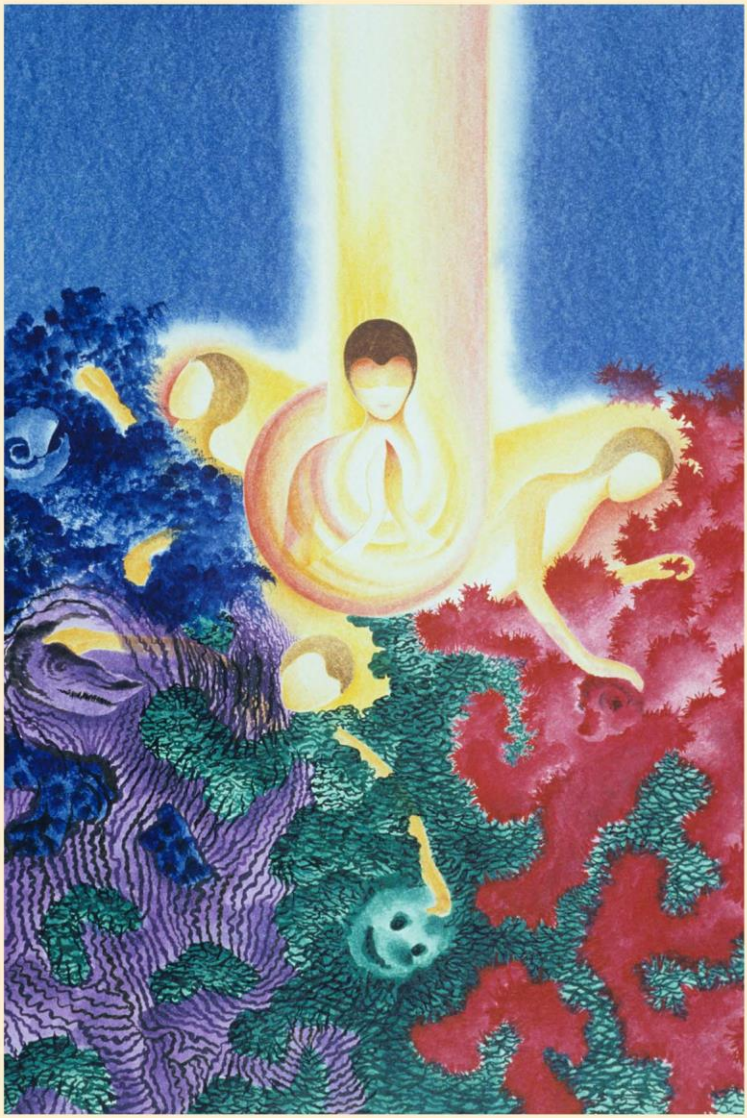
CONQUERING
OBSTACLES IN SADHANA

Second Edition



A Compilation from the Works of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother

Compiled by Jamshed M Mavalwalla

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Sri Aurobindo Society
AUROPUBLICATIONS
POWERFUL THOUGHTS, INSPIRING VISION

Conquering Obstacles in Sadhana

Second Edition

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"Yoga in its process of purification will lay bare and throw up all hidden impulses and desires in you. And you must learn not to hide things nor leave them aside, you have to face them and conquer and remould them." (CWM 3: 5)

"The rules are very few so that each one can enjoy the freedom needed for his development but a few things are strictly forbidden: they are—(1) politics, (2) smoking, (3) alcoholic drink and (4) sex enjoyment." (CWM 13: 108)

"There are always these resistances in sadhana; it is because the world is full of forces that don't want men to find the Divine. Even the Rishis of old times used always to be obstructed and disturbed until they conquered desire, anger and all else and became full of the Divine." (CWSA31: 667)

"… there is no question of personal incapacity, since our help and protection are always there. Indeed, you must open yourself to this help and protection and learn to use them to conquer the adversary who is trying to draw you towards the lower animal consciousness." (CWM 16: 136)

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

In continuation of the series Rejection Part I and Part II**,** this compilation *Conquering Obstacles in Sadhana* deals with other obstacles that need to be conquered, such as anger, fear, the sex-force, ill-will, hatred, self-distrust, incapacity, and doubt. It also covers the four obstacles that are strictly forbidden in the Sri Aurobindo Ashram.

The Mother 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 gain a complete understanding of the obstacles and how to conquer them. 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 the subject more fully but, most importantly, elevate his or her consciousness.

In order to facilitate a clear understanding, the following methods have been utilised. The quotations have been classified into captioned sections. There are eleven sections, designated by Roman numerals (I, II, III, IV, V, etc.). Under each section, there are different subsections indicated by the letters of the English alphabet (A, B, C, D, etc.), written as follows: I—A, I—B, I—C. Each quotation is numbered consecutively: 1, 2, 3, etc.

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

The quotations in this compilation were originally taken from *The Sri Aurobindo Birth Centenary Library* (SABCL)**.** Later, when the Letters on Yoga volumes of *The Complete Works of Sri Aurobindo* (CWSA) were published, the corresponding CWSA references were added alongside the SABCL references.

The section headings and subheadings have been given by the compiler to bring mental clarity to the selected subject.

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

Jamshed M. Mavalwalla.

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I— Get Rid of Anger

I—A. What is anger?

"Anger is a violent reaction of the vital to some shock that is unpleasant to it; and when it involves words or thoughts, the mind responds to the influence of the vital and also reacts violently. Any expression of anger is the sign of a lack of self-control." 11 May 1966 (CWM 16: 334–335)

"Because anger is a deformation of the vital power, an obscure and wholly unregenerated vital, a vital that is still subject to all the ordinary actions and reactions. When this vital power is used by an ignorant and egoistic individual will and this will meets with opposition from other individual wills around it, this power, under the pressure of opposition, changes into anger and tries to obtain by violence what cannot be achieved solely by the pressure of the force itself.

Besides, anger, like every other kind of violence, is always a sign of weakness, impotence and incapacity.

And here self-deception comes solely from the approval given to it or the flattering epithet attached to it—because anger can only be something blind, ignorant and asuric, that is to say, contrary to the light." (CWM 10: 80–81)

"... lust, anger, jealousy etc. are deformations of the vital nature ..." (CWSA 31: 565)

"Anger and vengeance belong to a lower humanity, the humanity of yesterday and not of tomorrow." 1 December 1969 (CWM 10: 276–277)

"Basically, disgust, revolt, anger, all these movements of violence are necessarily movements of ignorance and limitation, with all the weakness that limitation represents." (CWM 10: 77)

"The emotions are especially assailed and have the pranic stamp; fear is more even of a nervous sensation than an emotion, anger is largely or often a sensational response translated into terms of emotion." (CWSA 24: 649–650)

"The ordinary man depends upon outward things for his happiness; therefore he has desire; therefore he has anger and passion, pleasure and pain, joy and grief; therefore he measures all things in the balance of good fortune and evil fortune." (CWSA 19: 184)

"But if you feel the vibrations which come from the other person who throws on you all his violence and anger, if you feel this... at first it does... and then, suddenly, there is a response; and then if you yourself begin to get into a

temper, you may be sure that you are as weak as he." (CWM 6: 373)

"These things, hard forms of speech, anger etc. are habits formed by the vital-physical consciousness and, as they are supported by the subconscient, very difficult to change." (SABCL 24: 1411) (CWSA 31: 267)

"Anger is the primitive reaction to an unpleasant impact which is not unfamiliar, fear the primitive reaction to an unpleasant impact which is new and surprising." (CWSA 17: 287)

"Anger, vindictiveness and antipathy are not in themselves laudable feelings..." (CWSA 8: 63)

"Anger has never made anyone say anything but stupidities." (CWM 14: 205)

"The buffalo is a symbol of unnecessary or blind anger—perhaps it meant that that was still somewhere in your nature." (CWSA 30: 169)

I—B. Understanding different aspects of anger

1. Anger and universal forces often have a periodicity in their recurrence
2. Anger is not a sign of individual unfitness and with perseverance success is sure

"I do not at all agree about the unfitness. When you came here first you were too raw still, but since then you have developed much and, whatever difficulties may remain, it cannot be said that the ground is not there! I do not quite understand what you mean by the pressure, but if you mean the pressure of the universal forces, sex, anger etc., it is always under that pressure that the recurrences occur. There is nothing new or peculiar in that which would justify a conclusion of individual unfitness. These things have also often a periodicity in them which helps them to recur and the up and down movement is characteristic of the course followed by the nature in the sadhana which I myself felt for many years together. It is only after one reaches a certain height that one gets rid of it or rather it changes into an oscillation the reason and utility of which one can understand. Until that happens one has to go on and the one thing one must avoid is this feeling of despondency and self-distrust. If one perseveres, the final success is sure." 24 October 1934 (CWSA 35: 372)

3. There are waves of emotion, like anger and sorrow, which go out and affect others without their knowing whence they come

"Just as there are waves of unseen physical forces (cosmic waves etc.) or currents of electricity, so there are mind waves, thought currents, waves of emotion, e.g. anger, sorrow etc. which go out and affect others without their knowing whence they come or that they come at all—they only feel the result.

One who has the occult or inner senses awake can feel them coming and invading him; influences good or bad can propagate themselves in that way; that can happen without intention, automatically, but also a deliberate use can be made of them. There can also be a purposeful generation of force, spiritual or other." 6 February 1943 (CWSA 35: 483–484) (CWSA 29: 183)

4. The part that feels anger is a part of the external vital nature
5. This anger is a wrong form of strength of will and force of action and control in the vital being

"In fact each human being is composed of different personalities that feel and behave in a different way and his action is determined by the one that happens to be prominent at the time. The one that has no feelings against

anyone is either the psychic being or the emotional being in the heart, the one that feels anger and is severe is a part of the external vital nature on the surface. This anger and severity is a wrong form of something that in itself has a value, a certain strength of will and force of action and control in the vital being, without which work cannot be done. What is necessary is to get rid of the anger and to keep the force and firm will along with a developed judgment as to what is the right thing to do in any circumstances. For instance, people can be allowed to do things in their own way when that does not spoil the work, when it is only their way of doing what is necessary to be done; when their way is opposed to the discipline of the work, then they have to be controlled, but it should be done quietly and kindly, not with anger. Very often, if one has developed a silent power of putting the Mother's force on the work with one's own will as instrument, that by itself may be sufficient without having to say anything as the person changes his way of himself as if by his own initiative." (CWSA 29: 281)

6. The navel—the centre of the dynamic and sensational vital—is the source of anger

"The navel is the centre of the dynamic and sensational vital (this is the source of pride, sense of possession, ambition,

anger and other passions—but it expresses them often through the heart centre).” (CWSA 28: 240)

“Anger, fear, jealousy touch the heart no doubt just as they touch the mind but they rise from the navel region and entrails (i.e. the lower or at highest the middle vital).” (CWSA 28: 193)

“Yogically, psycho-physically etc. etc. stomach, heart and intestine lodge the vital movements, not the physical consciousness—it is there that anger, fear, love, hate and all the other psychological privileges of the animal tumble about and upset the physical and moral digestion.” (CWSA 28: 246)

“The vital has to be carefully distinguished from mind, even though it has a mind element transfused into it; the vital is the Life nature made up of desires, sensations, feelings, ... anger, fear, greed, lust etc. that belong to this field of the nature.” (CWSA 28: 168)

“... the lower vital which is occupied with small desires and feelings, such as make the greater part of daily life, e.g. food desire, sexual desire, small likings, dislikings, vanity, quarrels, love of praise, anger at blame, little wishes of all kinds—and a numberless host of other things.” (CWSA 28: 187)

7. Anger is a harmful and wasteful force

"Yes, anger is a harmful and wasteful force, harmful both to the person himself and to the one on whom it is thrown." (CWSA 31: 267)

8. A man who is angry becomes anger and forgets all the rest of himself

"This power of exclusive concentration is not confined to absorption in a particular character or type of working of one's larger self, but extends to a complete self-forgetfulness in the particular action in which we happen at the moment to be engaged. ... In the same way the man who is overcome by intense anger, forgets himself as it is commonly said, or as it has been still more aptly and forcibly put,: and these terms express a real truth which is not the whole truth of the man's being at the time, but a practical fact of his conscious energy in action. He does forget himself, forgets all the rest of himself with its other impulses and powers of self-restraint and self-direction, so that he acts simply as the energy of the passion which preoccupies him, becomes that energy for the time being." (SABCL 18: 588) (CWSA 21: 609)

"It has already been noted how this can happen in the case of an uprush of wrath which swallows us up so that for the

moment our whole consciousness seems to be a wave of anger: other passions, love, grief, joy have the same power to seize and occupy us; thought also absorbs and occupies, we lose sight of the thinker and become the thought and the thinking." (CWSA 22: 544)

9. The rising of anger is the recurrence of an old habit of nature

"It [*an outburst of anger*] is really simply the recurrence of an old habit of the nature. Look at it and see how trifling is the occasion of the rising of this anger and its outburst—it becomes more and more causeless—and the absurdity of such movements reveals itself." (SABCL 24: 1410–1411) (CWSA 31: 268)

10. The habit of the human vital is the tendency to keep the touch of grief and anger

"What you have noticed about the disturbances is true. There are now two consciousnesses in you, the new one that is growing and what is left of the old. The old has something in it which is a habit of the human vital,—the tendency to keep any touch of grief, anger, vexation etc. or any kind of emotional, vital or mental disturbance, to make much of it, to prolong it, not to wish to let it go, to return to it even when the cause of disturbance is past and could be

forgotten, always to remember it and bring it up when it can. This is a common trait of human nature and a quite customary movement. The new consciousness on the contrary does not want these things and when they happen throws them off as quickly as possible. When the new consciousness is fully grown and established, then the disturbances will be altogether rejected. Even if the causes of them happen, there will be no response of grief, anger, vexation etc. in the nature." (CWSA 31: 140–141)

I—C. How does one become angry?

1. Anger is not in us but comes from outside the universal Nature

"The fact that the anger comes with such force is itself enough to show that it is not in you that it is but that it comes from outside. It is a rush of force from the universal Nature that tries to take possession of the individual being and make that being act according to the will of this outside force and not according to the will of the soul within." (SABCL 24: 1408) (CWSA 31: 271)

"These things [*anger, desire etc*.] can only be got rid of if you do not accept them. When they come, you must stand back from them in your mind, look at them and say, 'I don't want this.' If it comes in spite of your not wanting and refusing them, then it shows it is not your own movement, but something thrown upon you by the outside Nature. If you can once see that and feel them as not yours, then by degrees you can get free of anger, desire and other things that trouble you." (CWSA 31: 273–274)

"If one becomes very conscious one can become aware of the forces acting in and from all around, e.g. forces of joy or depression or anger." (CWSA 31: 330)

"All movements are in the mass movements of Nature's cosmic forces—they are movements of universal Nature. The individual receives something of them, a wave or pressure of some cosmic force, and is driven by it; he thinks it is his own, generated in himself separately, but it is not so, it is part of a general movement which works just in the same way in others. ... So it is with anger and other Nature-motives." (CWSA 31: 486)

2. The human being forms, in his mental, vital, and physical being, a habit of certain responses to these waves

"In fact all these ignorant vital movements originate from outside in the ignorant universal Nature; the human being forms in his superficial parts of being, mental, vital, physical, a habit of certain responses to these waves from outside. It is these responses that he takes as his own character (anger, desire, sex etc.) and thinks he cannot be otherwise. But that is not so; he can change." (SABCL 24: 1409) (CWSA 31: 274) (CWSA 30: 214)

3. If you observe attentively, you become aware that something in the being is responding to an influence which enters and produces similar vibrations in the being

"There it is a little easier to recognise the influence, for, if you are the least bit attentive, you become aware of something that has suddenly awakened within you. For example, those who are in the habit of losing their temper, if they have attempted ever so little to control their anger, they will find something coming from outside or rising from below which actually takes hold of their consciousness and arouses anger in them. I don't mean that everybody is capable of this discernment; I am speaking of those who have tried to understand their being and control it. These adverse suggestions are easier to distinguish than, for instance, your response to the will or desire of a being who is of the same nature as yourself, another human being, who consequently acts on you without this giving you a clear impression of something coming from outside: the vibrations are too alike, too similar in their nature, and you have to be much more attentive and have a much sharper discernment to realise that these movements which seem to come out from you are not really yours but come from outside. But with the adverse forces, if you are in the least sincere and observe yourself attentively, you become aware that it is something in the being which is responding to an influence, an impulse, a suggestion, even something at times very concrete, which enters and produces similar vibrations in the being.

There, now. That is the problem." (CWM 8: 393–394)

"It is the same thing for anger. It is very clear, one receives it suddenly, … from the atmosphere—it is there—and then all of a sudden it enters you and usually it gets hold of you from below and then rises up and pushes you, and so off you go. A minute earlier you were not angry, you were quite self-possessed, you had no intention of losing your temper. And this seizes you so strongly that you can't resist—because you are not sufficiently conscious, you let it enter you, and it makes use of you—you... what you call 'yourself', that is to say, your body; for apparently (I say apparently) it is something separate from your neighbour's body. But that is only an optical illusion, because in fact all the time there are what may be called particles, even physical particles, like a sort of radiation which comes out of the body and gets mixed with others; and because of this, when one is very sensitive, one can feel things at a distance." (CWM 8: 54–55)

4. Each one has around him an atmosphere made of the vibrations that come from his character and which act and react on each other by contagion

"*Sweet Mother,*

How can people insult me so easily, I wonder. Is it that my features are lacking in vigour? Is it that I am scornful of others and therefore others treat me scornfully? I try

again and again, but I can't find any satisfactory explanation.

It may be that physical appearance has something to do with it, but truly speaking it does not count for much. I believe rather in the influence of atmospheres. Each one has around him an atmosphere made of the vibrations that come from his character, his mood, his way of thinking, feeling, acting. These atmospheres act and react on each other by contagion; the vibrations are contagious; that is to say, we readily pick up the vibration of someone we meet, especially if that vibration is at all strong. So it is easy to understand that someone who carries in and around himself peace and goodwill, will in a way impose on others at least something of his peace and goodwill, whereas scorn, irritability and anger will arouse similar movements in others. The explanation of many events may be found along this line—although, of course, it is not the only explanation!" (CWM 16: 32)

5. Entities from the vital world love to feed upon energy thrown out when man becomes angry

"This terrestrial world, this human world is constantly invaded by the forces of the neighbouring world, that is, of the vital world, the subtler region beyond the fourfold earth-atmosphere; and this vital world which is not under the

influence of the psychic forces or the psychic consciousness is essentially a world of ill-will, of disorder, disequilibrium, indeed of all the most anti-divine things one could imagine. This vital world is constantly penetrating the physical world, and being much more subtle than the physical, it is very often quite imperceptible except to a few rare individuals. There are entities, beings, wills, various kinds of individualities in that world, who have all kinds of intentions and make use of every opportunity either to amuse themselves if they are small beings or to do harm and create disorder if they are beings with a greater capacity. And the latter have a very considerable power of penetration and suggestion, and wherever there is the least opening, the least affinity, they rush in, for it is a game which delights them.

Besides, they are very thirsty or hungry for certain human vital vibrations which for them are a rare dish they love to feed upon; and so their game lies in exciting pernicious movements in man so that man may emanate these forces and they be able to feed on them just as they please. All movements of anger, violence, passion, desire, all these things which make you abruptly throw off certain energies from yourself, project them from yourself, are exactly what these entities of the vital world like best, for, as I said, they enjoy them like a sumptuous dish.

Now, their tactics are simple: they send you a little suggestion, a little impulse, a small vibration which enters

deep into you and through contagion or sympathy awakens in you the vibration necessary to make you throw off the force they want to absorb." (CWM 8: 392–393)

6. Man has forgotten oneness

"By forgetting oneness, the idea of limitation is fixed on our being; by limitation comes the idea of not being this, not having that; from this idea arises the desire to be this, to have that; by the disappointment of desire comes disappointment, dislike of that which disappoints, hatred & anger against that which withholds, fear of that which gives contrary experience—the whole brood of earthly ills." (CWSA 17: 420–421)

I—D. The problems anger can cause in sadhana

1. To overcome anger is difficult because it is ingrained in the human vital

"So also I have never said that sex, anger, jealousy etc. were easy to overcome; I have said it was difficult because they were ingrained in the human vital, and even if thrown out were always being brought back into it either by its own habit or by the invasion of the general Nature and the resurgence of its own old response." (CWSA 31: 198–199)

"These things, anger, jealousy, desire, are the very stuff of the ordinary human vital consciousness. They could not be changed if there were not a deeper consciousness within which is of quite another character. There is within you a psychic being which is divine, directly a part of the Mother, pure of all these defects. It is covered and concealed by the ordinary consciousness and nature, but when it is unveiled and able to come forward and govern the being, then it changes the ordinary consciousness, throws all these undivine things out and changes the outer nature altogether. That is why we want the sadhaks to concentrate, to open this concealed consciousness—it is by concentration of whatever kind and the experiences it brings that one opens and becomes aware within and the new consciousness and nature begin to grow and come out. Of course we want them

also to use their will and reject the desires and wrong movements of the vital, for by doing that the emergence of the true consciousness becomes possible. But rejection alone cannot succeed; it is by rejection and by inner experience and growth that it is done." (CWSA 30: 24–25)

2. Anger disturbs the consciousness and makes it difficult to keep the quiet poise

"It [*a violent outburst of anger*] is obviously a surprise attack that took you off your guard. But you must throw off the tendency to anger with yourself also as well as the other tendency to sudden anger with others—for all anger only disturbs the consciousness and makes it difficult to keep the quiet poise. The whole thing has to be thrown out and the consciousness has to recover and be as if it had not happened." (CWSA 31: 267)

3. When the mind is clouded by anger, you at once become ignorant and mistake and misunderstand everything

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

4. Anger opens the door to hostile forces

"You are right in saying that it must be got rid of. Anger immediately opens the door to hostile forces; it is as if you were calling them." (CWSA 31: 267)

"But I say that the situation gets complicated if behind this there is an attack, a pressure from adverse forces who really want to harm you. You may have opened the door through spiritual error, through a movement of vanity, of anger, of hatred or of violence; even if it is merely a movement that comes and goes, that can open the door. There are always germs watching and only waiting for an occasion. That is why one should be very careful." (CWM 5: 185)

"This happens because the world as it is at present is still largely under the influence of the adverse forces, particularly the vital force which is dynamic and generally makes you act. This force is largely under the influence of the adverse vital, that is, forces which like to hurt, destroy, damage. That kind of will to spoil things: when one sees something beautiful, instead of admiring, loving, being happy, wishing that it grows and progresses (which is the true divine movement), one feels a sort of anger, rage, one wants to destroy, one wants to damage. This is the movement of the adverse forces. Unfortunately, this is quite spontaneous in many people, and even in children... the instinct to destroy

and spoil. Well, it is the presence of the adverse forces." (CWM 5: 232)

5. Anger produces vibrations which spread through the atmosphere like waves of electricity

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

6. Anger brings about the soul's loss of its divine memory, its self-knowledge, and its equal vision of the truth of things

"Desire, even the best, turns always to limitation and obscuration, to some eager exclusive choice and pressure, to some insistent exclusion of what should not be excluded and impatient revolt against the divine denials and withholdings. It generates anger and grief and passion and obstinacy, and these bring about the soul's loss of its divine memory or steadfast consciousness of itself and its self-knowledge and its equal vision of the truth of things." (CWSA 13: 124)

"By that attachment comes, by attachment desire, by desire distress, passion and anger when the desire is not satisfied

or is thwarted or opposed, and by passion the soul is obscured, the intelligence and will forget to see and be seated in the calm observing soul; there is a fall from the memory of one's true self, and by that lapse the intelligent will is also obscured, destroyed even." (CWSA 19: 100)

7. Every movement of anger is an obstacle to progress

"But everything that brings down the consciousness is an obstacle in one's progress. ... everything which is not in keeping with the Truth creates an obstacle to progress; and there are hundreds of these things every day.

