels that he is expressing in act and power his oneness with that which he loves and adores; he feels the rapture of the will which he obeys and with which all the force of his being is blissfully identified. So too, again, this God-lover will seek after perfection, because perfection is the nature of the Divine and the more he grows into perfection, the more he feels the Beloved manifest in his natural being. Or he will simply grow in perfection like the blossoming of a flower because the Divine is in him and the joy of the Divine, and as that joy expands in him, soul and mind and life too expand naturally into their godhead. At the same time, because he feels the Divine in all, perfect within every limiting appearance, he will not have the sorrow of his imperfection.” (CWSA 24: 590–591)

“Nor will the seeking of the Divine through life and the meeting of him in all the activities of his being and of the

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universal being be absent from the scope of his worship. All Nature and all life will be to him at once a revelation and a fine trysting-place. Intellectual and aesthetic and dynamic activities, science and philosophy and life, thought and art and action will assume for him a diviner sanction and a greater meaning. He will seek them because of his clear sight of the Divine through them and because of the delight of the Divine in them. He will not be indeed attached to their appearances, for attachment is an obstacle to the Ananda; but because he possesses that pure, powerful and perfect Ananda which obtains everything but is dependent on nothing, and because he finds in them the ways and acts and signs, the becomings and the symbols and images of the Beloved, he draws from them a rapture which the normal mind that pursues them for themselves cannot attain or even dream. All this and more becomes part of the integral way and its consummation." (CWSA 24: 591)

"In itself the adoration in the act is a great and complete and powerful sacrifice that tends by its self-multiplication to reach the discovery of the One and make the radiation of the Divine possible. For devotion by its embodiment in acts not only makes its own way broad and full and dynamic, but brings at once into the harder way of works in the world the divinely passionate element of joy and love which is often absent in its beginning when it is only the

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austere spiritual Will that follows in a struggling uplifting
tension the steep ascent, and the heart is still asleep or
bound to silence. If the spirit of divine love can enter, the
hardness of the way diminishes, the tension is lightened,
there is a sweetness and joy even in the core of difficulty
and struggle. The indispensable surrender of all our will
and works and activities to the Supreme is indeed only
perfect and perfectly effective when it is a surrender of
love. All life turned into this cult, all actions done in the
love of the Divine and in the love of the world and its
creatures seen and felt as the Divine manifested in many
disguises become by that very fact part of an integral
Yoga.” (CWSA 24: 165)

XII—The Integrality of Will, Knowledge and Love Is the Foundation of an Integral Yoga

“Will, knowledge and love are the three divine powers in human nature and the life of man, and they point to the three paths by which the human soul rises to the divine. The integrality of them, the union of man with God in all the three, must therefore, as we have seen, be the foundation of an integral Yoga.” (CWSA 24: 545)

- 1. The way of devotion will turn the path of knowledge into a joy of luminous union**
- 2. The way of devotion will turn the path of works into a joy of the active union of our being**

“It [The Way of devotion] may start from knowledge or it may start from works, but it will then turn knowledge into a joy of luminous union with the being of the Beloved and turn works into a joy of the active union of our being with the will and the power of being of the Beloved. Or it may start directly from love and delight; it will then take both these other things into itself and will develop them as part of the complete joy of oneness.” (CWSA 24: 593)

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of an Integral Yoga

3. Love is the crown of the union in the path of will

4. Love is the crown of the union in the path of knowledge

“And the crown of this union [union in will and works] is love; for love is the delight of conscious union with the Being in whom we live, act and move, by whom we exist, for whom alone we learn in the end to act and to be.” (CWSA 24: 545)

“And, here too, love is the crown of knowledge; for love is the delight of union, and unity must be conscious of joy of union to find all the riches of its own delight.” (CWSA 24: 546)

5. Knowledge and work become an adoration and aspiration by Bhakti

“Thus only can we aspire through the offering of all our nature and being to a living union with the One who has become in Time and Space all that is. Here is the place of bhakti in the scheme of the Yoga of an integral self-liberation. It is an adoration and aspiration towards that which is greater than imperishable self or changing Nature. All knowledge then becomes an adoration and aspiration, but all works too become an adoration and aspiration.

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Works of nature and freedom of soul are unified in this adoration and become one self-uplifting to the one Godhead. The final release, a passing away from the lower nature to the source of the higher spiritual becoming, is not an extinction of the soul,—only its form of ego becomes extinct, —but a departure of our whole self of knowledge, will and love to dwell no longer in his universal, but in his supracosmic reality, a fulfilment, not an annulation.” (CWSA 19: 307)

6. Perfect knowledge leads to perfect love

“Perfect knowledge indeed leads to perfect love, integral knowledge to a rounded and multitudinous richness of love. “He who knows me” says the Gita ‘as the supreme Purusha,’—not only as the immutable oneness, but in the many-souled movement of the divine and as that, superior to both, in which both are divinely held,—‘he, because he has the integral knowledge, seeks me by love in every way of his being.’” (CWSA 24: 546)

7. Love leading to perfect knowledge throws itself with joy into Divine works

“... but love leading to perfect knowledge brings the infinite and absolute union. Such love is not inconsistent with, but rather throws itself with joy into divine works; for it loves

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God and is one with him in all his being, and therefore in all beings, and to work for the world is then to feel and fulfil multitudinously one's love for God. This is the trinity of our powers, the union of all three in God to which we arrive when we start on our journey by the path of devotion with Love for the Angel of the Way to find in the ecstasy of the divine delight of the All-Lover's being the fulfilment of ours, its secure home and blissful abiding-place and the centre of its universal radiation." (CWSA 24: 547)

8. The widest love fulfilled in knowledge sees the world as the being of the Beloved and all creatures as His being, and in that vision Divine works find their joy and their justification

"There is a movement of love, as in the aspiration of human love, to separate the lover and the loved in the enjoyment of their exclusive oneness away from the world and from all others, shut up in the nuptial chambers of the heart. That is perhaps an inevitable movement of this path. But still the widest love fulfilled in knowledge sees the world not as something other and hostile to this joy, but as the being of the Beloved and all creatures as his being, and in that vision divine works find their joy and their justification." (CWSA 24: 551)

XII—The Integrality of Will, Knowledge and Love is the Foundation
of an Integral Yoga

“Love is the crown of all being and its way of fulfilment, that by which it rises to all intensity and all fullness and the ecstasy of utter self-finding. For if the Being is in its very nature consciousness and by consciousness we become one with it, therefore by perfect knowledge of it fulfilled in identity, yet is delight the nature of consciousness and of the acme of delight love is the key and the secret. And if will is the power of conscious being by which it fulfils itself and by union in will we become one with the Being in its characteristic infinite power, yet all the works of that power start from delight, live in the delight, have delight for their aim and end; love of the Being in itself and in all of itself that its power of consciousness manifests, is the way to the perfect wideness of the Ananda.” (CWSA 24: 546–547)

“None of these oppositions is more constant than that of Power and Love: yet neither of these deities can be safely neglected. What can be more divine than Love? But followed exclusively it is impotent to solve the world’s discords. The worshipped Avatar of love and the tender saint of saints ... have added an element to the potentialities of the heart, but the race cannot utilize it effectively for life because it has not been harmonised with the rest of the qualities that are essential to our fullness. ... Love fails because it hastily rejects the material of the world’s discords or only tramples them underfoot in an unusual ecstasy; Power because it seeks only to organise

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an external arrangement. The world's discords have to be understood, seized, transmuted. Love must call Power and Knowledge into the temple and seat them beside her in a unified equality; Power must bow its neck to the yoke of Light and Love before it can do any real good to the race." (CWSA 13: 156–157)