For example, every movement of impatience, every movement of anger, every movement of violence, ... all this is constantly in the way." (CWM 7: 294)

8. When higher consciousness descends on the vital, anger can disturb the work

"There is a stage in the transformation when the Power is pressing on the outer being, especially the vital, and bringing down the higher consciousness. But the natural movements of the vital (anger, restlessness and impatience) are frequently breaking out and disturbing the work. Do not be shaken by that but remain as separate as possible from these movements and let the Force work." (CWSA 31: 119)

9. If one has no self-control and receives higher vital forces from the universal forces, it increases one's anger

"There are people, for instance, who are short-tempered by nature and haven't succeeded in controlling their anger. Well, if with an aspiration or by some method or other they have managed to receive some higher vital forces, instead of this calming their irritation or anger... because they have no self-control it increases their anger, that is, their irritability, their movement of violence is full of a greater force, a greater energy, and becomes much more violent. So it is well said that to be in contact with universal forces does not make one progress. But this is because they make a bad use of them. Yet naturally in the long run, this bad use diminishes the capacity of receiving; but it takes time, it is not immediate. So it is very important to put yourself in a good condition to receive the higher forces and not the lower ones, and secondly, when you have received them use them for the best thing possible, in order to prepare yourself to receive those which are of a higher quality. But if you open yourself, receive the forces and afterwards, being satisfied with having received them you let yourself fall into all the ordinary movements, well, you close the door and the force no longer returns." (CWM 7: 139)

10. Violent anger can disorganise and destroy control

"You must not accept everything; you should reject all suggestions of uncontrolled desire or anger. *You must not allow any wrong force to get hold of your body and use it*. It is not safe to accept these things and you should be very careful to reject them always.

It is necessary that there should be control and organisation, and these cannot come and get fixed if you accept *uncontrolled desires, violent anger, confusion or extreme restlessness of mind*, for all these are things that disorganise and destroy control." (CWSA 31: 277)

11. Angry thoughts about somebody come back to you

"This happens often: one had bad feelings, not positively wicked but still things which are not desirable, bad thoughts, movements of dissatisfaction, revolt or impatience, or a lack of contentment or... you see, one may be angry with somebody, even in thought, no need of speaking... things like that. When one is quiet and tries to be still so as to have an experience, all these things come back to him in their true form, that is, not very pleasant forms: very ugly, forms which are at times very ugly. I think that I have already told you this several times: it's something that happens frequently if you don't control your thoughts and your vital reactions and if someone has displeased you for some reason or other, if that person has done or said something which you do not like, and you consider him hostile and so

the spontaneous reaction is to want to punish him in some way or other or if one is still more primitive—if I may say so—to want to take vengeance or hope that something bad will happen to him.

However, it may even come very spontaneously, a violent reaction, like that, then you don't think about it any more. But now, at night, when you are asleep, ninety-nine times out of a hundred, in a case like this, the person in question comes to you with an extreme violence, either to kill you or to make you ill, as though he wished you as much harm as possible, and then in your ignorance you say, 'Well, I was quite right to be angry with him.' But it is quite simply your own formation which returns to you, nothing else but that. The person has nothing to do with it—he is quite innocent in the affair. This is a phenomenon which occurs very often, I mean for people who have movements of rancour or anger or violence; and they always see in a dream of this kind the justification of their movements—whereas it is only a very striking image of their own feelings. For the formation returns upon one in this way.

Then in these cases what should one do?

What should one do? First, never have bad thoughts to begin with; and then, secondly, never be afraid, even if you see extremely ugly things—not only have no fear but no disgust and no repulsion, simply a perfect quietude—and try to be

as pure and calm as possible. Then, whatever it may be, whether it be your own formation or it comes from others, whether it be an attack or a bad place—no matter what it is—everything will be all right. But above all, this: quiet, calm, naturally sheltered from every kind of possible fear, and without any disgust, without any recoiling, nothing; like that: a perfect indifference with a complete calm. Then nothing bad can happen, absolutely nothing. Even if it is truly an enemy who comes to attack you, he becomes powerless.

In all cases, without exception, whatever may happen, calm and quietude and serene peace and an absolute faith in the divine Grace—if you have all this, nothing can happen to you. And you must have all this if you want to have experiences; because experiences without this—it's not good; but with this, it's excellent." (CWM 7: 81–82)

12. Anger and quarrelsomeness always tend to spoil the liver and through it the stomach and intestines

"This quarrelsomeness opens him to all sorts of forces of the vital plane and their attacks. It is also the cause of the damage done to the liver and organs of digestion—for anger and quarrelsomeness always tend to spoil the liver and through it the stomach and intestines. As his quarrelsomeness is colossal, so also is the damage done to liver and digestion extreme. He must get rid of his egoism, quarrelsomeness and bad feelings towards others, if he

wants to recover his health and his sadhana." (CWSA 31: 571)

"It is your angers that have resulted in these pains. Get rid of the bad temper and the stomach will be more at ease." (CWSA 31: 271)

"When you have such thoughts, it makes a formation of force which falls on the man against whom you are angry. If he is not on his guard or if he is sensitive in any way, it may become effective upon him. That is why such thoughts should be avoided altogether." (CWSA 31: 268)

I—E. Why does anger come in the course of sadhana?

1. The forces of the lower nature do not want the sadhak to liberate himself from the lower nature, and so they rush to recover their rule
   Remedy: Remember and call the Mother—Keep the idea that they are outside forces and foreign to oneself—Refuse to accept them as any longer a part of one's nature

"These things [anger] come in the course of the sadhana because the sadhak is liberating himself from the lower nature and trying to turn towards the Mother and live in her divine consciousness and the higher nature. The forces of the lower nature do not want that and so they make these rushes in order to recover their rule.

It is necessary when that comes, to remain quiet within remembering the Mother or calling her and reject the anger or whatever else comes, whenever it comes or however often it comes. If that is done, then these forces begin to lose their power to invade. It is easier if one clearly feels them to be outside forces and foreign to oneself; but even if you cannot feel that yet when they enter, still the mind must keep that idea and refuse to accept them as any longer a part of the nature." (SABCL 24: 1408) (CWSA 31: 271–272)

2. The world is full of forces that don't want men to find the Divine

"There are always these resistances in sadhana; it is because the world is full of forces that don't want men to find the Divine. Even the Rishis of old times used always to be obstructed and disturbed until they conquered desire, anger and all else and became full of the Divine." (CWSA31: 667)

3. Quietness is not fixed, and anger returns because the physical mind is active
4. The sadhak feels there is a defect in him, and this makes the vital nervous—in this state of despondency, irritation rises
5. The mind begins to judge and criticise, and this too leads to nervousness and irritation

"The reason why quietness is not yet fixed and anger returns is that you allow your physical mind to become active. In regard to the sadhana it begins to think there is this defect in you and that defect and therefore the sadhana does not become immediately effective and perfect. This makes the vital nervous or despondent and in the despondency a state of irritation arises.

At the same time this mind becomes active as it has now with regard to X or begins to judge and criticise and this too leads to nervousness and irritation. These things belong

to the old mind you are trying to leave and therefore stand in the way of concentration and quietude. They should be stopped at their root by rejecting the suggestions of the physical mind as soon as they begin. A new consciousness is coming based upon inner silence and quietude. You must wait quietly for that to develop. True knowledge, true perceptions of people and things will come in that new silent consciousness. The mind's view of people and things must necessarily be either limited and defective or erroneous—to go on judging by it is now a waste of time. Wait for the new consciousness to develop and show you all in a new and true light. Then the tendency to anger which arises from this mind and is a violent impatience directed against things the mind and vital do not like, would have no ground to rise at all—or if it rose without cause could be more easily rejected. Rely for the sadhana on the Mother's grace and her Force, yourself remembering always to keep only two things, quietude and confidence. For things and people, leave them to the Mother also; as you have difficulties in your nature, so they have too; but to deal with them needs insight, sympathy, patience." (SABCL 24: 1414–1415) (CWSA 31: 268–269)

6. In sadhana, the struggle is felt between the spiritual mind, which demands control, and the vital movements, which rebel and wish to continue

"In the ordinary life, people accept the vital movements, anger, desire, greed, sex etc. as natural, allowable and legitimate things, part of the human nature. Only so far as society discourages them or wishes to keep them within fixed limits or subject to a decent restraint or measure, people try to control them so as to conform to the social standard of morality or rule of conduct. Here on the contrary as in all spiritual life, the conquest and complete mastery of these things is demanded. That is why the struggle is more felt, not because these things rise more strongly in sadhaks than in ordinary men, but because of the intensity of the struggle between the spiritual mind which demands control and the vital movements which rebel and wish to continue in the new as they did in the old life. As for the idea that the sadhana raises up things of the kind, the only truth in that is this that, first, there are many things in the ordinary man of which he is not conscious because the vital hides them from the mind and gratifies them without the mind realising what is the force that is moving the action—thus things that are done under the plea of altruism, philanthropy, service etc. are largely moved by ego which hides itself behind these justifications; in Yoga the secret motive has to be pulled out from behind the veil, exposed and got rid of. Secondly, some things are suppressed in the ordinary life and remain lying in the nature, suppressed but not eliminated; they may rise up any day or they may express themselves in nervous forms or other disorders of the mind or vital or body without

it being evident what is their real cause." (CWSA 28: 420–421)

7. Anger comes so as to press and hasten progress when one is making a sincere effort to overcome

"That [proneness to anger] is the real reason for all these things happening to X. When there is something in the nature that has to be got over, it is always drawing on itself incidents that put it to the test till the sadhak has overcome and is free. At least it is a thing that often happens especially if the person is making a sincere effort to overcome. One does not always know whether it is the hostiles who are trying to break the resolution or putting it to the test (for they claim the right to do it) or whether it is, let us say, the gods who are doing it so as to press and hasten the progress or insisting on the reality and thoroughness of the change aspired after. Perhaps it helps most when one can take it from the latter standpoint." (CWSA 31: 653)

I—F. Anger is contrary to the spirit of the sadhana

"If a sadhak, whoever he may be, speaks or acts out of anger, rajasic violence or any other unYogic impulse, his speech or action is contrary to the spirit of the sadhana." (CWSA 35: 670)

"It is to the divine Mother that you have come for Yoga, not for the old kind of life. You should also regard this as an Asram, not an ordinary Sansar, and in your dealings with others here strive to conquer anger, self-assertion and pride, whatever may be their attitude or behaviour towards you; for so long as you keep these moods, you will find it difficult to make progress in the Yoga." 8 July 1932 (CWSA 35: 634–635)

"These movements [*of egoism*] are part of man's ignorant vital nature. The love which human beings feel for one another is also usually an egoistic vital love and these other movements, claim, demand, jealousy, abhiman, anger etc., are its common accompaniments. There is no place for them in Yoga—nor in true love, psychic or divine." (CWSA 31: 284)

"You should throw away fear as well as anger and go quietly on your way putting your confidence in the Mother." (CWSA 31: 279)

"There is no need to understand—for there is only one thing that it is necessary to understand—that, reason or no reason, desire, selfishness, jealousy, demand, anger have no place in the spiritual life." (CWSA 31: 788)

"You can at least know that anger, jealousy, envy, restlessness, despair, indolence etc. are not divine things and that purity, peace, harmony, zeal, unselfishness etc., are good things and help the growth to the Divine." (CWSA 32: 63)

"What Mother would like you to do is to come to the Meditation and Pranam putting aside all feelings of ego, anger, quarrel with others, demand for this or that, thinking only of your sadhana and making yourself quiet to receive from her the only things that are really precious and needful." 22 September 1936 (CWSA 32: 529)

"Otherwise why is he a sadhak at all? He is supposed to be here for seeking the Divine—but in the seeking for the Divine, jealousy, envy, anger, etc. have no place. They are movements of the ego and can only create obstacles to the union with the Divine." (CWSA 32: 534)

"*Yoga* means freedom from *dwandwa*. The Yogin is free from the bondage of pleasure and pain, of anger and hatred

and attachment, of liking and disliking, because he looks with equal eyes on all." (CWSA 8: 51)

"There was no true cause for the trouble. You have allowed it to come into you from outside. There are always forces moving about in the atmosphere trying to disturb the sadhana and the progress. You must be careful not to allow them to invade you with their suggestions whether of depression, despondency, discontent or of anger or desire or of any ego-movement, for it is these things that they try to raise. When they come, instead of remaining in this way and trying to find an external cause for them, recognise them and reject at once." (CWSA31: 734–735)

"Conditions internal and external that are most essential for meditation. ...

The second is an increasing purity and calm of the inner consciousness (*citta*) out of which thought and emotion arise; ie a freedom from all disturbing reactions, such as anger, grief, depression, anxiety about worldly happenings etc. Mental perfection and moral are always closely allied to each other." (CWSA 36: 295)

"If he has any … anger or vexation when denied or deprived, he is not free in spirit and his use of the things he possesses is contrary to the spirit of sadhana. Even if he is free in spirit, he will not be fit for possession if he has not learned to use

things not for himself, but for the Divine Will, as an instrument, with the right knowledge and action in the use for the proper equipment of a life lived not for oneself but for and in the Divine." (CWSA 35: 759) (CWSA 31: 258)

I—G. Wrong methods of curing anger

1. The height of stupidity—the vital should never be repressed; it must be allowed to do all it wants; it will get tired and be cured

"There are people who have a pretty little theory like that, which I have often heard; they say that one's vital should never be repressed, it must be allowed to do all it wants, it will get tired and be cured! This is the height of stupidity! First, because the vital by its very nature is never satisfied, and if a certain kind of activity becomes insipid, it will double the dose: if its stupidities bore it, it will increase its stupidities and its excesses, and if that tires it, as soon as it has rested it will start again. For it will not be changed." (CWM 4: 178)

"To let it do what it likes is not a solution either, and generally this brings on fairly serious disorders." (CWM 4: 179)

2. Sit upon your anger and it will disappear—it will shoot up like a steam-jet

"Let us take the instance of a person subject to outbursts of rage and violence. … According to another method he would be told: 'Sit upon your anger and it will disappear.' This too is debatable. In any case, you will have to sit upon it all the

time, for if ever you should get up for a minute you will see immediately what happens! Then, what is to be done?

You must become more and more conscious. You must observe how the thing happens, by what road the danger approaches, and stand in the way before it can take hold of you." (CWM 4: 179–180)

"Others say that if you sit upon your vital it will be suppressed and, one day, it will shoot up like a steam-jet... and this is true. Hence, to repress the vital is not a solution." (CWM 4: 178–179)

I—H. How to get rid of anger

1. Be perfectly vigilant and see clearly what you want to do

"Let us take the instance of a person subject to outbursts of rage and violence. …

… If you want to cure yourself of a defect or a difficulty, there is but one method: to be perfectly vigilant, to have a very alert and vigilant consciousness. First you must see very clearly what you want to do. You must not hesitate, be full of doubt and say, 'Is it good to do this or not, does this come into the synthesis or should it not come in?' You will see that if you trust your mind, it will always shuttle back and forth: it vacillates all the time. If you take a decision it will put before you all the arguments to show you that your decision is not good, and you will be tossed between the 'yes' and 'no', the black and white, and will arrive at nothing. Hence, first, you must know exactly what you want—know, not mentally, but through concentration, through aspiration and a very conscious will. That is the important point. Afterwards, gradually, by observation, by a sustained vigilance, you must realise a sort of method which will be personal to you—it is useless to convince others to adopt the same method as yours, for that won't succeed. Everyone must find his own method, everyone must have his own method, and to the extent you put into practice your

method, it will become clearer and clearer, more and more precise. You can correct a certain point, make clear another, etc. So, you start working." (CWM 4: 180)

2. Have the will to change and the clear perception that anger must go

IV – 1. "It is true that anger and strife are in the nature of the human vital and do not go easily; but what is important is to have the will to change, and the clear perception that these things must go. If that will and perception are there, then in the end they will go." (SABCL 24: 1412) (CWSA 31: 275)

3. Anger rises not in yourself, but comes from outside—this makes it easier for the sadhak to get rid of it

"It is these responses that he takes as his own character (anger, desire, sex etc.) and thinks he cannot be otherwise. But that is not so; he can change. There is another consciousness deeper within him, his true inner being, which is his real self, but is covered over by the superficial nature. This the ordinary man does not know, but the yogi becomes aware of it as he progresses in his sadhana. As the consciousness of this inner being increases by sadhana, the surface nature and its responses are pushed out and can be got rid of altogether. But the ignorant universal Nature does

not want to let go and throws the old movements on the sadhak and tries to get them inside again; owing to a habit the superficial nature gives the old responses. If one can get the firm knowledge that these things are from outside and not a real part of oneself, then it is easier for the sadhak to repel such returns, or if they lay hold, he can get rid of them sooner. That is why I say repeatedly that these things rise not in yourself, but from outside." (SABCL 24: 1409) (CWSA 31: 274)

"If you have a serious difficulty in your character, for example, the habit of losing your temper, and you decide: 'I must not get angry again', it is very difficult, but if on the other hand, you tell yourself: 'Anger is something which circulates through the whole world, it is not in me, it belongs to everybody; it wanders about here and there and if I close my door, it will not enter', it is much more easy. If you think: 'It is my character, I am born like that', it becomes almost impossible. It is true there is something in your character which answers to this force of anger. All movements, all vibrations are general—they enter, they go out, they move about—but they rush upon you and enter into you only to the extent you leave the door in you open. And if you have, besides, some affinity with these forces, you may get angry without even knowing why. Everything is everywhere and it is arbitrary to draw limits." (CWM 4: 170)

4. What you must feel as yours is the will, the power to refuse anger

"All these movements come from outside, from the universal lower Nature, or are suggested or thrown upon you by adverse forces—adverse to your spiritual progress.

Your method of taking them as your own is again a wrong method; for by doing that you increase their power to recur and take hold of you. If you take them as your own, that gives them a kind of right to be there. If you feel them as *not* your own, then they have no right, and the will can develop more power to send them away. What you must always have and feel as yours is this will, the power to refuse assent, to refuse admission to a wrong movement. Or if it comes in, the power to send it away, without expressing it." (SABCL 24: 1410) (CWSA 31: 272–273)

5. The first step towards weakening the power of anger is to refuse all expression to anger in act or speech

"I think you have always had an idea that to give expression to an impulse or a movement is the best way or even the only way to get rid of it. But that is a mistaken idea. If you give expression to anger, you prolong or confirm the habit of the recurrence of anger; you do not diminish or get rid of the habit. The very first step towards weakening the power

of anger in the nature and afterwards getting rid of it altogether is to refuse all expression to it in act or speech.

Afterwards one can go on with more likelihood of success to throw it out from the thought and feeling also. And so with all other wrong movements." (SABCL 24: 1410) (CWSA 31: 272)

"I am not astonished. You have reached a point of inner progress when you can no more get into fits of anger without feeling the results of it. You must, once for all, take the resolution—and keep it: NEVER LOSE YOUR TEMPER.

I told you already that far from diminishing, your hold upon the workmen can but increase by it." 26 September 1932 (CWM 16: 26)

"In spite of the outbreak of temper and violence with regard to the boy I do not think it can be said that you have not changed at all or made any progress. There are three obstacles that one has to overcome in the vital and they are very difficult to overcome, lust (sexual desire), wrath and rajasic ego. I think you have progressed much in all three. Even in regard to anger, the outbreaks are surely less common, less overpowering and long continued than they were before. It has been so much in your vital nature that you have to be on your guard against fits like these coming back; you have also to overcome excitement and violence of speech; but if you persevere without being discouraged, the

freedom will come. Rajasic ego is the ground of the others." (CWSA 31: 226–227)

"My little smile,

For your smile to become truly 'eternal', you must learn to speak to me as freely when you are near me as when you are in your room.

Also it would be better not to get angry, and if it happens, it is better to forget your anger quickly; and if that isn't possible, then you must tell me very simply what has happened so that I may remove the anger from the consciousness of my 'little smile' and give her back the joy and peace I want her always to have.

With my most affectionate blessings." 1931 (CWM 16: 60)

6. Not to act according to the impulses of anger, or to justify or persist in the action—then, after a time, the difficulty abates

"The difficulties of the character persist so long as one yields to them in action when they rise. One has to make a strict rule not to act according to the impulses of anger, ego or whatever the weakness may be that one wants to get rid of, or if one does act in the heat of the moment, not to justify or persist in the action. If one does that, after a time the difficulty abates or is confined purely to a subjective

movement which one can observe, detach oneself from and combat." (CWSA 31: 706–707)

"When you are with someone, if you are sincere, instantaneously your way of reacting should be to do the right thing, even when you are with someone who does not do it. Take the most common example of someone who gets angry: instead of saying things that hurt, you say nothing, you keep calm and quiet, you do not catch the contagion of the anger. You have only to look at yourself to see if this is easy. It is quite an elementary thing, a very small beginning to know whether you are sincere. And I am not speaking of those who catch every contagion, even that of coarse joking nor of those who commit the same stupidity as the others." (CWM 5: 6)

7. When angry, look at it calmly—for it is possible to stand back in one part of the being, observing in a detached equanimity even while the anger rises on the surface

"It [*an outburst of anger*] is really simply the recurrence of an old habit of the nature. Look at it and see how trifling is the occasion of the rising of this anger and its outburst—it becomes more and more causeless—and the absurdity of such movements itself. It would not really be difficult to get rid of it if, when it comes, you looked at it calmly—for it is

perfectly possible to stand back in one part of the being, observing in a detached equanimity even while the anger rises on the surface—as if it were someone else in your being who had the anger. The difficulty is that you get alarmed and upset and that makes it easier for the thing to get hold of your mind which it should not do.

Help we are giving you—stand back so as to be able to feel it and not this obsession of these surface movements." (SABCL 24: 1410–1411) (CWSA 31: 268)

"If someone is angry with you, do not be caught in his vibrations but simply step back and his anger, finding no support or response, will vanish. Always keep your peace, resist all temptation to lose it. Never decide anything without stepping back, never speak a word without stepping back, never throw yourself into action without stepping back. All that belongs to the ordinary world is impermanent and fugitive, so there is nothing in it worth getting upset about." (CWM 3: 160)

"Thus you identify yourself with a movement of anger and your whole being becomes one angry vibration, blind and precipitate, oblivious of everything else. It is only when you stand back; remain detached in the midst of the passionate turmoil that you are able to see the process with a knowing eye. So knowledge in the ordinary state of being is to be obtained rather by stepping back from a phenomenon, to

watch it without becoming identified with it. But the divine consciousness identifies itself with its object and knows it thoroughly, because it always becomes one with the essential truth or law inherent in each fact. And it not only knows, but, by knowing, brings about what it wants. To be conscious is for it to be effective—each of its movements being a flash of omnipotence which, besides illumining, blazes its way ultimately to the goal dictated by its truth-nature." (CWM 3: 167)

"The fear, anger, depression etc. which used to rise when making the japa of the names came from a vital resistance in the nature (this resistance exists in everyone) which threw up these things because of the pressure on the vital part to change which is implied in sadhana. These resistances rise and then, if one takes the right attitude, slowly or quickly clear away. One has to observe them and separate oneself from them, persisting in the concentration and sadhana till the vital becomes quiet and clear." (CWSA 30: 255)

8. Detachment must be gained by the sadhak—he must live in his inner being

"That [*inner detachment*] is the right thing that must happen always when anger or anything else rises. The psychic reply must become habitual pointing out that anger is neither right nor helpful and then the being must draw back from these

outward things and take its stand in its inner self, detach from all these things and people.

It is this detachment that is the first thing that must be gained by the sadhak—he must cease to live in these outward things and live in his inner being. The more that is done the more there is a release and peacefulness. Afterwards when one is secure in this inner being, the right thing to do, the right way to deal with men and things will begin to come." (SABCL 24: 1411) (CWSA 31: 275)

"It is indeed a very good sign that the anger when it comes is brief and subdued and no longer expressed in the outward—for that is one very marked stage always of the rejection of something not wanted by the nature. It comes still but it has no longer the old force, duration, intensity, completeness. The externalised condition is often used to show or test the progress made in the outer nature itself, for when one is entirely within these outward movements remain quiescent, so the extent to which they are changed cannot be so easily measured. But of course it is the going inward that most helps to deliver the nature." (SABCL 24: 1411–1412) (CWSA 31: 269)

"*In my daily life, I become dejected and fall a prey in the hands of the lower forces (anger, lust, etc.). I humbly request the Mother for help and protection.*

Detachment." (CWM 14: 39)

9. Develop goodwill, sincerity, insight, patience, and perseverance

The remedy? [Remedy of not becoming angry] ... It is always the same: goodwill, sincerity, insight, patience—oh! an untiring patience and a perseverance which assures you that what you have not succeeded in doing today, you will succeed in doing another time, and makes you go on trying until you do succeed. And this brings us back to Sri Aurobindo's sentence: if this control seems to you quite impossible today, well, that means that not only will it be possible, but that it will be realised later." (CWM 8: 394)

10. When the psychic being grows within, it will bring kindliness, patience, and charity towards all
11. With the growth of inner peace comes a calm wideness in which one perceives all as oneself, all beings as the children of the Mother, and the Mother dwelling in oneself and in all

"It is true that anger and strife are in the nature of the human vital and do not go easily; … The most important help to it is, here also, for the psychic being to grow within—for that brings a certain kindliness, patience, charity towards all and one no longer regards everything from the point of

view of one's own ego and its pain or pleasure, likings and dislikings. The second help is the growth of the inner peace which outward things cannot trouble. With the peace comes a calm wideness in which one perceives all as one self, all beings as the children of the Mother and the Mother dwelling in oneself and in all. It is that towards which your sadhana will move, for these are the things which come with the growth of the psychic and spiritual consciousness. Then these troubled reactions to outward things will no longer come." (SABCL 24: 1412) (CWSA 31: 275)

"It is indeed when the quietude comes down from above or comes out from the psychic that the vital becomes full of peace or of kindliness and goodwill. It is therefore that the inner psychic quietude first and afterwards the peace from above must occupy the whole being.

Otherwise such things as anger in the vital can be controlled but it is difficult to get rid of them altogether without this occupation by the inner quietude and higher peace. That you should depend on the Mother for the sadhana is the best attitude, for it is indeed her Force that does the sadhana in you." (SABCL 24: 1411) (CWSA 31: 275–276)

12. The lower vital aspires by offering all its small movements in the fire of purification

"Sometimes the aspiration is felt at the navel, but that is part of the larger vital. The lower vital is below. The lower vital aspires by offering all its small movements in the fire of purification, by calling for the light and power to descend into it and rid it of its little greeds, jealousies, resistances and revolts over small matters, angers, vanities, sexualities etc. to be replaced by the right movements governed by selflessness, purity, obedience to the urge of the Divine Force in all things." (CWSA 31: 168–169)

13. Keep more contact with the Mother and her Light and Force

"Of course the best way will be if you can keep the contact more with the Mother and her Light and Force and receive and accept and follow only what comes from that higher force. Secondly, to keep the mind quiet, not to allow it to be too active, going from one thing to another. That brings the confusion." (SABCL 24: 1410) (CWSA 31: 273)

"My dear child,

I know that it is impossible to change one's nature overnight, but what you can understand and accept immediately is that losing your temper and getting upset is a sign of great weakness. And, as I told you, my force is with you from the moment you decide to overcome this weakness which is unworthy of you. So I ask you, from now on, to use

this force I am giving you to control your reactions and to remain quiet until your anger has passed. This is the first indispensable step. Afterwards, I shall gradually help you to understand that your anger is unjustified and has no basis.

With all my love, I ask you to please make the effort necessary for this great progress to be achieved; it will open the door to transformation.

My love and my blessings are with you." August 1969 (CWM 17: 358)

14. When the psychic rules all the movements of the being, anger completely disappears

"When it is the psychic that rules all the movements of the being, then it [*anger*] completely disappears and when the equanimity of the higher consciousness takes complete possession of the lower vital. Till then one can establish control, diminish and reduce it to a touch that has no outward effect or a wave that passes without self-expression." (SABCL 24: 1411) (CWSA 31: 274–275)

"If the will is strong enough, it [*anger*] can be held in check—but usually it is only if the psychic being becomes entirely awake and governs the vital that the tendency to anger can entirely disappear." (CWSA 31: 274)

"The movement inward is all to the good—for going inward if one goes far enough brings one to the psychic. The more peace there is the better; even if it is only a little at first, that is so much gained. If the inward-drawing movement is held to, it will grow and the power to reject anger and other such movements will increase." (CWSA 30: 219)

"The consciousness that rejected and threw away the anger and old movements was also that of the psychic." (CWSA 30: 471)

"The presence of the Mother in all can be felt when one begins to have the widening of the consciousness in which it is not shut up in the personal self and the body but is extended everywhere. That comes usually with the descent of the higher consciousness from above. But one can also feel a beginning of it through the opening of the psychic. Then of course anger and jealousy do not remain—they fall away from the sense of spiritual oneness." 3 May 1936 (CWSA 32: 288)

15. Infinite peace and universal love can remove anger

"Yes, certainly. Infinite peace, universal love can remove anger—if they are complete and stable." (SABCL 24: 1411) (CWSA 31: 271)

"When these things [*anger, depression, etc.*] come you should always try to get back at once to the position you have taken of leaving all to the Mother,—your own difficulties, but also the stumbles of others,—X's rages (he behaves with everybody like that), Y's moods and all.

It would not matter so much about occasional anger coming—these recurrences happen with everybody so long as the peace is not settled permanently in the consciousness." (CWSA 32: 389)

16. Replace anger with an imperturbable calm, a perfect tolerance, and an understanding of the point of view of others

"For everything it is like that. For example, you have somewhere in your being that kind of habit of revolt, ignorant, arrogant, obscure revolt, of refusing what comes from above.

So, the negative side is to fight against this, to prevent it from expressing itself and reject it from your nature; and on the other side you must build positively surrender, understanding, consecration, self-giving and the sense of a complete collaboration with the divine forces. This is the positive side. Do you understand?

The same thing again: people who get angry... the habit of flying into a rage, of getting angry... one fights against that, refuses to get angry, rejects these vibrations of

anger from one's being, but this must be replaced by an imperturbable calm, a perfect tolerance, an understanding of the point of view of others, a clear and tranquil vision, a calm decision—which is the positive side." (CWM 7: 203)

17. The mind's view of people and things must necessarily be either limited and defective or erroneous

"They should be stopped at their root by rejecting the suggestions [there is this defect in you and therefore the sadhana does not become immediately effective] of the physical mind as soon as they begin. A new consciousness is coming based upon inner silence and quietude. You must wait quietly for that to develop. True knowledge, true perceptions of people and things will come in that new silent consciousness. The mind's view of people and things must necessarily be either limited and defective or erroneous—to go on judging by it is now a waste of time. Wait for the new consciousness to develop and show you all in a new and true light. Then the tendency to anger which arises from this mind and is a violent impatience directed against things the mind and vital do not like, would have no ground to rise at all—or if it rose without cause could be more easily rejected. Rely for the sadhana on the Mother's grace and her Force, yourself remembering always to keep only two things, quietude and confidence.

For things and people, leave them to the Mother also; as you have difficulties in your nature, so they have too; but to deal with them needs insight, sympathy, patience." (SABCL 24: 1414–1415) (CWSA 31: 268–269)

18. If things go wrong, simply say, "The Mother knows," and go on quietly with your work

"You must get rid of all inner as well as all outer movements of anger, impatience and dislike. If things go wrong or are done wrongly, you will simply say, 'The Mother knows' and go on quietly doing or getting things done as well as you can without friction." (CWM 14: 264)

19. If there is a change in the consciousness, the new consciousness quietly rejects anger

"Because anger etc. once used to come, it does not follow that they cannot die down in a short time, so his incredulity is not justifiable. This is just the way that these things do go. They come vehemently and resist the force used to eject them, but if they are still rejected or if there is a change in the consciousness, they lose their force and the consciousness quietly rejects them when they come." (CWSA 31: 270)

20. One must look for the cause when one feels that the fury is going to rise up, and one must bring the light of truth by calling the Mother

"For example, many people have the tendency to fly into a rage—suddenly it takes possession of them. Pouff! They get terribly angry. It is here that one must look for the cause; and here it is all entangled, like this, all mixed up, and one must go very deep and very fast because this spreads with the swiftness of a flood; and when it has spread, it is quite a mass of... like a black smoke which rises and burdens the consciousness, and it is very, very difficult to put any order in there. But when one feels that the fury is going to rise up, if one hurries there immediately like that in the vital centre, and goes there with a torch which lights up well, one can find the corner. If one finds the corner, hop! one does this, gets hold of it, and it is finished, the anger falls instantaneously, even before one has had the time to say a word. I give this example; there are hundreds of others." (CWM 7: 89)

"*Mother, here it is said that the light of truth is not always at one's disposal...*

It is always there; but one can't always use it.

But if...

It is always there; it is everywhere; but it is not at your disposal in the sense that you don't know how to make use of it.

But if one went to you to ask how?

Ah! But one must not ask personal questions. Of course if you ask me, 'What should I do?'—anyone at all among you—I shall tell you, 'My children, it is very easy, you have only to call me, and then when you feel the contact, well, you put it upon the thing till that part has understood.'" (CWM 7: 88)

21. When one is caught by an impulse of anger, instead of acting or speaking, if one withdraws and sits down quietly, concentrates, and looks at one's anger quietly, and writes it down, then it is gone

"Sometimes it is easier when you write it down; you imagine that I am there and then take a paper and write on it what you wanted to tell me. Then just the very fact of formulating it clearly sometimes gives you the true picture of the situation and you can have the answer more easily. It depends, sometimes it is necessary, sometimes not, but if you are in a confusion, a kind of whirlwind, above all, if there is a vital upsurge, the fact of compelling yourself to put it on paper already quietens you, it begins the work of purification.

In fact, one should always do this, when he feels that he is caught by an impulse of some kind or other, particularly impulses of anger. If one takes as an absolute discipline, instead of acting or speaking (because speech is an action), instead of acting under the impulse, if one withdraws and then does as I said, one sits down quietly, concentrates and then looks at his anger quietly, one writes it down, when one has finished writing, it is gone—in any case, most often." (CWM 7: 106)

22. Withdraw into an inner calm, into a detachment with a will to express only what comes from above, and always be submissive to the Divine Will

"*What is the right spirit?*

It depends on the case, my child. The right spirit is the will to perfect oneself, or the will to be calm, or... it depends, you see, depends on the circumstances. … In another case, one may feel a wave of anger or a fit of temper coming from outside; then one should withdraw into an inner calm, a detachment from superficial things, with a will to express only what comes from above and always be submissive to the divine Will. This is the right spirit. And in each case it is something like that. Naturally it always comes back to the same thing, that one must remember the Divine and put oneself at His service and will what He wills." (CWM 6: 340)

23. Do not be discouraged by these recurrences, but try to stand back in an inner quietude

"If one can conquer or change them by force of will or mental or spiritual control, so much the better. But if one cannot do this at once, one must not be upset or think oneself unfit. It is easier for most to realise the Divine or enter into the psychic consciousness than to change this part of the nature; but once the psychic consciousness governs or the higher consciousness descends then it is much easier for these to go. You must not therefore be discouraged by these recurrences or persistences, but try always to stand back in an inner quietude and if they come let them pass away like a cloud across the light. In time these things will be finally dealt with by the Force." (SABCL 24: 1411–1412) (CWSA 31: 267)

24. When you find yourself facing an insurmountable difficulty, then, through sustained concentration, open an inner door and bring in a new force

"For a while, all will go well. Then, one day, you will find yourself facing an insurmountable difficulty and will tell yourself, 'I have done all that and look, everything is as bad as before!' Then, in this case, you must, through a yet more sustained concentration, open an inner door in you and bring

into this movement a force which was not there formerly, a state of consciousness which was not there before. And there, there will be a power, when your own personal power will be exhausted and no longer effective. When the personal power runs out ordinary people say, 'That's good, I can no longer do anything, it is finished.' But I tell you that when you find yourself before this wall, it is the beginning of something new. By an obstinate concentration, you must pass over to the other side of the wall and there you will find a new knowledge, a new force, a new power, a new help, and you will be able to work out a new system, a new method which surely will take you very far.

'... Sit there and not stir any longer?—not at all. I must find other means of transport.' This will happen quite often, but after a while you will get used to it. You must sit down for a moment, meditate, and then find other means. You must increase your concentration, your aspiration and your trust and with the new help which comes to you, make a new programme, work out other means to replace those you have left behind. This is how one progresses stage by stage." (CWM 4: 180–181)

25. At each stage, apply what you have gained

"But you must take great care to apply at each stage, as perfectly as possible, what you have gained or learnt. If you remain in an indrawn state of consciousness and do not

apply materially the inner progress, a time will certainly come when you will not be able to move at all, for your outer being, unchanged, will be like a fetter pulling you back and hindering you from advancing. So, the most important point (what everybody says but only a few do) is to put into practice what you know. With that you have a good chance of succeeding, and with perseverance you will certainly get there." (CWM 4: 181)

26. Put the light and quietude upon the subconscient

"For example, it is as when one feels anger rising up from the subconscient; well, if one wants to control it one must be very careful not to be identified with it. One must not go down into it. One must remain in one's consciousness, above, quiet, peaceful, and from there look at this anger and put the light and quietude upon it so that it calms down and vanishes. But if one gets identified with it, one is also in anger, one can't change it." (CWM 7: 113)

"First of all, it is the subconscient that has to become conscious, and indeed the main difficulty of the integral transformation is that things are constantly rising up from the subconscient. You think you have got a certain movement under control—anger, for example. You try very hard to control your anger and succeed to some extent, then suddenly it rises up again for some reason unknown to you, as if you hadn't done anything at all, and you have to start

all over again. If it were the transformed part of the being going back to its old ways, it would be most depressing, but it is not like that. It is the material part, the material life which is sustained, supported, so to say, by a subconscient life. And this subconscient is beginning to get individualised around some people; it has certain affinities with a kind of subconscient somewhat like our own, and that is where the things you have repressed or thrown out of your nature go to—and one fine day they rise up again. But if you are able to bring the light into the subconscient and make it conscious, this will no longer happen." (CWM 15: 295–296)

27. When anger is rejected, it hurts as though something was being pulled out—because you identify yourself with anger

"*Sweet Mother, I have not understood this: "The spirit's inner enemies... have to be sacrificed in the harsher sense of the word, whatever pain in going they may throw by reflection on the consciousness of the seeker."*

"Not understood? This has never happened to you? No? When, for instance, you have a movement you don't like—a movement of anger or spite, all kinds of things like that, or an insincerity or something you don't like—when you reject it from yourself, when you want to make an effort not to have it any more, it hurts you, doesn't it? It hurts, it is as

though something was being pulled out. Well, this is the pain he is speaking about; he says that it is the bad thing you throw away from you which, when leaving, gives you a nice little knock as a parting gift. That's what he says." (CWM 8: 83–84)

"And this is a sure sign for you, a sure indication of what you identify yourself with. If you are identified with the forces from below, you suffer; if you are identified with the forces from above, you are happy." (CWM 8: 84–85)

I—I. Mastery over anger

1. The power of mastery is to replace the bad vibration with the true one

"Besides, it is childishly simple, for mastery means the knowledge of handling certain vibrations; if you know how to handle these vibrations you have the mastery. The best field of experimentation is yourself: first you have the control in yourself ...

To control something, a movement, is simply to replace by one's presence, without words or explanations, the bad vibration by the true one. This is what constitutes the power of mastery. It does not lie in speaking, in explaining; with words and explanations and even a certain emanation of force, you may have an influence on someone, but you do not control his movement. The control of the movement is the capacity to oppose the vibration of this movement by a stronger, truer vibration which can stop the other one." (CWM 8: 351–352)

2. Equanimity can bring mastery over anger

Equality ... means self-mastery over the vital movements, anger ..." (CWSA 29: 130)

"What you must arrive at (of course it cannot be done at once but takes time) is a complete equanimity which sees things and people as they are but is not shaken, angered or grieved by them." (CWSA 35: 802)

"*Sweet Mother! When will the vital yearn for the Divine? May its passion be changed into psychic love, its anger into*

Equanimity …" (CWM 17: 41)

"When there is an attack from the human instruments of adverse forces, one should try to overcome it not in a spirit of personal hatred or anger or wounded egoism, but with a calm spirit of strength and equanimity and a call to the Divine Force to act. Success or failure lies with the Divine." (CWSA 31: 780)

"It is an equality of philosophic indifference; it brings a high calm, but not the greater spiritual joy; ... This equality is founded upon oneness with all beings. ... Here there is no room, not merely for hatred or anger or uncharitableness, but for aloofness, disdain or any petty pride of superiority." (CWSA 19: 208)

I—J. Quarrel and anger

"All quarrels proceed from egoism which pushes its own opinion and affirms its own importance, considering that it is right and everybody else wrong and thus creates anger and sense of injury etc. These things must not be indulged, but rejected at once." (CWSA 31: 348)

"... the lower vital which is occupied with small desires and feelings, such as make the greater part of daily life, e.g. food desire, sexual desire, small likings, dislikings, vanity, quarrels, love of praise, anger at blame, little wishes of all kinds—and a numberless host of other things." (CWSA 28: 187)

"In all such dealings with others, you should see not only your own side of the question but the other side also. There should be no anger, vehement reproach or menace, for these things only raise anger and retort on the other side. I write this because you are trying to rise above yourself and dominate your vital and when one wants to do that, one cannot be too strict with oneself in these things. It is best even to be severe to one's own mistakes and charitable to the mistakes of others." 23 June 1935 (CWSA 35: 755) (CWSA 29: 280)

"You must remember that anger creates an atmosphere which spreads and gets hold of those around. If you give free vent to your anger, that spirit catches hold of others who are open to it like X and makes them also angry and violent. X's conduct has been serious, but the best way is to show your superiority to him by mastering your own anger. Going outside won't cure this weakness of yours.