"Unity is the secret, a complex, understanding and embracing unity. When the full heart of Love is tranquillised by knowledge into a calm ecstasy and vibrates with strength, when the strong hands of Power labour for the world in a radiant fullness of joy and light, when the luminous brain of knowledge accepts and transforms the heart's obscure inspirations and lends itself to the workings of the high-seated Will, when all these gods are founded together on a soul of sacrifice that lives in unity with all the world and accepts all things to transmute them, then is the condition of man's integral self-transcendence. This and not a haughty, strong and brilliant egoistic self-culture enthroning itself upon an enslaved humanity is the divine way of supermanhood." (CWSA 13: 157)

"The Gita starts from this Vedantic synthesis and upon the basis of its essential ideas builds another harmony of the three great means and powers, Love, Knowledge and Works, through which the soul of man can directly approach and cast itself into the Eternal." (CWSA 19: 9)

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of an Integral Yoga

“This love that is knowledge, this love that can be the deep heart of your action, will be your most effective force for an utter consecration and complete perfection.” (CWSA 19: 590)

“Thus only can we aspire through the offering of all our nature and being to a living union with the One who has become in Time and Space all that is. Here is the place of bhakti in the scheme of the Yoga of an integral self-liberation. It is an adoration and aspiration towards that which is greater than imperishable self or changing Nature. All knowledge then becomes an adoration and aspiration, but all works too become an adoration and aspiration. Works of nature and freedom of soul are unified in this adoration and become one self-uplifting to the one Godhead. The final release, a passing away from the lower nature to the source of the higher spiritual becoming, is not an extinction of the soul,—only its form of ego becomes extinct, —but a departure of our whole self of knowledge, will and love to dwell no longer in his universal, but in his supracosmic reality, a fulfilment, not an annulation.” (CWSA 19: 307)

“Thus by spiritual development devotion becomes one with knowledge. The Jiva comes to delight in the one Godhead,—in the Divine known as all being and consciousness and delight and as all things and beings and

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happenings, known in Nature, known in the self, known for that which exceeds self and Nature. He is ever in constant union with him, *nityayukta*; his whole life and being are an eternal Yoga with the Transcendent than whom there is nothing higher, with the Universal besides whom there is none else and nothing else. On him is centred all his bhakti, *ekabhaktiḥ*, not on any partial godhead, rule or cult. This single devotion is his whole law of living and he has gone beyond all creeds of religious belief, rules of conduct, personal aims of life. He has no griefs to be healed, for he is in possession of the Allblissful. He has no desires to hunger after, for he possesses the highest and the All and is close to the All-Power that brings all fulfilment. He has no doubts or baffled seekings left, for all knowledge streams upon him from the Light in which he lives.

He loves perfectly the Divine and is his beloved; for as he takes joy in the Divine, so too the Divine takes joy in him. This is the God-lover who has the knowledge, *jñānī bhakta*. And this knower, says the Godhead in the Gita, is my self; the others seize only motives and aspects in Nature, but he the very self-being and all-being of the Purushottama with which he is in union.” (CWSA 19: 287–288)

“This is a comprehension filled with Bhakti, because it is integral in its instruments, integral in its objective. It is not a pursuit of the Supreme merely as an abstract unity or an

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indeterminable Absolute. It is a heartfelt seeking and seizing of the Supreme and the Universal, a pursuit of the Infinite in his infinity and of the Infinite in all that is finite, a vision and embracing of the One in his oneness and of the One in all his several principles, his innumerable visages, forces, forms, here, there, everywhere, timelessly and in time, multiply, multitudinously, in endless aspects of his Godhead, in beings without number, all his million universal faces fronting us in the world and its creatures, *ekatvena prthaktvena bahudhā viśvatomukham*. This knowledge becomes easily an adoration, a large devotion, a vast self-giving, an integral self-offering because it is the knowledge of a Spirit, the contact of a Being, the embrace of a supreme and universal Soul which claims all that we are even as it lavishes on us when we approach it all the treasures of its endless delight of existence.