You must conquer it here in yourself—otherwise it will go wherever you go and create trouble for you." (CWSA 31: 348–349)

"Most of the difficulties that people have are due to a lack of control over their actions, and their reactions to the actions of others.

According to one's own nature and weaknesses, one must set for oneself a discipline that is invariably to be followed; for example,

never to quarrel,

never to reply when someone says or does something unpleasant,

never to argue when one disagrees.

Obviously one should never lose one's temper when things or people are not the way one would like them to be.

Naturally, if a person is not used to controlling himself, it takes a good deal of effort to acquire the habit. But this is quite indispensable if one wants to make any progress.

The path is long. That is why one must have patience and an unfailing sincerity towards oneself.

In order to be able to live in peace with others, self-control is essential, and it ought to be practised even by those who do not aspire for transformation." (CWM 17: 369–370)

"When two persons quarrel, always both are in the wrong." (CWM 14: 263)

"It is always wrong to quarrel, even if one is not the aggressor." (CWM 14: 263)

"When you start a quarrel it is as if you were declaring war on the Divine's work." (CWM 14: 263)

"Yes, all these quarrels are a very sad thing—they interfere terribly in the work and make everything more difficult." (CWM 14: 263)

"Before getting angry at the mistakes of others one should always remember one's own mistakes." (CWM 14: 263)

"That one feels sad for one's own faults,—this may, if necessary, be useful to strengthen one's resolution to correct them.

But that one can be offended by another's bad conduct, this has truly nothing to do with the spiritual life and the service of the Divine." (CWM 14: 264)

"To be above offence or insult makes one truly great." (CWM 14: 264)

"*What is to be done if a person comes to quarrel because one has accepted in one case and refused in another? What is to be done to avoid such bitterness around one, provoked by repeated refusals?*

As for ill-will, jealousy, quarrels and reproaches, one must sincerely be above all that and reply with a benevolent smile to the bitterest words; and unless one is absolutely sure of himself and his reactions, it would be better, as a general rule, to keep silent." (CWM 14: 264)

"As usual, it is only a misunderstanding, and also as usual, the ego of each one, by its reaction, magnifies the thing and aggravates it. But it is easy to arrange, and, with the goodwill of all, I am sure that all will be well." (CWM 14: 264)

I—K. Anger and speech

"To control speech is to stand back from the speech impulse and observe it, not to say whatever the impulse makes you say but only to speak what one really needs to say or chooses to say, not to speak in haste or anger or impatience or lightly, not to talk at random or say what is harmful. It does not necessarily mean to speak very little, though that is often helpful." (CWSA 31: 85)

"It is always a sign of strength to be able to say things gently and it is always weakness that bursts out into unpleasantnesses." 18 April 1956 (CWM 14: 205)

"Without going to this extreme, one should always control the words one speaks and never allow one's tongue to be prompted by a movement of anger, violence or temper. It is not only the quarrel that is bad in its results, but the fact of allowing one's tongue to be used to project bad vibrations into the atmosphere; for nothing is more contagious than the vibrations of sound, and by giving these movements a chance to express themselves, one perpetuates them in oneself and in others." (CWM 12: 59)

"In social life, in addition to the words that concern material life and occupations, there will be those that express sensations, feelings and emotions. Here the habit of outer

silence proves of valuable help. For when one is assailed by a wave of sensations or feelings, this habitual silence gives you time to reflect and, if necessary, to regain possession of yourself before projecting the sensation or feeling in words. How many quarrels can be avoided in this way; how many times one will be saved from one of those psychological catastrophes which are only too often the result of uncontrolled speech." (CWM 12: 58–59)

"Someone comes and insults you or says unpleasant things to you; and if you begin to vibrate in unison with this anger or this ill-will, you feel quite weak and powerless and usually you make a fool of yourself. But if you manage to keep within yourself, especially in your head, a complete immobility which refuses to receive these vibrations, then at the same time you feel a great strength, and the other person cannot disturb you. If you remain very quiet, even physically, and when violence is directed at you, you are able to remain very quiet, very silent, very still, well, that has a power not only over you but over the other person also. If you don't have all these vibrations of inner response, if you can remain absolutely immobile within yourself, everywhere, this has an almost immediate effect upon the other person.

That gives you an idea of the power of immobility." (CWM 8: 67)

"In all things there must be a control over thought and speech also. But while rajasic violence is excluded, a calmly forceful severity of thought and speech where severity is needed is sometimes indispensable." (SABCL 24: 1415–1416) (CWSA 31: 94)

"Agitation, violence, anger, all these things are always, without exception, signs of weakness. And especially when one gets carried away in one's speech and says things one should not say, *this* indeed is the sign of a frightful mental weakness—mental and vital—frightful. Otherwise you may hear all the insults in the world, people may tell you all possible stupidities; if you are not weak, you may perhaps not smile outwardly, for it is not always good taste to smile, but deep within you, you are smiling, you let it pass, it does not touch you.... Simply, if your mind has formed the habit of being quiet as it is recommended here, and you have the perception of truth within yourself, you can hear anything at all. It does not even produce the semblance of a vibration—everything remains absolutely immobile and quiet. And then if the witness we were speaking about a while ago is there, looking on at the comedy, he surely smiles." (CWM 6: 372–373)

"I think I have explained this to you once; I told you, for example, that words spoken casually, usually without any re-flection and without attaching any importance to them,

can be used to do something very good. I think I spoke to you about 'Bonjour', 'Good Day', didn't I? When people meet and say 'Bonjour', they do so mechanically and without thinking. But if you put a will into it, an aspiration to indeed wish someone a good day, well, there is a way of saying 'Good Day' which is very effective, much more effective than if simply meeting someone you thought: 'Ah! I hope he has a good day', without saying anything. If with this hope in your thought you say to him in a certain way, 'Good Day', you make it more concrete and more effective.

It's the same thing, by the way, with curses, or when one gets angry and says bad things to people. This can do them as much harm—more harm sometimes—than if you were to give them a slap. With very sensitive people it can put their stomach out of order or give them palpitation, because you put into it an evil force which has a power of destruction.

It is not at all ineffective to speak. Naturally it depends a great deal on each one's inner power. People who have no strength and no consciousness can't do very much—unless they employ material means. But to the extent that you are strong, especially when you have a powerful vital, you must have a great control on what you say, otherwise you can do much harm. Without wanting to, without knowing it; through ignorance." (CWM 7: 343–344)

I—L. Conquering Anger

"Anger comes from the vital nature or if it has been driven out from there rises back into it from the subconscient or from the environmental Nature." (CWSA 31: 273)

"If anger is a powerful element in our nature, we may put it down for a time by sheer force and call it self-control, but eventually unsatisfied Nature will get the better of us and the passion return upon us with astonishing force at an unexpected moment. There are only two ways by which we can effectively get the better of the passion which seeks to enslave us. One is by substitution, replacing it whenever it rises by the opposite quality, anger by thoughts of forgiveness, love or forbearance, lust by meditation on purity, pride by thoughts of humility and our own defects or nothingness; this is the method of Rajayoga, but it is a difficult, slow and uncertain method; for both the ancient traditions and the modern experience of Yoga show that men who had attained for long years the highest self-mastery have been suddenly surprised by a violent return of the thing they thought dead or for ever subject." (CWSA 13: 34)

"It [*rejection*] is the way to get rid of these things [*anger and sex desire*]—when rejected they either sink into the subconscient or pass out into the surrounding

(environmental) consciousness through which one is connected with the universal forces. They may try to rise up from the subconscient or come in again from outside; but if one always rejects them, calling in the aid of the Mother and does not allow them to take hold, their force of recurrence dies away and finally they come no more. Sometimes a very decisive rejection gets rid of them at a stroke once for all." (CWSA 31: 273)

"As for the anger it is evidently in process of control and elimination and its recurrences cannot fail to disappear after a time as the new consciousness increases." (CWSA 30: 225)

"It is rather perilous to think of anything like that—'Now it [*anger*] is finished'—it is better to wait some time and see. The hostiles have a habit of trying their strength when they hear anything like that; they want to show you that it is not so." (CWSA 31: 270)

"There is nothing peculiar about retrogression. [Going back to an earlier inferior state] I was also noted in my earlier time before Yoga for the rareness of anger. At a certain period of the Yoga it rose in me like a volcano, and I had to take a long time eliminating it." (CWSA 35: 377)

Q: "You surprise me very much by this volcanic anger of yours. People say that they never heard a single harsh, rude,

angry word from your mouth here in Pondicherry. But how is it that this 'volcano' flared up in Yoga when you were noted for its rareness in pre-Yoga? Subconscient surge?

A: I was speaking of a past phase. I don't know about subconscient, must have come from universal Nature." 14 November 1936 (CWSA 35: 377)

Q: "I heard an interesting thing, that you gave X a big shout! Ah, I wish I had heard it! But I thought you had lost your capacity to shout?

A: The supramental (even its tail) does not take away any capacity, but rather sublimates all and gives those that were not there. So I gave a sublimated supramental shout. I freely admit that (apart from the public platform) I have shouted only four or five times in my life." 23 July 1938 (CWSA 35: 377)

I—M. Other quotations on anger

"When you have a thought, a well-made mental formation which goes out of you, it becomes an independent entity and continues on its way and it does that for which it was made. It continues to act independently of you. That is why you must be on your guard. If you have made such a formation and it has gone out, it has gone out to do its work; and after a time you find out that it was perhaps not a very happy thing to have a thought like that, that this formation was not very beneficial; now that it has gone out, it is very difficult for you to get hold of it again. You must have considerable occult knowledge. It has gone out and is moving on its way.... Supposing in a moment of great anger (I do not say that you do so, but still) when you were in quite a rage against someone, you said: 'Ah! couldn't some misfortune befall him?' Your formation has gone on its way. It has gone out and you have no longer any control over it; and it goes and organizes some misfortune or other: it is going to do its work. And after sometime the misfortune arrives. Happily, you do not usually have sufficient knowledge to tell yourself: 'Oh! It is I who am responsible', but that is the truth." (CWM 5: 132)

"All your troubles, depression, discouragement, disgust, fury, all, all come from the vital. … When it is not satisfied, it hides in a corner and does not budge. And then you have

no more energy, no more strength, you have no courage left. Your will is like... like a withering plant. All resentment, disgust, fury, all despair, grief, anger—all that comes from this gentleman. For it is energy in action." (CWM 5: 256)

From the Dhammapada on Anger

"*One should cast away anger, one should reject pride, one should break all bonds. One who is not attached to name or form, who possesses nothing, is delivered from suffering.*

Whosoever masters rising anger, as one who controls a moving chariot, that one indeed is worthy of being called a good charioteer. Others merely hold the reins.

Oppose anger with serenity, evil with good; conquer a miser by generosity and a liar by the truth.

Speak the truth; do not give way to anger; give the little you possess to one who asks of you; by these three attributes, men can approach the gods.

The sages who are void of violence, who are always in control of their senses, attain that imperishable state where pain is no more.

Those who are always vigilant and who discipline themselves day and night, whose minds are always turned towards Nirvana, will see their impurities disappear for ever.

Not only today but since ancient times, they have always been criticised, those who remain silent, those who speak much and those who speak little. None here below escapes criticism.

There has never been and never will be, nor is there now, one who receives only blame or only praise. If a man is praised by the sages, who have observed him day after day, for being intelligent, without reproach, endowed with knowledge and virtue, who then would dare to blame him who is as pure as gold? Even the gods and Brahma praise him.

Be on your guard against the wrath of the body. Control your actions, and leaving behind wrong ways of acting, practise perfect conduct in action.

Be on your guard against wrath in speech. Control your words, and leaving behind wrong ways of speaking, practise good conduct in speech.

Be on your guard against wrath of mind. Control your thoughts, and leaving behind wrong ways of thinking, practise good conduct in thought.

The sages whose actions are controlled, whose words are controlled and whose thoughts are controlled, they in truth are perfectly controlled." (CWM 3: 258–259)

"If the anger did not come, it must be because the vital force of the attack is diminishing and it must be more in the physical mind and the external (physical) vital that it acts. You have a great strength for action; as for the inner growth and action of the sadhana you have a strength there too of the psychic and the vital,—it is only the external being that finds these difficulties in its way and is momentarily overcome or affected by them. Things always come in the way when one wants to progress in the sadhana, but in the end if one is sincere in one's aspiration these troubles help to prepare the victory of the soul over all that opposes.

The inner will prevails sometimes, sometimes it does not prevail for the time being. That is quite normal. It depends on certain conditions which the physical mind does not see. As one grows in knowledge, one becomes aware of these unseen conditions and understands better what happens." (SABCL 24: 1413) (CWSA 31: 269–270)

"If you look closely, you will see that all these things—the rudeness of one, the anger of another—are exceedingly slight things which should be received with indifference. Do not allow them to trouble you so much. The one thing of supreme importance is your sadhana and your spiritual growth. Let nothing touch or disturb that." (SABCL 24: 1415) (CWSA 31: 314)

"*The Essays on the Gita* explain the ordinary Karmayoga as developed in the Gita, in which the work done is the ordinary work of human life with only an inward change. There too the violence to be used is not a personal violence done from egoistic motives, but part of the ordered system of social life. Nothing can spiritually justify individual violence done in anger or passion or from any vital motive. In our yoga our object is to rise higher than the ordinary life of men and in it violence has to be left aside altogether." (SABCL 24: 1414) (CWSA 35: 99) (CWSA 31: 277)

"*I nearly got angry and it was with an effort that I controlled myself.*

It is very good to control one's anger. Even if it were only to learn to do so, these contacts with others are useful." (CWM 16: 189–190)

"This is why I tell people, 'If you can't find peace and solitude in yourself, can't isolate yourself sufficiently to enter within yourself, if you can't do this in the conditions of ordinary life, it is certainly not here that you will be able to do it, because your first difficulty will be that you will feel invaded by everything and everybody, and will be absolutely unable to isolate yourself. If you have learnt to do it before coming here, then it will be good. But if you don't know how to do it, you will find it very difficult to do so here.'

And for everything it is the same way. People who are ill-natured, those who have no control over their anger, for instance, are much worse here than in the ordinary world, because in the ordinary world they are controlled by all the necessities of life and because, for example, when they go to an office, if they get into a temper against the boss, they are thrown out. While here, we don't throw them out; they are simply told, 'Try to control yourself.'" (CWM 7: 416)

"Two things need to be done. Children must be taught:

a) not to tell a lie, whatever the consequences;

b) to control violence, rage, anger.

If these two things can be done, they can be led towards superhumanity." (CWM 12: 155)

"I can only say—it is your vital you have to change. Make it perfectly straight and clear and pure. Make it free from all selfishness, blindness, insincerity, anger, abhiman, self-

indulgence, vital desire—and give it as a pure offering to the Mother." 28 September 1933 (CWSA 32: 146)

"Yes, that is the most important thing—to get over ego, anger, personal dislikes, self-regarding sensitiveness, etc. Work is not only for work's sake, but as a field of sadhana, for getting rid of the lower personality and its reactions and acquiring a full surrender to the Divine." (CWSA 32: 419) (CWSA 29: 239)

"Of course the cause is that the sadhaks apply the movements of a vital human love to the Mother and the ordinary vital human love is full of contrary movements of distrust, misunderstanding, jealousy, anger, despair. But in Yoga this is most undesirable—for here trust in the Mother, faith in her divine Love is of great importance; anything that denies or disturbs it opens the door to obstacles and wrong reactions. It is not that there should be no love in the vital, but it must purify itself of these reactions and fix itself on the psychic being's trust and confident self-giving." (CWSA 32: 548)

"External sacrifices of this kind have no longer any meaning—as so many saints have said, sacrifice ego, anger, lust etc. to Kali, not goats or cocks." (CWSA 28: 414)

"By the way, a sattwic man can have strong passion and strong anger—and when he lets the latter loose, the normally violent fellow is simply nowhere." (CWSA 28: 495)

"*Physical effects such as flushing of the face, flaring of the nostrils, clenched teeth and 'ebullition' in the chest. The correspondent had read a book on psychology in which the author suggested that one cannot 'fancy' the state of rage without such visible signs of anger.*—Ed.

But is it true that even anger which is of the lower vital and therefore close to the body, invariably produces these effects? Of course the psychologist can't know that another man is angry unless he shows physical signs of it, but also he can't know what a man is thinking unless the man speaks or writes—does it follow that the state of thought cannot be 'fancied' without its sign in speaking or writing? A Japanese who is accustomed to control all his 'emotions' and give no sign … will have none of these things when he is angry—not even the 'ebullition' [bubbling or boiling] in the chest,—in its place there will be a settled fire that will burn till his anger achieves itself in action." (CWSA 31: 270–271)

A prayer

"Deliver me from anger, ingratitude and foolish pride. Make me calm, humble and gentle. Let me feel your divine control

in my work and in all my action." 5 November 1938 (CWSA 35: 843)

"It [*the equivalent of anger in the higher nature*] is a *rudra* power of severity and indignation (in the deepest sense of the word) against what should not be—the warrior force of Mahakali in combating the Asura." (CWSA 31: 271)

"If you find it difficult to reject in the sense of throwing away, what you have to do is to refuse assent. As for instance, as regards voices or suggestions, not to listen to them, not to believe what they want you to believe, not to do what they want or push you to do." (CWSA 31: 273)

"*The correspondent wrote that he grew angry when he read some false statements about Sri Aurobindo made by a journalist and that his anger relieved him of a slight depression. He was reminded of a remark made by Sri Ramakrishna: 'The ripus (passions) too can help in the spiritual life provided you know the secret of the game: for instance, anger may help you if you turn it against all who are hostile to the Divine.'—Ed.*

It is not at all unnatural that the anger brought back peace and harmony: for this anger was a form of loyalty to the Divine and that put you into touch with your psychic consciousness again. Sri Ramakrishna was quite right about

anger. The hostile powers are proof against gentleness and sweetness and non-resistance and soul-force, but a current of righteous anger often sends them flying." (CWSA 31: 276)

"*While meditating today I received the Mother's peace and light and joy. Then for a short time I went deep inside and suddenly saw a tiger standing in front of me. Seeing the tiger, I kept calling the Mother and went near it. Then the tiger vanished ...*

A: The tiger is some force that appears hostile. If you face it with the Mother's name, the hostile force disappears ... At first it is inhabited by the tiger (anger, passion, desire etc.)—but as soon as the psychic influence masters it, that disappears ..." 3 April 1933 (CWSA 32: 127)

"To the mystic there is no such thing as an abstraction. Everything which to the intellectual mind is abstract has a concreteness, substantiality which is more real than the sensible form of an object or of a physical event. To me, for instance, consciousness is the very stuff of existence and I can feel it everywhere enveloping and penetrating the stone as much as man or the animal. A movement, a flow of consciousness is not to me an image but a fact. If I wrote 'His anger climbed against me in a stream', it would be to the general reader a mere image, not something that was felt by me in a sensible experience; yet I would only be

describing in exact terms what actually happened once, a stream of anger, a sensible and violent current of it rising up from downstairs and rushing upon me as I sat in the veranda of the guest-house, the truth of it being confirmed afterwards by the confession of the person who had the movement." (CWSA 27: 316)

PERSONALITY TRAITS OF A SUCCESSFUL TEACHER

1. "Complete self-control not only to the extent of not showing any anger, but remaining absolutely quiet and undisturbed under all circumstances." (CWM 12: 167)

"The habit of self-indulgence in anger by an organization of great passivity and low physical and mental sensibility creates the characteristic of a quiet unimpassioned cruelty,—the savage is, as a rule, calmly cruel." (CWSA 17: 287)

"Hinduism only incidentally strings together a number of commandments for observance, a table of moral laws; more deeply it enjoins a spiritual or ethical purity of the mind with action as one outward index. It says strongly enough, almost too strongly, 'Thou shouldst not kill,' but insists more firmly on the injunction, 'Thou shalt not hate, thou shalt not yield to greed, anger or malice,' for these are the roots of killing." (CWSA 20: 149)

"Then too the right activity of the heart can be brought to the surface; for we find then that behind this emotion-ridden soul of desire there was waiting all the while a soul of love and lucid joy and delight, a pure psyche, which was clouded over by the deformations of anger, fear, hatred, repulsion and could not embrace the world with an impartial love and joy. But the purified heart is rid of anger, rid of fear, rid of hatred, rid of every shrinking and repulsion: it has a universal love, it can receive with an untroubled sweetness and clarity the various delight which God gives it in the world." (CWSA 24: 661)

"*When people speak against you, I feel as if a big flame with many tongues is arising in me and the person in front becomes docile.*

It must be Kali's force which you evoke." (CWM 15: 15)

"*I want to ask you a question concerned with my reaction to the inconsideration and vulgarity in X's letter about Sri Aurobindo. … A similar blaze [It was like a sword of fire leaping out of my chest, striking and striking through the hours] began to go out of my chest yesterday on reading Y's letter. I had no scruple in directing it at his journal as if to consume its future to ashes. But although I also struck out at Y himself as if to destroy him, I did not encourage the fiery onslaught. I started wondering if it was right to attack*

like that a person. At times I thought I was perfectly justified. At other times it seemed to me that I should offer my sword of fire to you and Sri Aurobindo and leave it to you both to use it instead of myself concentratedly directing it at Y. I shall be thankful if I can have some words of guidance from you. Please keep in mind that I am not talking of a mere outburst of anger: some force appears to be there which wants to destroy and which feels it has the power to destroy. Of course I would never think of using it for my own private ends.

It is evidently the working of the Kali force that has lit and is directing this fire in you. There is nothing wrong in its action; it is not an anger personal to you but the wrath of a divine power and it must be allowed to act; in fact, I think you could not stop it from burning in you even if you wanted to stop it. This man has drawn it on himself and there is nothing wrong in what is happening, he alone is responsible. Of course, it must not be used for any personal aim or in any self-regarding way." 8 October 1950 (CWM 15: 15–16)

"Hussein was the grandson of the Prophet Mohammed. His home was beautiful and his purse well filled. Whoever offended him offended a rich man, and heavy is the anger of the rich.

One day a slave carrying a bowl of boiling hot water was passing by Hussein as he dined. By misfortune a little

water fell upon the grandson of the Prophet who let out a cry of rage.

Falling to his knees, the slave had the presence of mind to recall an appropriate verse of the Koran:

'Paradise is for those who bridle their anger,' he said.

'I am not angry,' broke in Hussein, touched by these words.

'... and for those who forgive men,' continued the slave.

'I forgive you,' said Hussein.

'... for Allah loves the merciful,' the servant added.

In the course of this exchange, all Hussein's anger had vanished. Now wholly at peace with himself he made the slave rise and said:

'From now on you are free. Here, take these four hundred pieces of silver.'

In this way Hussein learnt how to bridle his temper which was as generous as it was hasty. Since his noble character was neither wicked nor cruel, it was worthy of being controlled." (CWM 2: 173–174)

II— Fear Is the First Thing That Must Be Thrown Away in Yoga

"Fear is the first thing that must be thrown away …" (CWSA 29: 36)

II—A. What is fear?

1. Fear is a creation of the vital plane, an instinct of the ignorance, a sense of danger with a violent vital reaction

"There is no fear in the higher Nature. Fear is a creation of the vital plane, an instinct of the ignorance, a sense of danger with a violent vital reaction that replaces and usually prevents or distorts the intelligence of things. It might almost be considered as an invention of the hostile forces." (CWSA 31: 278)

2. Fear is more of a nervous sensation than an emotion

"The emotions are especially assailed and have the pranic stamp; fear is more even of a nervous sensation than an emotion, anger is largely or often a sensational response translated into terms of emotion." (CWSA 24: 649–650)

"If I am a coward today, I can be a hero tomorrow. The cowardice was merely the habit of associating certain things with pain and grief and of shrinking from the pain and grief; this shrinking and the physical sensations in the vital or nervous man which accompany it are called fear, and they can be dismissed by the action of the mind which created them." (CWSA 13: 25)

"Fear is of course a vital and physical thing. Many people who have shown great courage, were not physically or even vitally brave; yet by force of mind they pushed themselves into all sorts of battle and danger. Henry IV of France, a great fighter and victor, was an example. Just because his body consciousness was in a panic, he forced it to go where the danger was thickest." (CWSA 31: 280)

3. Fear belongs to the lower nature

"Moreover, fear belongs to the lower nature, to the lower self, and in approaching the higher Self must be put aside before we can enter into its presence." (CWSA 24: 566)

4. Fear and anxiety are perverse forms of will

"Fear and anxiety are perverse forms of will…But the spirit is stronger than both together; from fear and hope take

refuge in the grandiose calm and careless mastery of the spirit." (CWSA 12: 473)

5. Fear is a disease of the mind, born of its sense of division and limitation

"Fear, desire and sorrow are diseases of the mind; born of its sense of division and limitation, they cease with the falsehood that begot them." (CWSA 23: 508)

6. Fear is a mental construction which could have no real foundation

"But the fear itself is a mental construction which could have no real foundation if you had remembered the constant indulgence and patience the Mother has always shown to you." (CWSA 32: 122)

7. Fear is many-sided, self-contradictory, illogical, unreasoning, and often unreasonable

"Generally speaking, perhaps the greatest obstacle in the way of man's progress is fear, a fear that is many sided, multiform, self-contradictory, illogical, unreasoning and often unreasonable." (CWM 12: 82)

8. Fear is the worst instrument of education—fear is a pernicious means of education: it invariably gives birth to deceit and lying

"Fear is the worst instrument of education and the surest way of attracting what is feared." (CWM 12: 14)

"You should not allow any fear to come between you and your child; fear is a pernicious means of education: it invariably gives birth to deceit and lying. Only a discerning affection that is firm yet gentle and an adequate practical knowledge will create the bonds of trust that are indispensable for you to be able to educate your child effectively. And do not forget that you have to control yourself constantly in order to be equal to your task and truly fulfil the duty which you owe your child by the mere fact of having brought him into the world." (CWM 12: 11)

9. Fear is an invention of the hostile forces

"Q: *Sweet Mother, Why does one feel afraid? Where does fear come from?*

A: Fear is an invention of the hostile forces who have created it as the best means of dominating living beings, animals and men.

Those who are *pure*—that is to say, exclusively under the Divine influence—have no fear." 10 November 1965 (CWM 16: 329)

"But certainly, the fact is that the adverse beings, beings of the vital world who fight against the divine Work, make an extensive use of fear. It is through that that they have the strongest hold on human beings. Besides, they are not the only ones: there are also all the political and religious means which are of that type. There are religions which found their power over the believers simply through the fear of death and of what will happen thereafter, and of all catastrophes which await you after death if you do not obey blindly the laws they dictate to you." (CWM 6: 51)

10. Fear comes with insincerity

"The Grace works for the realisation of your aspiration and everything is arranged to gain the most prompt, the quickest realization—so there is nothing to fear.

Fear comes with insincerity. If you want a comfortable life, agreeable circumstances, etc., you are putting conditions and restrictions, and then you can fear.

But it has no business in the sadhana!" 26 May 1967 (CWM 15: 181)

11. Fear may also come from an antipathy, a lack of affinity with something

"This fear may also come from an antipathy, that is, a lack of affinity with something. Some people are especially afraid of fire, some especially fear water, others have a special fear of one animal or another. It comes from a disharmony between the vital vibrations. And then it is translated in this body-unconsciousness by fear. The body is a terribly unconscious thing. How one has to work to give it just a very little consciousness! It lives automatically, by habit. It is terribly unconscious." (CWM 6: 51)

12. Fear is slavery

"Fear is slavery, work is liberty, courage is victory." (CWM 14: 241–244)

13. Tamas can cause fear

"Tamas binds by weakness and the craving in the nature for ease and inaction; it is always sinking into idleness, depression, confusion of mind, fear, disappointment, despondency and despair; it is in order that we may get rid of the tamasic *ahankara* that we are given the command, 'Let there be no attachment to inaction,' and the instruction to pursue the yoga always, whether we seem to advance

or seem to be standing still or seem even to be going back, always with a calm faith and patient and cheerful perseverance, *anirviṅṅacetasā*." (CWSA 13: 83–84)

14. Fear is also a terribly contagious collective thing

"Fear is also a terribly contagious collective thing—contagious, it is much more catching than the most contagious of illnesses. You breathe an atmosphere of fear and instantly you feel frightened, without even knowing why or how, nothing, simply because there was an atmosphere of fear. A panic at an accident is nothing but an atmosphere of fear spreading round over everybody. And it is quite curable. There have been numerous cases of a panic being stopped outright simply because some people refused the suggestion and could counteract it with an opposite suggestion." (CWM 5: 318)

15. It is stupid to be afraid

"You must observe yourself a little and say that when you are afraid it is as though the fear was attracting the thing you are afraid of. If you are afraid of illness, it is as though you were attracting the illness. If you are afraid of an accident, it is as though you were attracting the accident. And if you look into yourself and around yourself a little,

you will find it out, it is a persistent fact. So if you have just a little common sense, you say: "It is stupid to be afraid of anything, for it is precisely as though I were making a sign to that thing to come to me. If I had an enemy who wanted to kill me, I would not go and tell him: 'You know, it's me you want to kill!'" It is something like that. So since fear is bad, we won't have it. And if you say you are unable to prevent it by your reason, well, that shows you have no control over yourselves and must make a little effort to control yourselves. That is all." (CWM 5: 317)

II—B. Why does one feel afraid?

1. Two reasons why a sadhak fears the divinisation of the consciousness are:
   First, there is the feeling of the vital that it will have to cease to be obscure, crude
2. Next, there is some vague, ignorant idea of the mind that the divine nature is something cold, bare, empty, austere, aloof, without the glorious riches of the egoistic human vital life

"But is the Divine then something so terrible, horrible or repellent that the idea of its entry into the physical, its divinizing of the human should create this shrinking, refusal, revolt or fear? I can understand that the unregenerate vital attached to its own petty sufferings and pleasures, to the brief ignorant drama of life, should shrink from what will change it. But why should a God-lover, a God-seeker, a sadhak fear the divinisation of the consciousness! Why should he object to becoming one in nature with what he seeks, why should he recoil from *sādṛśya-mukti*? Behind this fear there are usually two causes: first, there is the feeling of the vital that it will have to cease to be obscure, crude, muddy, egoistic, unrefined (spiritually), full of stimulating desires and small pleasures and interesting sufferings (for it shrinks even from the Ananda which will replace them); next, there is some

vague ignorant idea of the mind, due, I suppose, to the ascetic tradition, that the divine nature is something cold, bare, empty, austere, aloof, without the glorious riches of the egoistic human vital life. As if there were not a divine vital and as if that divine vital is not itself and, when it gets the means to manifest, will not make the life on earth also infinitely more full of beauty, love, radiance, warmth, fire, intensity and divine passion and capacity for bliss than the present impotent, suffering, pettily and transiently excited and soon tired vitality of the still so imperfect human creation!" (CWSA 29: 481–482)

3. An excessive concern about one's security
4. What one does not know always gives an uneasy feeling
5. One doesn't have the habit of a spontaneous trust in the Divine

"Q: *Why does one feel afraid?*

A: I suppose it is because one is egoistic.

There are three reasons. First, an excessive concern about one's security. Next, what one does not know always gives an uneasy feeling which is translated in the consciousness by fear. And above all, one doesn't have the habit of a spontaneous trust in the Divine. If you look into things sufficiently deeply, this is the true reason. There are

people who do not even know that That exists, but one could tell them in other words, 'You have no faith in your destiny' or 'You know nothing about Grace'—anything whatever, you may put it as you like, but the root of the matter is a lack of trust. If one always had the feeling that it is the best that happens in all circumstances, one would not be afraid.

The first movement of fear comes automatically. There was a great scientist who was also a great psychologist (I don't remember his name now); he had developed his inner consciousness but wanted to test it. So he undertook an experiment. He wanted to know if, by means of consciousness, one could control the reflex actions of the body (probably he didn't go far enough to be able to do it, for it can be done; but in any case, for him it was still impossible).Well, he went to the zoological garden, to the place where snakes were kept in a glass cage. There was a particularly aggressive cobra there; when it was not asleep, it was almost always in a fury, for through the glass it could see people and that irritated it terribly. Our scientist went and stood in front of the cage. He knew very well that it was made in such a way that the snake could never break the glass and that he ran no risk of being attacked. So from there he began to excite the snake by shouts and gestures. The cobra, furious, hurled itself against the glass, and every time it did so the scientist closed his eyes! Our psychologist told himself, 'But look

here, I know that this snake cannot pass through, why do I close my eyes?' Well, one must recognise that it is difficult to conquer the reaction. It is a sense of protection, and if one feels that one cannot protect one self, one is afraid. But the movement of fear which is expressed by the eyes fluttering is not a mental or a vital fear: it is a fear in the cells of the body; for it has not been impressed upon them that there is no danger and they do not know how to resist. It is because one has not done yoga, you see. With yoga one can watch with open eyes, one would not close them; but one would not close them because one calls upon something else, and that 'something else' is the sense of the divine Presence in one self which is stronger than everything.

This is the only thing that can cure you of your fear." (CWM 4: 211–212)

6. One fears what one does not know

"Q: *Why does one feel afraid?*

A: I have been told—and this was one of the teachings of a very old tradition—that it was the influence of the adverse forces upon earth that had created fear, for it was their way of acting on human beings. But animals also feel fear. So that takes away a little from the strength of the

argument, for I don't think the adverse beings have any special interest in creating fear in animals.

Fear is a phenomenon of unconsciousness. It is a kind of anguish that comes from ignorance. One does not know the nature of a certain thing, does not know its effect or what will happen, does not know the consequences of one's acts, one does not know so many things; and this ignorance brings fear. One fears what one does not know. Take a child, if it is brought before someone it does not know (I am not speaking of a child with an awakened inner consciousness, I am speaking of an ordinary child),—you bring it before someone it does not know, its first movement will always be one of fear. Only very rare children—and they have another consciousness—are very bold. It may also be a mixture of apprehension, a kind of instinct. When one instinctively feels that something is dangerous and hasn't the means to remedy it, when one does not know what to do to protect himself from it, then he is afraid. There are, I believe, countless reasons for fear. But it is a movement of unconsciousness, in every case.

That which knows has no fear. That which is perfectly awake, which is fully conscious and which knows, has no fear. It is always something dark that is afraid." (CWM 6: 49–50)

7. The body is afraid of anything new because its very base is inertia, *tamas*

8. The mind can lecture the body with all the reasons to enable it to overcome its fear
9. The best way is self-giving to the Divine and confidence in His infinite Grace

"Q: *One is often afraid of doing what is new; the body refuses to act in a new way, like trying a new gymnastic figure or another way of diving. From where does this fear come? How can one free oneself of it? And again, how can one encourage others to do the same?*

A: The body is afraid of anything new because its very base is inertia, *tamas*; it is the vital which brings the dominance of *rajas* (activity). That is why, generally, the intrusion of the vital in the form of ambition, emulation and egotism, obliges the body to shake off tamas and make the necessary effort to progress. Naturally, those in whom the mind predominates can lecture their body and provide it with all the necessary reasons to enable it to overcome its fear.

The best way for everybody is self-giving to the Divine and confidence in His infinite Grace." 13 May 1964 (CWM 12: 395–396)

10. Children have fear because, physically, vitally, and mentally, they are weaker than grown-ups
11. Fear stems from a sense of inferiority

12. To have faith in the Divine Grace and to rely on It to protect you in all circumstances
13. When you consciously live in your soul, you will fear nothing any longer

"Why do children have fear? Because they are weak.

Physically they are weaker than the grown-ups around them and, generally, they are also weaker vitally and mentally.

Fear stems from a sense of inferiority.

However, there is a way to be free from it: it is to have faith in the Divine Grace and to rely on It to protect you in all circumstances.

The more you grow up, the more will you get over your fear if you let the contact with your soul develop in you—that is to say, with the truth of your being—and if you always strive that all you think, all you speak, all you do should be more and more the expression of this deep truth.

When you will consciously live in it [soul], you will fear nothing any longer, in any domain of your being, because you will be united with the universal Truth which governs the world." 8 August 1964 (CWM 12: 125)

14. Children are influenced by forces because they have a perception of the play of the forces behind

"Children are afraid of all sorts of things which for older people don't exist any more. Their vision is not solely material. They have a kind of perception, more or less exact and precise, of the play of the forces behind. So, being in that state they are influenced by forces which otherwise have no hold over people who are shut up in themselves and more gross. And these forces—the forces of destruction, for example, or forces of cruelty, forces of wickedness, of ill-will—all, all these things are in the atmosphere. When one is more conscious and more well-formed within, one can see that they are outside oneself and deny them any expression." (CWM 5: 409)

15. People use their imagination for something bad, and they always think of all the possible catastrophes

"It is only the head which creates all the trouble. In fact it is always the head which creates the trouble, because one doesn't know how to use it. If one knew how to use it, it could also create harmony. But it is something very strange that people always use their imagination for something bad, and it is very very rarely that they use their imagination for the good. Instead of thinking of happy things which would help to keep them in balance and harmony, they always think of all the possible catastrophes, and so naturally they disturb the balance of

their being, and into the bargain, if they are unfortunate enough to be afraid, they attract the catastrophes they fear." (CWM 7: 63)

16. One is cowardly because one is very tamasic and fears having to make an effort

"But I think that one is cowardly because one is very tamasic and fears having to make an effort. In order not to be cowardly, one must make an effort, begin by an effort, and afterwards it becomes very interesting. But the best thing is to make the effort to overcome this kind of flight out of oneself. Instead of facing the thing, one recoils, runs away, turns one's back and runs away. For the initial effort is difficult. And so, what prevents you from making an effort is the inert, ignorant nature.

As soon as you enter the rajasic nature, you like effort. And at least the one advantage of rajasic people is that they are courageous, whereas tamasic people are cowards. It is the fear of effort which makes one cowardly. For once you have started, once you have taken the decision and begun the effort, you are interested. It is exactly the same thing which is the cause of some not liking to learn their lessons, not wanting to listen to the teacher; it is tamasic, it is to be asleep, it avoids the effort which must be made in order to catch the thing and then grasp it and keep it. It is half-somnolence. So it is the same

thing physically, it is a somnolence of the being, an inertia." (CWM 7: 25–26)

II—C. The problems fear causes in Yoga

1. Fear can create disharmony in your being, which can be the origin of disturbance in the mind and vital being, and of discomfort and disease in the body

"There are physical movements, effects of the pressure of the Yoga, which sometimes create ungrounded fears that may do harm if the fear is not rejected. There is, for instance, a certain pressure in the head of which there has been question and which is felt by many, especially in the earlier stages, when something that is still closed has to open. It is a discomfort that comes to nothing and can easily be got over, if you know that it is an effect of the pressure of the forces to which you are opening, when they work strongly on the body to produce a result and to hasten the transformation. Taken quietly, it can turn into a not unpleasurable sensation. But if you get frightened, you are sure to contract a very bad headache; it may even go as far as a fever. The discomfort is due to some resistance in the nature; if you know how to release the resistance, you are immediately free of the discomfort. But get frightened and the discomfort may turn into something much worse. Whatever the character of the experience you have, you must give no room to fear; you must keep an unshaken confidence and feel that whatever happens is the thing that had to happen. Once you have chosen the path,

you must boldly accept all the consequences of your choice. But if you choose and then draw back and choose again and again draw back, always wavering, always doubting, always fearful, you create a disharmony in your being, which not only retards your progress, but can be the origin of all kinds of disturbance in the mind and vital being and discomfort and disease in the body." (CWM 3: 90–91)

"The first thing from which you must cure yourself once for ever, is *Fear*.

It is more dangerous than the worst disease. With love and blessings." 9 October 1967 (CWM 14: 242)

2. Fear can bring about all illnesses—when one can eliminate fear, one is almost safe from epidemics

"Q: *Can all physical ailments be traced to some disorder in the mind?"*
Questions and Answers 1929 (16 June)

"A: If there is one mental disorder which can bring about all illnesses, it is fear.

But, each man can make his own experiment. If one has a bad throat, this may be due to the fact that the day before one was in a state of depression. Or perhaps one is very unhappy, dissatisfied, one finds everything very bad,

and the next day one gets a cold in the head.... Everyone must make his own observations." (CWM 4: 263)

"Q: *Can one get ill through fear?*

A: Yes. I knew someone who was so full of fear that he got cholera! There was cholera in the next house and he got so frightened that he caught the illness and without any other reason, there was no other reason for his catching it: it was through sheer fright. And it is a very common thing; in an epidemic, it is so in the majority of cases. It is through fear that the door is opened and you catch the illness. Those who have no fear can go about freely and generally they catch nothing. But still as I have said there, you may have no fear in the mind, you may have no fear even in the vital, but who has no fear in the body?... Very few.

A strict discipline is needed to cure the body of fear. The cells themselves tremble. It is only by discipline, by yoga that one can overcome this fear. But it is a fact that one can catch anything through fear, even invite an accident. And, you see, from a certain point of view everything is contagious. I knew a person who got a wound through the kind of fear that he felt seeing someone else's wound. He really got it." (CWM 5: 166–167)

"Q: *For some time I have been really worried about the skin trouble on my legs. Please, Mother, throw this disease out of my body and the fear out of my mind.*

A: The real disease is fear. Throw the fear away and the disease will go.

My help is with you. Blessings." *1965* (CWM 15: 141)

"So each one should find out for himself why he is ill.

From the ordinary point of view, in most cases, it is usually fear—fear, which may be mental fear, vital fear, but which is almost always physical fear, a fear in the cells—it is fear which opens the door to all contagion. Mental fear—all who have a little control over themselves or any human dignity can eliminate it; vital fear is more subtle and asks for a greater control; as for physical fear, a veritable yoga is necessary to overcome it, for the cells of the body are afraid of everything that is unpleasant, painful, and as soon as there is any unease, even if it is insignificant, the cells of the body become anxious, they don't like to be uncomfortable. And then, to overcome that, the control of a conscious will is necessary. It is usually this kind of fear that opens the door to illnesses. And I am not speaking of the first two types of fear which, as I said, any human being who wants to be human in the noblest sense of the word, must overcome, for that is cowardice. But physical fear is more difficult to overcome; without it even

the most violent attacks could be repelled. If one has a minimum of control over the body, one can lessen its effects, but that is not immunity. It is this kind of trembling of material, physical fear in the cells of the body which aggravates all illnesses." (CWM 9: 122–123)

"If one knows how to teach the cells the splendour that lies within them, if one knows how to make them understand the reality which makes them exist, gives them being, then they too enter the total harmony, and the physical disorder which causes the illness vanishes as do all other disorders of the being. But for that one must be neither cowardly nor fearful. When the physical disorder comes, one must not be afraid; one must not run away from it, must face it with courage, calmness, confidence, with the certitude that illness is a *falsehood* and that if one turns entirely, in full confidence, with a complete quietude to the divine Grace, It will settle in these cells as It is established in the depths of the being, and the cells themselves will share in the eternal Truth and Delight." (CWM 9: 43)

"But when one can eliminate fear, one is almost in safety. For example, epidemics, or so-called epidemics, like those which are raging at present—ninety-nine times out of a hundred they come from fear: a fear, then, which even becomes a mental fear in its most sordid form, promoted

by newspaper articles, useless talk and so on." (CWM 9: 123)

"There is *nothing* to fear—all is the Lord—there is *nothing else* than the Lord; the *Lord alone* exists and all that tries to frighten us is only a silly and meaningless disguise of the Lord.