The way of works too turns into an adoration and a devotion of self-giving because it is an entire sacrifice of all our will and its activities to the one Purushottama.” (CWSA 19: 328)

“This supreme word of the Gita is, we find, first the explicit and unmistakable declaration that the highest worship and highest knowledge of the Eternal are the knowledge and the adoration of him as the supreme and divine Origin of all that is in existence and the mighty Lord of the world and its peoples of whose being all things are the

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becomings. It is, secondly, the declaration of a unified knowledge and bhakti as the supreme Yoga; that is the destined and the natural way given to man to arrive at union with the eternal Godhead. And to make more significant this definition of the way, to give an illuminating point to this highest importance of bhakti founded upon and opening to knowledge and made the basis and motive power for divinely appointed works, the acceptance of it by the heart and mind of the disciple is put as a condition for the farther development by which the final command to action comes at last to be given to the human instrument, Arjuna. 'I will speak this supreme word to thee' says the Godhead 'from my will for thy soul's good, now that thy heart is taking delight in me,' *te prīyamāṇāya vakṣyāmi*. For this delight of the heart in God is the whole constituent and essence of true bhakti, *bhajanti prīti-pūrvakam*. As soon as the supreme word is given, Arjuna is made to utter his acceptance of it and to ask for a practical way of seeing God in all things in Nature, and from that question immediately and naturally there develops the vision of the Divine as the Spirit of the universe and there arises the tremendous command to the world-action." (CWSA 19: 344–345)

XIII—Three Paths Are One and Can Lead to Each Other

“We can see also that in the integral view of things these three paths are one. Divine Love should normally lead to the perfect knowledge of the Beloved by perfect intimacy, thus becoming a path of Knowledge, and to divine service, thus becoming a path of Works. So also should perfect Knowledge lead to perfect Love and Joy and a full acceptance of the works of That which is known; dedicated Works to the entire love of the Master of the Sacrifice and the deepest knowledge of His ways and His being. It is in this triple path that we come most readily to the absolute knowledge, love and service of the One in all beings and in the entire cosmic manifestation.” (CWSA 24: 40)

“We have to start God ward from the powers of the mind, the intellect, the will, the heart, and in the mind all is limited. Limitations, exclusiveness there can hardly fail to be at the beginning and for a long time on the way. But an integral Yoga will wear these more loosely than more exclusive ways of seeking, and it will sooner emerge from the mental necessity. It may commence with the way of love, as with the way of knowledge or of works; but where they meet, is the beginning of its joy of fulfilment. Love it cannot miss, even if it does not start from it; for love is the

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crown of works and the flowering of knowledge.” (CWSA
24: 551)

XIV—Other Important Quotations on Bhakti and Devotion

“The Path of Devotion aims at the enjoyment of the supreme Love and Bliss and utilises normally the conception of the supreme Lord in His personality as the divine Lover and enjoyer of the universe. The world is then realised as a play of the Lord, with our human life as its final stage, pursued through the different phases of self-concealment and self-revelation. The principle of Bhakti Yoga is to utilise all the normal relations of human life into which emotion enters and apply them no longer to transient worldly relations, but to the joy of the All-Loving, the All-Beautiful and the All-Blissful. Worship and meditation are used only for the preparation and increase of intensity of the divine relationship. And this Yoga is catholic in its use of all emotional relations, so that even enmity and opposition to God, considered as an intense, impatient and perverse form of Love, is conceived as a possible means of realisation and salvation. This path, too, as ordinarily practised, leads away from world-existence to an absorption, of another kind than the Monist’s, in the Transcendent and Supra-cosmic.

But, here too, the exclusive result is not inevitable. The Yoga itself provides a first corrective by not confining the play of divine love to the relation between the supreme Soul and the individual, but extending it to a common

XIV—Other Important Quotations on Bhakti and Devotion
feeling and mutual worship between the devotees themselves united in the same realisation of the supreme Love and Bliss. It provides a yet more general corrective in the realisation of the divine object of Love in all beings not only human but animal, easily extended to all forms whatsoever. We can see how this larger application of the Yoga of Devotion may be so used as to lead to the elevation of the whole range of human emotion, sensation and aesthetic perception to the divine level, its spiritualisation and the justification of the cosmic labour towards love and joy in our humanity.” (CWSA 23: 39)