Cheer up—the way is open before you, shake off this obsession of illness and bring down the Divine Calm.

Then everything will be all right. With love and blessings." (CWM 14: 242)

3. Even in real danger, fear does not help
4. Fear clouds the intelligence and takes away the presence of mind

"Yes, fear creates imaginary terrors—even if there is real danger, fear does not help; it clouds the intelligence, takes away presence of mind and prevents one seeing the right thing to do. Let the Force at work increase, till it clears out the mixed consciousness altogether." (CWSA 31: 278)

"Fear … usually prevents or distorts the intelligence of things. It might almost be considered as an invention of the hostile forces." (CWSA 31: 278)

5. Fear always sets a barrier and a distance between oneself and the Divine

"Closeness of the human soul to the Divine is the object, and fear sets always a barrier and a distance; even awe and reverence for the divine Power are a sign of distance and division and they disappear in the intimacy of the union of love." (CWSA 24: 566)

"All fear ought to be cast out. This movement of fear belongs to a still unchanged part of the vital which answers to the old ideas, feelings and reactions. Its only effect is to make you misinterpret the Mother's attitude or the intention in her words or looks or expression. If the Mother becomes serious or has an ironic smile, that does not in the least mean that she is angry or has withdrawn her affection; on the contrary, it is with those with whom she is most inwardly intimate that she feels most free to become like that—even to give them severe chidings. They in their turn understand her and do not get upset or afraid,—they only turn to look inside themselves and see what it is on which she is putting her pressure. That pressure they regard as a privilege and a sign of her grace. Fear stands in the way of this complete intimacy and confidence and creates only misunderstanding; you must cast it out altogether." 22 May 1932 (CWSA 32: 536)

6. Fear is a guard of Nature, forbidding us to turn away from her ordinary life

"If mankind could but see though in a glimpse of fleeting experience what infinite enjoyments, what perfect forces, what luminous reaches of spontaneous knowledge, what wide calms of our being lie waiting for us in the tracts which our animal evolution has not yet conquered, they would leave all & never rest till they had gained these treasures. But the way is narrow, the doors are hard to force, and fear, distrust & scepticism are there, sentinels [guard whose job is to keep watch] of Nature, to forbid the turning away of our feet from her ordinary pastures." (CWSA 12: 423)

7. Fear can give rise to wrong formations in the subconscient

"Q: *Z—the man with T.B.—has dreamt three or four times that a very dark figure comes to him and tries to strangulate him. He wants to know why this happens and what he should do.*

A: It is some wrong formation in the subconscient. But it would not have recurred if he had not feared. It is the fear—more or less conscious—which does almost all the mischief.

Without fear nothing can happen.

You can tell him like that." July 1963 (CWM 17: 227)

"One must have no fear—fear is a bad counsellor; it acts like a magnet and attracts what we fear. One must, on the contrary, keep a calm certitude that sooner or later all will be well." (CWM 16: 184)

"My advice is not to worry. The more you think of it, the more you concentrate upon it and, above all, the more you fear, the more you give a chance for the thing to grow.

If, on the contrary, you turn your attention and your interest elsewhere you increase the possibilities of cure." (CWM 15: 142)

"Do not torment yourself, do not worry; above all try to banish all fear; fear is a dangerous thing which can give importance to something which had none at all. The mere fear of seeing certain symptoms renew themselves is enough to bring about this repetition." 24 July 1945 (CWM 14: 240)

"Fear is hidden consent. When you are afraid of something, it means that you admit its possibility and thus strengthen its hand. It can be said that it is a subconscient consent.

Fear can be overcome in many ways. The ways of courage, faith, knowledge are some of them." (CWM 14: 243)

"We know that fear always brings what one fears. If you fear an accident, this acts like a magnet drawing the accident towards you. In this sense, it may be said that it is the result of character. And the same thing holds for illness. There are people who can move about among the sick and in places where there are epidemics and never catch a disease. There are others—it is enough for them to spend an hour with a sick person, they catch the illness. That too depends on what they are within themselves." (CWM 6: 2)

8. Fear opens the door to the adverse forces

"Write to her again that if she wants to do sadhana, she must get rid of fear altogether; fear opens the door to the adverse forces. She should not listen to people who try to put fear in her. If ugly forms or sounds are seen and heard, one has not to fear but reject them and call in the Mother's protection. If she feels calmness in the meditation, that is the necessary basis—with that basis one can safely practise the Yoga. It is not indispensable that the mind should be entirely blank—it is sufficient that it is quiet with a fundamental silence which is not disturbed even if thoughts pass across it." (CWSA 31: 279)

9. If one approaches the Divine with fear, he meets a severe Divine

"The Divine is infinite and innumerable, and consequently the ways of approaching Him are also infinite and innumerable, and on the manner of one's approach to the Divine depends what he receives and knows of the Divine. The bhakta meets a Divine full of affection and sweetness, the wise man will find a Divine full of wisdom and knowledge. He who fears meets a severe Divine, and he who is trusting finds the Divine a friend and protector... and so on in the infinite variety of possibilities." (CWM 16: 169)

10. Fear is always a very bad adviser

"Fear is always a very bad adviser." (CWM 14: 240)

11. Fear is the cause of all mischief and trouble

"It is the fear—more or less conscious—which does almost all the mischief.

Without fear *nothing* can happen." (CWM 14: 240)

"Do not fear, keep your confidence, all these troubles will leave you.

With my love and blessings." (CWM 14: 240)

"Stop fearing and the bothers will stop also.

A child of mine cannot fear. Blessings." (CWM 14: 240)

12. To have the effect of magic, fear or fright is created in the person against whom the magic is done—if he has no fear, it cannot have any effect

"These things [magical formulas] put into motion certain small entities which are usually the result of the decomposition of human beings and yet have a sufficient contact with the material world to be able to act there. But anyhow, if the action is of a lower order, the power is of a lower order, and it is something almost repugnant for one who is truly in relation with the higher forces. …

… and that one factor is indispensable for it to take effect: fear. The first thing is a kind of fear, a fright created in the person against whom the magic is done; for if he has no fear I am quite sure that it cannot have any effect or has so ridiculously small an effect that it's not worth speaking about it.

What opens the door to the action of these [magical rites] forces is fear, a kind of apprehension, the feeling that something is going to happen; and it is these vibrations of fear which put out certain forces from you, forces which give these entities the power to act." (CWM 7: 262–263)

13. The Mother's force can work fully when fear is shaken off

"My protection is always with you and nothing bad can happen.

But you must take the decision to shake off the fear and then my force can work fully." 27 October 1937 (CWM 14: 240)

14. If you are frightened when a man comes to kill you, he will most probably succeed

"I even go so far as to affirm that in the zone of immediate influence of each one, the right attitude not only has the power to turn every circumstance to advantage but can change the very circumstance itself. For instance, when a man comes to kill you, if you remain in the ordinary consciousness and get frightened out of your wits, he will most probably succeed in doing what he came for; if you rise a little higher and though full of fear call for the divine help, he may just miss you, doing you a slight injury; if, however, you have the right attitude and the full consciousness of the divine presence everywhere around you, he will not be able to lift even a finger against you." (CWM 3: 154)

15. If you indulge your imagination to give form to your fears, you are undermining your own future

"Every time you indulge your imagination in an unhealthy way, giving a form to your fears and anticipating accidents and misfortunes, you are undermining your own future. On the other hand, the more optimistic your imagination, the greater the chance of your realizing your aim. Monsieur Coué got hold of this potent truth and cured hundreds of people by simply teaching them to imagine themselves out of misery. He once related the case of a lady whose hair was falling off. She began to suggest to herself that she was improving every day and that her hair was surely growing. By constantly imagining it her hair really began to grow and even reached an enviable length owing to still further autosuggestion. The power of mental formation is most useful in Yoga also; when the mind is put in communication with the Divine Will, the supramental Truth begins to descend through the layers intervening between the mind and the highest Light and if, on reaching the mind, it finds there the power of making forms it easily becomes embodied and stays as a creative force in you. Therefore I say to you never be dejected and disappointed but let your imagination be always hopeful and joyously plastic to the stress of the higher Truth, so that the latter may find you full of the necessary formations to hold its creative light." (CWM 3: 156)

II—D. Once you enter the path of Yoga, you must get rid of all fears

"And even if by discipline and effort you have liberated your mind and your vital of apprehension and fear, it is more difficult to convince the body. But that too must be done. Once you enter the path of Yoga you must get rid of all fears—the fears of your mind, the fears of your vital, the fears of your body which are lodged in its very cells. One of the uses of the blows and knocks you receive on the path of Yoga is to rid you of all fear. The causes of your fears leap on you again and again, until you can stand before them free and indifferent, untouched and pure. One has a fear of the sea, another the fear of fire. The latter will find, it may be, that he has to face conflagration after conflagration till he is so trained that not a cell of his body quivers. That of which you have horror comes repeatedly till the horror is gone.

One who seeks the transformation and is a follower of the Path, must become through and through fearless, not to be touched or shaken by anything whatever in any part of his nature." (CWM 3: 56–57)

"Q: *When I see any dog on the way while walking, I at once pray to the Mother to protect me from its attack and remove my fear.*

A: A call for protection is always permissible. The removal of fear is part of the sadhana." (CWSA 32: 316)

"For the body conquest of disease, pain and material obstructions, for the mind liberation from bondage to past experience and the heavier limitations of space and time, for the heart victory over sin and grief and fear, for the spirit unclouded bliss, strength and illumination, this is the gospel of Yoga, is the goal to which Hinduism points humanity." (CWSA 13: 28)

"I have already written once before that fearlessness is the first necessary condition for going through this Yoga. These fears and apprehensions and the sense of weakness and insecurity come from the attachment of the physical and nervous being to its ordinary basis of consciousness and usual habits of living and its alarm at anything abnormal which forces it out of its own grooves. As for the need of immediate protection, that is only when the vital being goes out of the body. The psychic being can go out without any danger if the physical consciousness does not disturb and itself create the danger." (CWSA 36: 363)

Yoga will deliver you from great fear

"You are afraid of many things, afraid of sin, afraid of suffering, afraid of hell and punishment, afraid of God,

afraid of this world, afraid of the hereafter, afraid of yourself. What is it that you are not afraid of at this moment, you the Aryan fighter, the world's chief hero? But this is the great fear which besieges humanity, its fear of sin and suffering now and hereafter, its fear in a world of whose true nature it is ignorant, of a God whose true being also it has not seen and whose cosmic purpose it does not understand. My Yoga will deliver you from the great fear and even a little of it will bring deliverance. When you have once set out on this path, you will find that no step is lost; every least movement will be a gain; you will find there no obstacle that can baulk you of your advance." *Essays on the Gita* (CWSA 19: 94–95)

"Q: *I shall oppose the vital, I shall fight with it, I shall win the victory. One day I shall win the victory over all the dark forces. The Divine Grace is there—why should I fear?*

A: Yes, you should not fear, you should keep an entire faith in the Divine Grace. The second point is to keep your body well balanced by getting enough sleep—seven hours out of twenty four—and enough food." 2 March 1933 (CWM 17: 7)

"*Fear nothing*: the Divine always answers every sincere aspiration and never refuses what is offered to Him whole-

heartedly; thus you may live in the peace of the certitude that you are accepted by the Divine." (CWM 16: 170)

"And I would add this: that fear is an impurity, one of the greatest impurities, one of those which come most directly from the anti-divine forces which want to destroy the divine action on earth; and the first duty of those who really want to do yoga is to eliminate from their consciousness, with all the might, all the sincerity, all the endurance of which they are capable, even the shadow of a fear. To walk on the path, one must be dauntless, and never indulge in that petty, small, feeble, nasty shrinking back upon oneself, which is fear.

An indomitable courage, a perfect sincerity and a sincere self-giving, so that one does not calculate or bargain, does not give with the idea of receiving, does not trust with the idea of being protected, does not have a faith which asks for proofs—it is this that is indispensable in order to walk on the path, and it is this alone which can truly shelter you from all danger." (CWM 7: 260–261)

The Yogi must be fearless

"In the experiences proper related in your first letter there is absolutely nothing that should have disturbed you—all was quite normal, the usual experiences of the Yogin at such a juncture and very good and powerful, such as do

not come except by the grace of the Divine. … The disturbing factor came with the feeling of discomfort in the heart due to some resistance in the physical being which is very often felt and can be overcome by the working of the Force itself and the fear that came afterwards in the seats of the vital Nature, heart, navel etc. But that was no part of the experience, it was an interference by a wrong reaction from the lower or exterior consciousness. If you had not allowed yourself to be disturbed, probably nothing untoward would have disturbed the process. One must not get frightened by unusual states or movements or experiences, the Yogi must be fearless, *abhīḥ*; it is absurd to have a fear because one can control one's states; that is a power very much to be desired and welcomed in Yoga." (CWSA 29: 463)

"There are two things that take place; an ascent of one's consciousness to the higher levels in and above the head, and a descent of the higher consciousness which is above into one's mind, vital and body. How it is done or by what stages or how long it will take varies with each person. But this new consciousness is very different from the ordinary one and many things happen in its coming which would not happen to the mind and might seem strange to it—e.g. the dissolution of the ego and the opening into a wider self or spirit not limited by the body, to which the body is only a small instrument and nothing more. One must therefore

dismiss all fear of new things and accept with calm and confidence each field of new experience, relying on the Divine Mother-Force for guidance and support and protection throughout the change." (CWSA 30: 458–459)

"Spiritual ascension: fearless, regular, uninterrupted." (CWM 14: 30)

"This fear comes from weakness of nerves and of the vital. This fear must be got rid of, before any attempt is made to follow the path of Yoga." 9 March 1949 (CWM 14: 241)

"Yoga and fear do not go together." (CWM 14: 241)

"If you want to do Yoga, you must get rid of fear. Yoga and fear do not go together." (CWSA 31: 278)

"You are frightened because your breathing seems to stop when you try to concentrate. Don't enter this path if you are so full of fears. Suppose it comes to the worst; then what will happen?

You may die—and then? What great harm will be done if you are dead? Our Yoga is not for cowards; if you have no courage, better leave it—your fears will bring disaster." (CWM 14: 241)

"What can he fear who belongs to the Divine? Can he not walk, his soul expanding and his brow illumined, upon the path the Divine traces for him, whatever it may be, even if it is altogether incomprehensible to his limited reason?" 14 October 1954 (CWM 14: 241)

"All fear must be overcome and replaced by a total confidence in the Divine Grace." 6 June 1955 (CWM 14: 241)

II—E. Ways to remove fear

1. Everyone finds his own way of curing oneself of fear

"There are many ways of curing oneself of fear. But in reality everyone finds his own way, the one good for him. There are people to whom you have simply to say: 'Your fear is a weakness', and they would immediately find the means to look at it with contempt, for they have a horror of weakness. There are others, you tell them: 'Fear is a suggestion from hostile forces, you must push it away, as you drive off hostile forces', and this is very effective. For each one it is different." (CWM 5: 317–318)

2. Firstly, you must know that fear is a very bad thing; it is like an acid: if you put a drop of it on something, it eats into the substance

"But first of all you must know that fear is a very bad thing, very bad, it is a dissolvent; it is like an acid. If you put a drop of it on something, it eats into the substance. The first step is not to admit the possibility of fear. Yes, that's the first step. I knew people who used to boast about their fear. These are incurable. That is, quite naturally they would say, 'Ah, just imagine, I was so frightened!' And then what! It is nothing to be proud of. With such people you can do nothing." (CWM 5: 318)

"However, when once you recognise that fear is neither good nor favourable nor noble nor worthy of a consciousness a little enlightened, you begin to fight against it. And I say, one man's way is not another's; one must find one's own way; it depends on each one." (CWM 5: 318)

3. Freedom from all fear can come only by steady effort and discipline

"The normal human condition is a state filled with apprehensions and fears; if you observe your mind deeply for ten minutes, you will find that for nine out of ten it is full of fears—it carries in it fear about many things, big and small, near and far, seen and unseen, and though you do not usually take conscious notice of it, it is there all the same. To be free from all fear can come only by steady effort and discipline." (CWM 3: 56)

4. When you feel you have had enough of the fear of coming out of the rut and have enough courage to overcome this

"But even those whose destiny is certain have to struggle mightily, resolutely, against this 'something' which one seems to take in with the very air one breathes: this fear, this dread of what may happen. And this is so stupid,

because, in the final analysis, the destiny of each individual is the same: you are born, you live—more or less satisfactorily—and you die; then you wait for a certain length of time, and again you are born, you live—more or less satisfactorily—and again you die, and so on indefinitely, until you feel you have had enough of it.

Fear of what? Fear of coming out of the rut? Fear of being free? Fear of no longer being a prisoner?

And then, when you have enough courage to overcome this, when you say, 'Come what may! After all, there's not much to lose', then you become wary, you wonder if it is reasonable, if it is true, if all that is not an illusion, if you are not just imagining things, if there is really any substance to it.... …

To conquer it, one must be a mighty warrior. One must struggle against all the obscurities of Nature, against all her tricks, all her temptations." (CWM 10: 11–12)

"And it is very justifiable to feel tired of living like a beast at pasture, of roaming from one patch of grass to another, of ruminating in a corner, of having such narrow horizons and of missing all the splendours of life.

Perhaps it amuses Nature that we should be like that, but we are tired of it, we want to be different.

And that is it. When you have truly had enough of it and want things to be different, then you have the courage, the strength, the capacity to conquer these three

terrible enemies: fear, doubt and scepticism." (CWM 10: 13)

5. To face boldly what one fears

"One of the great remedies for conquering fear is to face boldly what one fears. You are put face to face with the danger you fear and you fear it no longer. The fear disappears. From the yogic point of view, the point of view of discipline, this is the cure recommended. In the ancient initiations, especially in Egypt, in order to practise occultism, as I was telling you last time, it was necessary to abolish the fear of death completely. Well, one of the practices of those days was to lay the neophyte in a sarcophagus and leave him in there for a few days, as though he were dead. Naturally, he was not left to die, neither of hunger nor suffocation, but still he remained lying there as though he were dead. It seems that cures you of all fear.

When fear comes, if one succeeds in putting upon it consciousness, knowledge, force, light, one can cure it altogether." (CWM 6: 50)

"It is true that what one fears has the tendency to come until one is able to look it in the face and overcome one's shrinking. One must learn to take one's foundation on the Divine and overcome the fear, relying on the help to carry

one through all things even unpleasant and adverse. There is a Force that works even through them for the seeker and carries him towards his goal." (CWSA 31: 278)

6. You must reject all fear by calling the Mother's name

"These things that come [*in dreams*] to frighten you are merely impressions thrown on you by small vital forces which want to prevent you (by making you nervous) pushing on the sadhana.

They can really do nothing to you, only you must reject all fear. Keep always this thought when these things come, 'The Mother's protection is with me, nothing bad can happen'; for when there is the psychic opening and one puts one's faith in the Mother, that is sufficient to ward these things off. Many sadhaks learn, when they have alarming dreams, to call the Mother's name in the dream itself and then the things that menace them become helpless or cease. You must therefore refuse to be intimidated and reject these impressions with contempt. If there is anything frightening, call down the Mother's protection." (CWSA 30: 195)

7. Never allow any fear to enter into you, and ask for the protection of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother before you sleep or meditate

"(1) Never allow any fear to enter into you. Face all you meet and see in this world with detachment and courage. (2) Ask for the protection of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother before you sleep or meditate. Use their names when you are attacked or tempted." (CWSA 30: 208)

"Q: *Mother,*

Last night when I went to bed at about 9:30, I felt a sort of fear, as if someone were there or someone might come. I shut my eyes and after a moment, in my sleep, I felt a sort of fear. I opened my eyes, looked at the sky, and then closed my eyes again. I saw something like a cloud coming slowly and I opened my eyes...

A: My dear little smile,

You must not be afraid. If you see something that frightens you or you have an unpleasant feeling, you must call me and the thing will disappear. When you are awake, surely you are not afraid of an approaching thunder-cloud; why should it frighten you at night?

Put yourself in my arms without fear and be sure that nothing can harm you. My force and my protection are always with you.

With my tender love." 18 June 1935 (CWM 16: 97–98)

8. Bring down strength and calm into the lower vital – region below the navel
9. Wilfully impose calm on the system when the fear arises

"By bringing down strength and calm into the lower vital (region below the navel) [fear can be eliminated]. Also by will and imposing calm on the system when the fear arises. It can be done in either way or both together." (CWSA 31: 280)

10. To walk through life armoured against all fear, only two things are needed: the Grace of the Divine Mother and an inner state made up of faith, sincerity, and surrender

"To walk through life armoured against all fear, peril and disaster, only two things are needed, two that go always together—the Grace of the Divine Mother and on your side an inner state made up of faith, sincerity and surrender. Let your faith be pure, candid and perfect." (CWSA 32: 8)

"The more complete your faith, sincerity and surrender, the more will grace and protection be with you. And when the grace and protection of the Divine Mother are with you, what is there that can touch you or whom need you fear? A little of it even will carry you through all difficulties,

obstacles and dangers; surrounded by its full presence you can go securely on your way because it is hers, careless of all menace, unaffected by any hostility however powerful, whether from this world or from worlds invisible." (CWSA 32: 8)

11. Fear disappears when all movements are an offering made to the Supreme

"I think it would be better to say that there is a certain state of consciousness—which one can acquire by aspiration and a persistent inner effort—in which joy is unmixed and light shadow less, where all possibility of fear disappears. It is the state in which one does not live for oneself but where whatever one does, whatever one feels, all movements are an offering made to the Supreme, in an absolute trust, freeing oneself of all responsibility for oneself, handing over to Him all this burden which is no longer a burden." (CWM 3: 256)

12. Fear disappears when one is perfectly surrendered to the Divine; one no longer fears anything

"…when one is perfectly surrendered to the Divine one is perfectly free, and *this is* the absolute condition for freedom, to belong to the Divine alone; you are free from

the whole world because you belong only to Him. And this surrender is the supreme liberation, you are also free from your little personal ego … the feeling of an *infinite* freedom from all that afflicts you, dwarfs, diminishes, impoverishes you, and from all that can create the least anxiety in you, the least fear. You are no longer afraid of anything, you no longer fear anything, you are the supreme master of your destiny because it is the Divine who wills in you and guides everything. But this does not happen overnight: a little time and a *great deal* of ardour in the will, not fearing to make any effort and not losing heart when one doesn't succeed, knowing that the victory is certain and that one must last out until it comes." (CWM 7: 242)

13. The best cure, as soon as one begins to feel afraid of something, is to think of the Divine and then snuggle in His arms or at His feet

"For mystics the best cure as soon as one begins to feel afraid of something is to think of the Divine and then snuggle in his arms or at his feet and leave him entirely responsible for everything that happens, within, outside, everywhere—and immediately the fear disappears. That is the cure for the mystic. It is the easiest of all. But everybody does not enjoy the grace of being a mystic." (CWM 5: 318)

14. If you have some contact with your psychic being, you must call it immediately
15. If you are a reasonable being, speak to yourself and reason it out that this fear is a bad thing in itself
16. With the power of courage that you have, you have a chance of coming out of fear
17. If you are consecrated to the Divine, then say: "Let Your will be done"

"Q: *When one feels frightened, what should one do?*

A: That depends upon who you are. There are many ways of curing oneself of fear.

If you have some contact with your psychic being, you must call it immediately and in the psychic light put things back in order. This is the most powerful way.

When one does not have this psychic contact, but is still a reasonable being, that is, when one has a free movement of the reasoning mind, one can use it to reason with, to speak to oneself as one would to a child, explaining that this fear is a bad thing in itself and, even if there is a danger, to face the danger with fear is the greatest stupidity. If there is a real danger, it is only with the power of courage that you have a chance of coming out of it; if you have the least fear, you are done for. So with that kind of reasoning, manage to convince the part that fears that it must stop being afraid.

If you have faith and are consecrated to the Divine, there is a very simple way, it is to say: 'Let Your will be done. Nothing can frighten me because it is You who are guiding my life. I belong to You and You are guiding my life.' That acts immediately. Of all the means this is the most effective: indeed, it is. That is, one must be truly consecrated to the Divine. If one has that, it acts immediately; all fear vanishes immediately like a dream. And the being with the bad influence also disappears like a dream along with the fear. You should see it running away at full speed, prrt! *Voilà*.

Now, there are people having a strong vital power in them and they are fighters who immediately lift up their heads and say: 'Ah! an enemy is here, we are going to knock him down.' But for that one must have the knowledge and a very great vital power. One must be vitally a giant. That does not happen to everyone.

So there are many different ways. They are all good, if you know how to make use of the one that suits your own nature." (CWM 5: 117–118)

18. If it is a vital fear, you must reason with yourself
19. If it is a physical instinct, then you must listen to the instinct, for it is a very sure thing

"Q: *In gymnastics when I want to take a jump and feel frightened, why does this happen?*

A: Ah! there, my children, it depends.... You must distinguish two very different things and you must deal with them very differently.

If it is a vital fear, you must reason with yourself and go about it all the same. But if it is a physical instinct (that is possible, it happens very often that there is a kind of physical instinct), in that case you must listen to it, for the instinct of the body is a very sure thing, if it is not disturbed by thought or vital will. The body left to itself knows very well what it can and what it cannot do. And not only that but even a thing that one can do and does usually, if one day you feel a sort of repulsion, as if you were shrinking back, you must definitely not do it; it is an indication that for some reason or other—a purely material reason of a disorder in the functioning of the body—you are not fit to do the thing at that time. Then you must not do it. In that case, it is not even a fear, it is something that shrinks, that withdraws, there is nothing in the head, it does not correspond to any kind of thought like: 'What is going to happen?' When the head starts working and you say: 'What is going to happen?', you must sweep it away because it is worth nothing; you must use all the means of reason and good sense you have to drive that away. But if it is a purely physical sensation, as though something were contracting,

a kind of physical repugnance, if the body itself is refusing, so to say, you should never force it, never, because it is usually when you force it that there's an accident. That may very well be a kind of premonition that there's going to be an accident, that if you do the thing, you will not go far. And in such a case you must not do it. You must not put into it the least *amour-propre*. You must realise: 'Today I am not in a good condition.'

But if it is a vital fear, if for example you have a competition or a tournament, and you felt this kind of fear and then: 'What is going to happen?', you must sweep it away quickly, it means nothing." (CWM 5: 118–119)

20. For there is no fear since God Himself has taken entire charge of you

"But you need not be distressed when the *pramada* [carelessness] comes and the state of fall or clouded condition seems to persist, for there is no fear for you of a permanent fall since God himself has taken entire charge of you and if you stumble, it is because it is best for you to stumble, as a child by frequent stumbling and falling learns to walk." (CWSA 13: 86)

21. To turn towards the Divine is the best method

22. If the consciousness is turned away from the pain to one's work or anything that interests one, the pain ceases

"You may have been told that certain bodily complaints will give you a great deal of pain. Things like that are often said. You then make a formation of fear and keep expecting the pain. And the pain comes even when it need not.

But in case it is there after all, I can tell you one thing. If the consciousness is turned upward, the pain vanishes. If it is turned downward, the pain is felt and even increases. When one experiments with the upward and the downward turnings, one sees that the bodily complaint as such has nothing to do with the pain. The body may suffer very much or not at all, although its condition is exactly the same. It is the turn of the consciousness that makes all the difference.

I say 'turned upward' because to turn towards the Divine is the best method, but what can be said in general is that if the consciousness is turned away from the pain to one's work or anything that interests one, the pain ceases.

And not only the pain but whatever damage there may be in an organ is set right much more easily when the consciousness is taken away from the trouble and one is open to the Divine. There is the Sat aspect of the Divine—the pure supreme Existence above or beyond or behind the cosmos. If you can keep in contact with it, all physical complaints can be removed." 25 November 1962 (CWM 15: 144–145)

23. One must be able to separate oneself from the body consciousness; then one can free oneself from the suggestions of fear

"Q: *When one takes up a human body, is it necessary to accept suggestions of fear?*

A: It seems more inevitable than necessary!... One doesn't even perceive that one is accepting them. We said the other day that when a psychic being enters a body, it is as though it fell on its head—it is a little stunned for a time. So during this period it is under the influence of these suggestions without even knowing it. But as soon as it wakes up, it can come out of that; it is not at all necessary to accept them. Only, one must know that they are suggestions. One must be able to separate oneself from the purely human consciousness, the body consciousness. And once you can look at it from above, you can free yourself from these suggestions quite well. You can free yourself from all suggestions, but for that you must rise above them. If that were not possible, it would be impossible to do yoga." (CWM 5: 312–313)

24. You must have complete faith in the Divine protection

"If you want to get cured there are two conditions. First you must be without fear, absolutely fearless, you understand, and secondly you must have a complete faith in the Divine protection.

These two things are essential." (CWM 15: 141)

"You can write to her that to get rid of fear is the first necessity. Yoga can only be done on a basis of faith and confidence in the Divine.

At the same time one must be on guard against undesirable movements or phenomena in the sadhana. The motion of her head is not a result of the descent of Force, or a sign that it is too much for her, but a wrong movement of the body which she must check and get rid of altogether." (CWSA 31: 278–279)

25. The more enlightened part of the being must impress on the body the necessity of an entire trust in the Divine's Grace
26. The certitude that this Grace is always working for the best
27. The determination to submit entirely and unreservedly to the Divine's Will

"You must not fear. Most of your troubles come from fear. In fact, ninety per cent of illnesses are the result of the subconscient fear of the body. In the ordinary

consciousness of the body there is a more or less hidden anxiety about the consequences of the slightest physical disturbance. It can be translated by these words of doubt about the future: 'And what will happen?' It is this anxiety that must be checked. Indeed this anxiety is a lack of confidence in the Divine's Grace, the unmistakable sign that the consecration is not complete and perfect.

As a practical means of overcoming this subconscient fear each time that something of it comes to the surface, the more enlightened part of the being must impress on the body the necessity of an entire trust in the Divine's Grace, the certitude that this Grace is always working for the best in our self as well as in all, and the determination to submit entirely and unreservedly to the Divine's Will.

The body must know and be convinced that its essence is divine and that if no obstacle is put in the way of the Divine's working, nothing can harm us. This process must be steadily repeated until all recurrence of fear is stopped. And then even if the illness succeeds in making its appearance, its strength and duration will be considerably diminished until it is definitively conquered." 14 October 1945 (CWM 15: 140)

28. In order to do Yoga without fear, one must have organised one's being with the help of reason around the highest centre one consciously possesses

"Now there is a handful—a big handful—of people who are born with the feeling that there is something else to find in life, a higher purpose to life, that there is an aim, and they strive to find it. …

Now there are beings, I think, who are born and whose rational period of life may begin very early, when they are very young, and it may last for a very short time; and then they are almost immediately ready to set out on new and unexplored paths towards the higher realities. But in order to set out on these paths without fear and without any danger, one must have organised his being with the help of reason around the highest centre he consciously possesses, and organised it in such a way that it is inwardly in his control and he has not to say at every moment, "Ah! I have done this, I don't know why. Ah! That's happened to me, I don't know why"—and always it is "I don't know, I don't know, I don't know", and as long as it is like that, the path is somewhat dangerous. Only when one does what he wants, knows what he wants, does what he wants and is able to direct himself with certitude, without being tossed about by the hazards of life, then one can go forward on the suprarational paths fearlessly, unhesitatingly and with the least danger. But one need not be very old for this to happen. One can begin very young; even a child of five can already make use of reason to control himself; I know it. There is enough mental organization in the being in these little tots who look so

spontaneous and irresponsible; there is enough cerebral organisation for them to organise themselves, their life, their nature, their movements, actions and thoughts with reason." (CWM 7: 176–177)

29. Be observant and vigilant, so that you may not give assent to wrong movements

"It is a mistake to think that by fearing or being unhappy you can progress. Fear is always a feeling to be rejected, because what you fear is just the thing that is likely to come to you: fear attracts the object of fear. Unhappiness weakens the strength and lays one more open to the causes of unhappiness. One can be quiet, happy, cheerful without being all that in a light or shallow way—and the happiness need not bring any vital reaction. All that you need to do is to be observant and vigilant,—watchful so that you may not give assent to wrong movements or the return of the old feelings, darkness, confusion etc. Not fear, but vigilance. If you remain vigilant, then with the increase of the Force upholding you, a power of self-control will come, a power to see and reject the wrong turn or the wrong reaction when it comes. Fear and unhappiness will not give you that. It is only by this vigilance accompanied by an opening to the supporting and guiding Force that it will come. What you describe as a capacity to choose the right and the feeling of strength or power that can stop the

wrong movement and take the right one as soon as it recognises them, is just this control and vigilance. It is by this control and vigilance supported by the Force that you can prevent the love and devotion too from being mixed with or replaced by selfish desires and impurities. The more you open, the more this power will increase in you. Certainly, if talking about old things or excessive speaking brings the wrong reactions at night, it is better to abstain from such talk or speech. Here also control is the thing you have to develop." (CWSA 31: 279–280)

30. That equality of temper which makes children free from fear, for what makes children deceitful, untruthful, and even cunning is the fear of being punished

"And above all, set them the right example.... Be yourself what you would like them [children] to be. Give them the example of disinterestedness, patience, self-control, constant good humour, the overcoming of one's little personal dislikes, a sort of constant goodwill, an understanding of others' difficulties; and that equality of temper which makes children free from fear, for what makes children deceitful and untruthful, and even cunning, is the fear of being punished. If they feel secure, they will hide nothing and you will then be able to help them to be loyal and honest. Of all things the most important is good

example. Sri Aurobindo speaks of that, of the invariable good humour one must have in all circumstances, this self-forgetfulness: not to throw one's own little troubles on others; when one is tired or uncomfortable, not to become unpleasant, impatient." (CWM 9: 81)

31. A perfect indifference with a complete calm when we see ugly things in dreams

"First, never have bad thoughts to begin with; and then, secondly, never be afraid, even if you see extremely ugly things [in dreams]—not only have no fear but no disgust and no repulsion, simply a perfect quietude—and try to be as pure and calm as possible. Then, whatever it may be, whether it be your own formation or it comes from others, whether it be an attack or a bad place—no matter what it is—everything will be all right. But above all, this: quiet, calm, naturally sheltered from every kind of possible fear, and without any disgust, without any recoiling, nothing; like that: a perfect indifference with a complete calm. Then nothing bad can happen, absolutely nothing. Even if it is truly an enemy who comes to attack you, he becomes powerless." (CWM 7: 82)

32. The part of the being which has no fear can impose its own courage on the part which is afraid

"To overcome one's fear means that there is one part of the being which is stronger than the other, and which has no fear and imposes its own intrepidity on the part which is afraid. But this doesn't necessarily imply that one is more courageous than the one who has no fear to master. Because the one who doesn't have any fear to master... this means that he is courageous everywhere, in all the parts of his being. Now, there is an intrepidity which comes from unconsciousness and ignorance. Children, for example, who do not know about dangers, you see, do things they would not do if they had the knowledge of this danger. This means that their intrepidity is an ignorant one. But true courage is courage with the full knowledge of the thing, that is, it knows all the possibilities and is ready to face everything without exception." (CWM 7: 31)

33. Overcome the fear of death—two remedies

"But you do not become aware of it, it is a constant thing. For example, there is that formidable collective suggestion of death. But how can you get rid of that idea unless you are able to create n you an immortal consciousness? Once you have created in you the immortal consciousness, you can be freed of the suggestion." (CWM 5: 313)

"No, someone is dead.

And one is afraid to die.

There are two remedies. There are many, but two at least are there. In any case, the use of a deeper consciousness is essential. One remedy consists in saying that it is something that happens to everyone (let us take it on that level), yes, it is a thing that happens to everybody, and therefore, sooner or later, it will come and there is no reason why one should be afraid, it is quite a normal thing. You may add one more idea to this, that according to experience (not yours but just the collective human experience), circumstances being the same, absolutely identical, in one case people die, in another they do not—why? And if you push the thing a little further still, you say to yourself that after all it must depend on something which is altogether outside your consciousness—and in the end one dies when one has to die. That is all. When one has to die one dies, and when one has not to die, one does not die. Even when you are in mortal danger, if it is not your hour to die, you will not die, and even if you are out of all danger, just a scratch on your foot will be enough to make you die, for there are people who have died of a pin-scratch on the foot—because the time had come. Therefore, fear has no sense.

What you can do is to rise to a state of consciousness where you can say, 'It is like that, we accept the fact because it seems to be recognised as an inevitable fact. But I do not need to worry, for it will come only when it

must come. So I don't need to feel afraid: when it is not to come, it will not come to me, but when it must come to me, it will come. And as it will come to me inevitably, it is better I do not fear the thing; on the contrary, one must accept what is perfectly natural.' This is a well-known remedy, that is to say, very much in use.

There is another, a little more difficult, but better, I believe. It lies in telling oneself: "This body is not I", and in trying to find in oneself the part which is truly one's self, until one has found one's psychic being. And when one has found one's psychic being—immediately, you understand—one has the sense of immortality. And one knows that what goes out or what comes in is just a matter of convenience: "I am not going to weep over a pair of shoes I put aside when it is full of holes! When my pair of shoes is worn out I cast it aside, and I do not weep."

Well, the psychic being has taken this body because it needed to use it for its work, but when the time comes to leave the body, that is to say, when one must leave it because it is no longer of any use for some reason or other, one leaves the body and has no fear. It is quite a natural gesture—and it is done without the least regret, that's all." (CWM 5: 314–316)

34. The third remedy to overcome the fear of death for a yogi

"Now, a third thing also one must know, but for this one has to be a mighty yogi. For this means knowing that death is not an inevitable thing, it is an accident which has been occurring till now (which seems in any case to have always occurred till now), and that we have put it into our head and our will to conquer this accident and overcome it. But it is so terrible, so formidable a battle against all the laws of Nature, against all collective suggestions, all earthly habits, that unless, as I have said, you are a first-rate warrior whom nothing frightens, it is better not to begin the battle. You must be an absolutely intrepid hero, for at every step, at every second you have to fight a battle against all established things. So it is not a very easy thing. And even as an individual it is a battle against oneself, because (I think I have already told you this once), if you want your physical consciousness to be in a state which admits of physical immortality, you must be free to such an extent from everything which at present represents the physical consciousness that it becomes every second a battle. All feelings, all sensations, all thoughts, all reflexes, all attractions, all repulsions, all existing things, all that forms the fabric of our physical life must be overcome, transformed and freed from all their habits. This is a battle of every second against thousands and millions of enemies. Unless you feel you are a hero, it is better not to try." (CWM 5: 316–317)

II—F. Wrong methods of removing fear

"For fear of being mistaken in our actions, we stop doing anything at all; for fear of being mistaken in our speech, we stop speaking; for fear of eating for the pleasure of eating, we do not eat at all—this is not freedom, it is simply reducing the manifestation to a minimum; and the natural conclusion is Nirvana. But if the Lord wanted only Nirvana, nothing but Nirvana would exist! It is obvious that He conceives of the coexistence of all opposites, and that for Him this must be the beginning of a totality." (CWM 10: 195)

"The first step is not to admit the possibility of fear. Yes, that's the first step. I knew people who used to boast about their fear. These are incurable. That is, quite naturally they would say, 'Ah, just imagine, I was so frightened!' And then what! It is nothing to be proud of. With such people you can do nothing." (CWM 5: 317–318)

II—G. Different kinds of fear

1. The fear of death must be thrown away

"For when we feel the physical being to be not ourselves, but only a dress or an instrument, the repulsion to the death of the body which is so strong and vehement an instinct of the vital man must necessarily weaken and can be thrown away. Thrown away it must be and entirely. The fear of death and the aversion to bodily cessation are the stigma left by his animal origin on the human being. That brand must be utterly effaced." (CWSA 23: 349)

"The fear of death shows a vital weakness which is also contrary to a capacity for Yoga." (CWSA 29: 116)

"This suggestion of death comes from the 'ego' when it feels that soon it will have to abdicate. Keep quiet and fearless. Everything will be all right." (CWM 15: 119)

"If you wish to escape from death, you must not bind yourself to anything perishable.

One can conquer that alone which one fears not, and he who fears death has already been vanquished by death." (CWM 15: 120)

"In order to be able to conquer death and win immortality, one must neither fear death nor desire it." (CWM 15: 120)

"Of all fears the most subtle and the most tenacious is the fear of death. It is deeply rooted in the subconscient and it is not easy to dislodge. …

How can one overcome this fear? Several methods can be used for this purpose. But first of all, a few fundamental notions are needed to help us in our endeavour. The first and most important point is to know that life is one and immortal. Only the forms are countless, fleeting and brittle. …

…

The first method appeals to the reason. One can say that in the present state of the world, death is inevitable; a body that has taken birth will necessarily die one day or another, and in almost every case death comes when it must: one can neither hasten nor delay its hour. … Reason teaches us that it is absurd to fear something that one cannot avoid. The only thing to do is to accept the idea of death and quietly do the best one can from day to day, from hour to hour, without worrying about what is going to happen. … No doubt, these people should have recourse to the second method, the method of inner seeking. Beyond all the emotions, in the silent and tranquil depths of our being, there is a light shining constantly, the light of the psychic consciousness. Go in search of this light,

concentrate on it; it is within you. With a persevering will you are sure to find it and as soon as you enter into it, you awake to the sense of immortality. …

The third method is for those who have faith in a God, their God, and who have given themselves to him. They belong to him integrally; all the events of their lives are an expression of the divine will and they accept them not merely with calm submission but with gratitude, for they are convinced that whatever happens to them is always for their own good." (CWM 12: 82–84)

2. Fear of the gods arose from man's ignorance of God and his ignorance of the laws that govern the world

"In certain religions, in most perhaps, the idea of the fear of God plays a very large part, sometimes the largest, and the God fearing man is the typical worshipper of these religions. The sentiment of fear is indeed perfectly consistent with devotion of a certain kind and up to a certain point; at its highest it rises into a worship of the divine Power, the divine Justice, divine Law, divine Righteousness, and ethical obedience, an awed reverence for the almighty Creator and Judge. Its motive is therefore ethico-religious and it belongs not so strictly to the devotee, but to the man of works moved by a devotion to the divine ordainer and judge of his works. It regards God as the King and does not approach too near the glory of

his throne unless justified by righteousness or led there by a mediator who will turn away the divine wrath for sin. Even when it draws nearest, it keeps an awed distance between itself and the high object of its worship. It cannot embrace the Divine with all the fearless confidence of the child in his mother or of the lover in his beloved or with that intimate sense of oneness which perfect love brings with it.