“We arrive at union with it also by worship; for the thought and act of a distant worship develops into the necessity of close adoration and this into the intimacy of love, and the consummation of love is union with the Beloved. It is from this development of worship that the Yoga of devotion starts and it is by this union with the Beloved that it finds its highest point and consummation.” (CWSA 24: 552)

“... the more intimate yoga of Bhakti resolves itself simply into these four movements, the desire of the Soul when it turns towards God and the straining of its emotion towards him, the pain of love and the divine return of love, the delight of love possessed and the play of that delight, and the eternal enjoyment of the divine Lover which is the heart of celestial bliss.” (CWSA 24: 571)

XIV—Other Important Quotations on Bhakti and Devotion

“There is also the Mother’s personal and individual presence in the heart which brings immediately love and bhakti and the sense of a close intimacy and personal oneness.” (CWSA 32: 51)

“Q: People make all sorts of effort to have God’s darshan; some even weep and weep, yet they fail to obtain it. We in the Asram don’t seem to have done very much, and yet we are here with you. What has brought this about?”

A: There are many things that have brought it about—a connection in past lives with the Mother and myself, the development of your nature in former births which made it possible for you to seek the Divine, bhakti in those lives bearing its fruit now—finally, the Divine Grace.” (CWSA 32: 88)

“The power of the concentration in the heart-centre is to open that centre and by the power of aspiration, love, bhakti, surrender remove the veil which covers and conceals the soul and bring forward the soul or psychic being to govern the mind, life and body and turn and open them all—fully—to the Divine, removing all that is opposed to that turning and opening.” (CWSA 29: 307)

XIV—Other Important Quotations on Bhakti and Devotion

“The more love and bhakti and surrender grow in the heart, the more rapid and perfect becomes the evolution of the sadhana.” (CWSA 30: 327)

“A ‘bhakti’ which claims everything from the Divine and does not give itself is not real bhakti.” (CWSA 32: 392) (CWSA 29: 355)

“...the Gita distinguishes between four kinds of *bhaktas*.

1) There are those who turn to him as a refuge from sorrow and suffering in the world, *ārta*.

2) There are those who seek him as the giver of good in the world, *ārtharthī*.

3) There are those who come to him in the desire for knowledge, *jijñāsu*.

4) And lastly there are those who adore him with knowledge, *jñanī*.

All are approved by the Gita, but only on the last does it lay the seal of its complete sanction. All these movements without exception are high and good, *udārāḥ sarva evaite*, but the bhakti with knowledge excels them all, *viśiṣyate* [excel].

We may say that these forms are successively the bhakti of the vital-emotional and affective nature, that of the practical and dynamic nature, that of the reasoning intellectual nature, and that of the highest intuitive being which takes up all the rest of the nature into unity with the

XIV—Other Important Quotations on Bhakti and Devotion
Divine. Practically, however, the others may be regarded as preparatory movements.” (CWSA 19: 284–285)

“The later *bhakti* of ecstatic love is at its roots psychic in nature; it is vital-emotional only in its inferior forms or in some of its more outward manifestations.” (CWSA 19: 284)

“There can be no such thing as a mechanical and artificial devotion— there is either devotion or there is not. Devotion may be intense or not intense, complete or incomplete, sometimes manifest and sometimes veiled, but mechanical or artificial devotion is a contradiction in terms.” (CWSA 29: 355)

“The Gopis are not ordinary people in the proper sense of the word—they are extraordinary by their extremeness of love, passionate devotion, unreserved self-giving. Whoever has that, however humble his position in other respects, learning, external sanctity etc. etc., can easily follow after Krishna and reach him; that seems to me the sense of the symbol of the Gopis.” (CWSA 29: 493)

“There is the whitish moonlight blue of Krishna’s light—lavender blue of devotion, deep blue of the physical mind, sapphire blue of the higher mind and many others.” (CWSA 30: 128)

“The Fundamental Realisations

1. The psychic change so that a complete devotion can be the main motive of the heart and the ruler of thought, life and action in constant union with the Mother and in her Presence.” (CWSA 30: 319)

“The realisation of the Supreme, the Ishwara, is certainly the essential thing; but to approach him with love and devotion and bhakti, to serve him with one’s works and to know him, not necessarily by the intellectual cognition, but in a spiritual experience, is also essential in the path of the integral Yoga.” (CWSA 29: 375)

“...the Radha love is not based upon any such thing, but means simply that whatever comes on the way to the Divine, pain or joy, milana or viraha, and however long the sufferings may last, the Radha love is unshaken and keeps its faith and certitude pointing fixedly like a star to the supreme object of Love.” (CWSA 29: 14)

“The Bhakta envisages only two realities, God & himself, and by the ecstatic union of himself with God through love and adoration, enters into the pure and unmixed presence of the Eternal.” (CWSA 17: 192)

“In silence lies the greatest devotion.” (CWM 17: 374)

XIV—Other Important Quotations on Bhakti and Devotion

“Not knowledge and works alone are demanded of him now, but *bhakti* also, devotion to the Divine, love and adoration and the soul’s desire of the Highest.” (CWSA 19: 282)

No devotion is worthless or ineffective, whatever its limitations

“Still the supreme Godhead does not at all reject these devotees because of their imperfect vision. For the Divine in his supreme transcendent being, unborn, imminuable and superior to all these partial manifestations, cannot be easily known to any living creature. ... If then after thus bewildering them with his workings in Nature, he were not to meet them in these at all, there would be no divine hope for man or for any soul in Maya. Therefore according to their nature, as they approach him, he accepts their bhakti and answers to it with the reply of divine love and compassion. These forms are after all a certain kind of manifestation through which the imperfect human intelligence can touch him, these desires are first means by which our souls turn towards him: nor is any devotion worthless or ineffective, whatever its limitations. It has the one grand necessity, faith. ‘Whatever form of me any devotee with faith desires to worship, I make that faith of his firm and undeviating.’ By the force of that faith in his cult and worship he gets his desire and the spiritual

XIV—Other Important Quotations on Bhakti and Devotion
realisation for which he is at the moment fitted. By seeking all his good from the Divine, he shall come in the end to seek in the Divine all his good. By depending for his joys on the Divine, he shall learn to fix in the Divine all his joy. By knowing the Divine in his forms and qualities, he shall come to know him as the All and the Transcendent who is the source of all things.” (CWSA 19: 286–287)

“To work, to act with devotion and an inner consecration is also a spiritual discipline. The final aim is to be in constant union with the Divine, not only in meditation but in all circumstances and in all the active life.” (CWM 3: 20)

“In the integrality and absoluteness of bhakti and surrender, we find the essential condition of perfect peace leading to uninterrupted bliss.” (CWM 14: 108)

“Sincere devotion is much more effective than the Ganges water.” (CWM 14: 98)

“Let this day of your birth be for you an occasion to give yourself a little more, a little better to the Divine. Let your consecration be more total, your devotion more ardent, your aspiration more intense.” (CWM 15: 199)

XIV—Other Important Quotations on Bhakti and Devotion

“All has to be done by the working of the Mother’s force aided by your aspiration, devotion and surrender.” (CWSA 32: 196)

“Whatever difficulties still remain, be sure that they will be surmounted. There is no need for the outer being to be nervous—the Mother’s Force and the devotion within you will be sufficient to overcome all that stands in the way.” (CWSA 32: 299)

“Q: All in me is proceeding towards the Mother’s love, devotion and purity. Why then am I not going up in my consciousness and getting higher experience?”

A: The power of experience is not gone—but what is most important now is to develop the psychic condition of surrender, devotion, love and cheerful confidence in the Mother, an unshaken faith and a constant inner closeness, and also to bring down from above the peace, wideness, purity etc. of the higher Self which is that of the Mother’s consciousness. It is these things that are the basis of the siddhi in this Yoga—other experiences are only a help, not the basis.” (CWSA 32: 332–333)

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