The origin of this divine fear was crude enough in some of the primitive popular religions. It was the perception of powers in the world greater than man, obscure in their nature and workings, which seemed always ready to strike him down in his prosperity and to smite him for any actions which displeased them. Fear of the gods arose from man's ignorance of God and his ignorance of the laws that govern the world. It attributed to the higher powers caprice and human passion; it made them in the image of the great ones of the earth, capable of whim, tyranny, personal enmity, jealous of any greatness in man which might raise him above the littleness of terrestrial nature and bring him too near to the divine nature. With such notions no real devotion could arise, except that doubtful kind which the weaker may feel for the stronger whose protection he can buy by worship and gifts and propitiation and obedience to such laws as he may have laid upon those beneath him and may enforce by rewards and punishments, or else the submissive and

prostrate reverence and adoration which one may feel for a greatness, glory, wisdom, sovereign power which is above the world and is the source or at any rate the regulator of all its laws and happenings." (CWSA 24: 562)

3. Religious fear

"Religion itself has been imposed on men; it is often supported by a suggestion of religious fear or by some spiritual or other menace. There can be no such imposition in your relation with the Divine; it must be free, your own mind's and heart's choice, taken up with enthusiasm and joy. What union can that be in which one trembles and says, "I am compelled, I cannot do otherwise"? Truth is self-evident and has not to be imposed upon the world." (CWM 3: 82–83)

4. The Divine even as the Master does not punish anybody, does not threaten, does not force obedience

"Certainly, fear enters into the relations of the master and the servant and even of the father and the child, but only when they are on the human level, when control and subjection and punishment figure predominantly in them and love is obliged to efface itself more or less behind the mask of authority. The Divine even as the Master does not

punish anybody, does not threaten, does not force obedience. 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, *dasyam*, is in Indian Yoga the happy service of the divine Friend or the passionate service to the divine Beloved." (CWSA 24: 565)

"I knew people who were so frightened of the Kali they had at home that indeed they trembled to make the least mistake, for when catastrophes came they thought it was Kali who sent them! It is a frightful thing, thought. I know them, those entities. I know them very well, but they are vital beings, vital forms which, so to say, are given a form by human thought, and what forms! And to think that men worship such terrible and monstrous things; and what's more that these poor gods are given, are paid the compliment of believing that it is...

From this point of view, it is good that for some time men get out of this religious atmosphere, so full of fear, and this sort of blind, superstitious submission of which the hostile forces have taken a dreadful advantage. The period of denial, positivism, is from this viewpoint quite indispensable in order to free men from superstition. It is

only when one comes out of that and the abject submission to monstrous vital forces that one can rise to truly spiritual heights and there become the collaborator and true instrument of the forces of Truth, the real Consciousness, the true Power.

One must leave all this far behind before one can climb higher." (CWM 6: 196–197)

"And there was that Kali who was particularly satisfied with all the vital forces of all those poor little chickens; they had been killed off by hundreds and each one had a little vital force which escaped when its throat was cut, and so that Kali was feeding upon all that: she was very happy. And there was evidently—I don't know if it could be called cruelty, it was rather greed,—greed of vital forces, of a very unconscious vital force, for these poor chickens don't have anything very conscious. And the whole thing created a very low, very heavy, very unconscious and painful atmosphere, yet not of the intensity of cruelty. So it can't be said that this practice is due to cruelty, I don't think so. Perhaps some of these people, had they to sacrifice a little kid, a little lamb they loved, perhaps they would even find this a little sad. It is rather a great unconsciousness and a great fear. Oh, fear! In religions there is so much fear! Fear: "If I don't do this or that, if I don't cut the throat of a dozen chickens, disastrous things will happen to me all my life through or at least the whole of this year. My

children will be ill, I shall lose my job, I won't be able to earn my living; very, very unpleasant things will happen to me."... And so, let us sacrifice the dozen chickens. But it is not from the desire to kill. It can't be said that it's through cruelty: it's through unconsciousness." (CWM 6: 65–66)

Not fear of God, but love of God, must be the motive

"And, speaking more largely, to grow into the divine nature is the consummation of the ethical being. This can be done best by realising God as the higher Self, the guiding and uplifting Will or the Master whom we love and serve. Not fear of him, but love of him and aspiration to the freedom and eternal purity of his being must be the motive." (CWSA 24: 565)

5. One who fears monotony and wants something new would not be able to do Yoga

"One who fears monotony and wants something new would not be able to do Yoga or at least this Yoga which needs an inexhaustible perseverance and patience." (CWSA 29: 116)

6. When the physical is opening, fear in the body also must go

"It is clear also that the physical is effectively opening, but the instinctive physical and vital-physical motions in it, fear in the body, weakness, disposition to ill-health must go also." (CWSA 29: 282)

"Inwardly, I have been told this many times—told and shown by small experiences—that the body can bear much more than we think, if no fear or anxiety is added to the pain. If we eliminate the mental factor, the body, left to itself, has neither fear nor apprehension nor anxiety about what is going to happen—no anguish—and it can bear a great deal." (CWM 10: 169)

7. Fear of surrendering to the Divine

"It is here, however, that the Western people find their difficulty. They have been taught to fear and avoid all that threatens their personal independence. They have imbibed with their others' milk the sense of individuality. And surrender means giving up all that. In other words, you may follow, as Ramakrishna says, either the path of the baby monkey or that of the baby cat. The baby monkey holds to its mother in order to be carried about and it must hold firm, otherwise if it loses its grip, it falls. On the other hand, the baby cat does not hold to its mother, but is held by the mother and has no fear nor responsibility; it has

nothing to do but to let the mother hold it and cry *ma ma*." (CWM 3: 4–5)

8. Illness can come from fear

"Nine-tenths of the danger in an illness comes from fear. Fear can give you the apparent symptoms of an illness; and it can give you the illness too,—its effects can go so far as that. Not so long ago the wife of one who frequents the Ashram but is not herself practising Yoga, heard that there was cholera in the house where her milkman lived; fear took her and the next moment she began to show symptoms of the disease. She could however be rapidly cured, because the apparent symptoms were not allowed to develop into the real illness." (CWM 3: 90–91)

"The body, if left to itself, is remarkable, for, not only does it aspire for equilibrium and well-being but it is capable of restoring the balance. If one leaves one's body alone without intervening with all those thoughts, all the vital reactions, all the depressions, and also all the so-called knowledge and mental constructions and fears—if one leaves the body to itself, spontaneously it will do what is necessary to set itself right again.

The body in its natural state likes equilibrium, likes harmony; it is the other parts of the being which spoil everything." (CWM 6: 140)

9. One must take great care not to instil into a child the fear of illness

"Another thing should be taught to a child from his early years: to enjoy cleanliness and observe hygienic habits. But, in obtaining this cleanliness and respect for the rules of hygiene from the child, one must take great care not to instil into him the fear of illness. Fear is the worst instrument of education and the surest way of attracting what is feared. Yet, while there should be no fear of illness, there should be no inclination for it either." (CWM 12: 14)

"Q: *Sweet Mother, when one sees an illness coming, how can one stop it?*

A: Ah! First of all, you must not want it and nothing in the body must want it. You must have a very strong will not to be ill. This is the first condition.

The second condition is to call the light, a light of equilibrium, a light of peace, quietude and balance, and to push it into all the cells of the body, enjoining them not to be afraid, because that again is another condition.

First, not to want to be ill, and then not to be afraid of illness. You must neither attract it nor tremble. You must not want illness at all. But you must not because of fear not want it; you must not be afraid; you must have a calm certitude and a complete trust in the power of the Grace

to shelter you from everything, and then think of something else, not be concerned about this any longer. When you have done these two things, refusing the illness with all your will and infusing a confidence which completely eliminates the fear in the cells of the body, and then busying yourself with something else, not thinking any longer about the illness, forgetting that it exists... there, if you know how to do that, you may even be in contact with people who have contagious diseases, and yet you do not catch them. But you must know how to do this.

Many people say, 'Oh, yes, here I am not afraid.' They don't have any fear in the mind, their mind is not afraid, it is strong, it is not afraid; but the body trembles, and one doesn't know it, because it is in the cells of the body that the trembling goes on. It trembles with a terrible anxiety and this is what attracts the illness. It is there that you must put the force and the quietude of a perfect peace and an absolute trust in the Grace. And then, sometimes you are obliged to drive away with a similar force in your thought all suggestions that after all, the physical world is full of illnesses, and these are contagious, and because one was in contact with somebody who is ill, one is sure to catch it, and then, that the inner methods are not powerful enough to act on the physical, and all kinds of stupidities of which the air is full. These are collective suggestions which are passed on from one person to another by everybody. And if by chance there are two or three doctors,

then it becomes terrible. which the air is full. These are collective suggestions which are passed on from one person to another by everybody. And if by chance there are two or three doctors, then it becomes terrible." (CWM 7: 142–143)

10. If he wants to go into the inner consciousness and move in the inner planes, he must cast away fear

"In any case, if he wants to go into the inner consciousness and move in the inner planes—which will inevitably happen if he shuts off the waking consciousness in his meditation—he must cast away fear. Probably he expected to get the silence or the touch of the divine consciousness by following out the suggestion of the Gita. But the silence or the touch of the divine consciousness can be equally and for some more easily got in the waking meditation through the Mother's presence and the descent from above. The inward movement, however, is probably unavoidable and he should try to understand and, not shrinking or afraid, to go to it with the same confidence and faith in the Mother as he has in the waking meditation. His dreams are of course experiences on the inner (vital) plane." (CWSA 30: 221)

11. The fear which rises while making the japa of the names

"The fear, anger, depression etc. which used to rise when making the japa of the names came from a vital resistance in the nature (this resistance exists in everyone) which threw up these things because of the pressure on the vital part to change which is implied in sadhana. These resistances rise and then, if one takes the right attitude, slowly or quickly clear away. One has to observe them and separate oneself from them, persisting in the concentration and sadhana till the vital becomes quiet and clear." (CWSA 30: 255)

12. Afraid of the darkness; fear of ghosts

"Q: *A few days ago X told me some stories about vital beings and ghosts. Since then I feel afraid in the dark.*

A: Why do you listen to these stories? They are very stupid. Most often ghosts exist only in people's imaginations. As for vital beings, if we do not fear them they can do us no harm. And with the divine protection what fear can one have? None." (CWM 17: 109)

13. Fear of cold, fear of bad health

"Be on your guard. There was on X a formation of fear—fear of cold, fear of bad health, etc.—take care that this

formation does not jump upon you; you must reject it resolutely." 1937 (CWM 15: 139)

14. When people who have left their bodies appear in front of you, you must not fear

"Go safely to Siddhapur and *do not fear*.

It is only fear which hurts, not the "spirits". When people who have left their body appear in front of you, you must not fear—it is generally because they are restless and lack peace—give them a good thought and wish them to be in peace and it will be over.

In any case you can tell them to go to Mother and they will not bother you any more.

Go to Siddhapur and avoid unpleasant company if there is any, but always remember that it is only fear which harms and that with confident faith in the Divine's Grace you are safe." (CWM 14: 243)

15. Fear of animals

"Of course, those animals—all animals—feel it if one is afraid, even if one doesn't show it. They feel it extraordinarily, with an instinct which human beings don't have. They [animals] feel that you are afraid, your body produces a vibration which arouses an extremely unpleasant sensation in them. If they are strong animals

this makes them furious; if they are weak animals, this gives them a panic. But if you have no fear at all, you see, if you go with an absolute trustfulness, a great trust, if you go in a friendly way to them, you will see that they have no fear; they are not afraid, they do not fear you and don't detest you; also, they are very trusting.

When you meet a barking dog, if you are afraid, it will bite you, if you aren't, it will go away." (CWM 7: 29)

"Once I was asked a question, a psychological question. It was put to me by a man who used to deal in wild animals. He had a menagerie, and he used to buy wild animals everywhere, in all countries where they are caught, in order to sell them again on the European market. He was an Austrian, I think. He had come to Paris, and he said to me, "I have to deal with two kinds of tamers. I would like to know very much which of the two is more courageous. There are those who love animals very much, they love them so much that they enter the cage without the least idea that it could prove dangerous, as a friend enters a friend's house, and they make them work, teach them how to do things, make them work without the slightest fear. I knew some who did not even have a whip in their hands; they went in and spoke with such friendliness to their animals that all went off well. This did not prevent their being eaten up one day. But still—this is one kind. The other sort are those who are so afraid before entering, that

they tremble, you know, they become sick from that, usually. But they make an effort, they make a considerable moral effort, and without showing any fear they enter and make the animals work."

Then he told me, "I have heard two opinions: some say that it is much more courageous to overcome fear than not to have any fear.... Here's the problem. So which of the two is truly courageous?"

There is perhaps a third kind, which is truly courageous, still more courageous than either of the two. It is the one who is perfectly aware of the danger, who knows very well that one can't trust these animals. The day they are in a particularly excited state they can very well jump on you treacherously. But that's all the same to them. They go there for the joy of the work to be done, without questioning whether there will be an accident or not and in full quietude of mind, with all the necessary force and required consciousness in the body. This indeed was the case of that man himself." (CWM 7: 26–27)

"Q: *What is the ground of the repulsion that one instinctively feels towards certain animals, such as snakes and scorpions?*

A: It is not an inevitable necessity that one should feel this or any other repulsion. To have no repulsion at all is one of the fundamental achievements of Yoga.

The repulsion you speak of comes from fear; if there were no fear, it would not exist. This fear is not based on reason, it is instinctive; it is not individual, but racial; it is a general suggestion and belongs to the consciousness of humanity as a whole. When one takes up the human body, one accepts along with it a mass of these general suggestions, race ideas, race feelings of mankind, associations, attractions, repulsions, fears.

But from another viewpoint there is something very personal in the nature of an attraction or repulsion; for these movements are not the same for everybody and depend mostly on the quality of vibration of the vital being in different people. There are men who not only do not feel any repulsion for creatures like snakes, but have even a liking for them, a vital attraction and preference.

The world is full of things that are not pleasing or beautiful, but that is no reason why one should live in a constant feeling of repulsion for these things. All feelings of shrinking and disgust and fear that disturb and weaken the human mind can be overcome. A Yogi has to overcome these reactions; for almost the very first step in Yoga demands that you must keep a perfect equanimity in the presence of all beings and things and happenings. Always you must remain calm, untouched and unmoved; the strength of the Yogi lies there." (CWM 3: 100)

II—H. Who has no fear

"When we have this realisation, when we dwell in it securely and permanently, all possibilities of grief and sin, fear, delusion, internal strife and pain are driven puissantly from our being. We realise in our experience the truth of the Upanishads, "He who possesses the delight of the Brahman has no fear from anything in the world," ..." (CWSA 13: 77)

Those who are *pure*—that is to say, exclusively under the Divine influence—have no fear." 10 November 1965 (CWM 16: 329)

"The greatest spirits are therefore those who have no fear of the future, who accept its challenge and its wager; they have that sublime trust in the God or Power that guides the world, that high audacity of the human soul to wrestle with the infinite and realise the impossible, that wise and warrior confidence in its ultimate destiny which mark the Avatars and prophets and great innovators and renovators." (CWSA 13: 130)

"One must have no fear, victory is for him who is without fear; I am always with you to guide and protect you." (CWM 16: 184)

"One does not become wise by talking much; one is called wise if one is forbearing, without fear or foe." (CWM 15: 254)

"A hero fears nothing, complains of nothing and never gives way." (CWM 12: 315)

"Heroic action fights for the beautiful and the true without fear of obstacles and opposition." (CWM 14: 168)

"Heroic thought goes to the conquest of the unknown without fear of difficulty and incomprehension." (CWM 14: 168)

"Bravery fears nothing and knows how to hold tight against adversaries." (CWM 14: 168)

"Boldness: do fearlessly what must be done, not dreading any difficulty." (CWM 14: 169)

"You can be entirely free from fear only when you have driven out of you all violence." (CWM 14: 243)

"Get rid of all violence and you will no longer have any fear." (CWM 14: 243)

"Vital trust in the Divine: full of courage and energy, no longer fears anything." (CWM 14: 355)

"Courage is the total absence of fear in any form." (CWM 10: 282)

"One must be a true warrior to make this conquest, a warrior who fears nothing, neither enemies nor death, for, against the whole world, with or without a body, the struggle continues and will end in Victory." (CWM 10: 292)

"There are two things that must be acquired in these passages through the vital world—first this immediate call on the Mother's protection and, second, the throwing away of all fear. To those who do not fear them, these beings or forces can do nothing—in any meeting or conflict with them the Mother's name is a sure protection even if some fear should come." (CWSA 32: 289)

"There is a misguided, perverted occultism which is called black magic, it is a thing one must never touch. But unfortunately, there are people who touch it through pure wickedness. You must not believe it is an illusion, a superstition; it is real. There are people who know how to do magic and do it, and with their magic they obtain altogether detestable results.... It is understood of course that when you have no fear and remain under protection,

you are sheltered. But there is a "when", there is a condition, and then if the condition is not always fulfilled, very unpleasant things may happen. So long as you are in a state full of strength, full of purity—that is, in a state of invincibility, if anybody does anything against you, that falls back upon him automatically, as when you throw a tennis-ball against the wall, it comes back to you; the thing comes back to them exactly in the same way, sometimes with a greater force, and they are punished by their own wickedness. But naturally it all depends on the person against whom the magic is done, on his inner force and purity.... I have come across such things, many cases like this. And in such cases, in order to resist, one must be, as I said, a warrior in the vital, that is, a spiritual fighter in the vital. All who do yoga sincerely must become that, and when they do become that, they are altogether sheltered. But one of the conditions for becoming it is never to have bad will or a bad thought towards others. For if you have a bad feeling or bad will or a bad thought, you come down to their level and when you are on the same level with them, well, you may receive blows from them." (CWM 5: 178–179)

"When you will consciously live in it [soul], you will fear nothing any longer, in any domain of your being, because you will be united with the universal Truth which governs the world." 8 August 1964 (CWM 12: 125)

"Destruction in itself is neither good nor evil. It is a fact of Nature, a necessity in the play of forces as things are in this world. The Light destroys the Darkness and the Powers of Darkness, and that is not a movement of Ignorance!

It all depends on the character of the destruction and the forces that enter into it. All dread of fire or other violent forces should be overcome. For dread shows a weakness—the free spirit can stand fearless before even the biggest forces of Nature." (CWSA 28: 435)

"It is here upon earth, in the body itself, that you must acquire a complete knowledge and learn to use a full and complete power. Only when you have done that will you be free to move about with entire security in all the worlds. Only when you are incapable of having the slightest fear, when you remain unmoved, for example, in the midst of the worst nightmare, can you say, 'Now I am ready to go into the vital world.' But this means the acquisition of a power and a knowledge that can come only when you are a perfect master of the impulses and desires of the vital nature. You must be absolutely free from everything that can bring in the beings of the darkness or allow them to rule over you; if you are not free, beware!

No attachments, no desires, no impulses, no preferences; perfect equanimity, unchanging peace and absolute faith in the Divine protection: with that you are safe, without it you are in peril. And as long as you are not

safe, it is better to do like little chickens that take shelter under the mother's wings." (CWM 3: 47–48)

II—I. The least fear puts you in danger when practising occultism

"As I said at the beginning, the absolutely indispensable condition is to have an intrepidity which does not allow any fear to enter into you. For this has been very often said, and it is quite true, that when you enter the invisible realm, the first things you meet are literally terrifying. If you have no fear, there is no danger, but the least fear puts you into danger. So, before anybody at all was allowed to practise this science, [occultism] for a very long time, sometimes for years, the novice was submitted to a discipline which gave him the assurance that he could practise it without experiencing the least fear and without any danger. That is why, my children, I have never spoken to you about it." (CWM 6: 40)

"I practised occultism when I was twelve. But I must say I had no fear, I feared nothing. One goes out of one's body, but is tied by something resembling an almost imperceptible thread; if the thread is cut, it is all over. Life also is ended. One goes out, and then can begin seeing the world he has entered. And usually the first things one sees, as I said, are terrifying. Because, for you the air is empty, there is nothing in it—you see something blue or white, there are clouds, sunbeams, and all that is very pretty—but when you have the other sight, you see that it is filled

with a multitude of small formations which are all residues of desires or of mental deformation and these swarm inside it, you see, in a mass, and this is not always very pretty. At times it is extremely ugly. This assails you; it comes, presses upon you, attacks you; and if you are afraid, it takes absolutely frightful forms. Naturally, if you do not flinch, if you can look upon all that with a healthy curiosity, you perceive that it is not at all so terrifying. It may not be pretty, but it is not terrifying." (CWM 6: 40–41)

"Sweet Mother, I did not understand the ending, the last paragraph: "There is yet another way to conquer the fear of death, but it is within the reach of so few that it is mentioned here only as a matter of information. It is to enter into the domain of death deliberately and consciously while one is still alive, and then to return from this region and re-enter the physical body, resuming the course of material existence with full knowledge. But for that one must be an initiate."

What do you want to say? You have not understood what I meant?... I am not surprised! Has anyone understood?...

This is a domain about which I have so far refrained from speaking to you, for one must be already very conscious of oneself, have a good mastery over one's reflexes and be above all fear, precisely—above all possibility of fear, in order to be able to enter upon it. It is

a knowledge which in the modern world is hardly recognised as scientific, but it *is* scientific in the sense that it follows some definite processes and that if the circumstances are correctly reproduced, the same results are obtained. It is a progressive science and one can devote oneself to it, can make quite a regular progress, as logical as in all the sciences that are acknowledged as such in modern times." (CWM 6: 38)

II—J. Other quotations on fear

If surrender is due to fear, then certainly that is not surrender

"As for surrender, everyone has his own first way of approach towards it; but if it is due to fear, 'form' or sense of duty, then certainly that is not surrender at all; these things have nothing to do with surrender. Also, complete and total surrender is not so easy as some seem to imagine. There are always many and large reservations; even if one is not conscious of them, they are here. Complete surrender can best come by a complete love and bhakti." (CWSA 30: 57)

"Q: *My sweet mother,*

Light, more light. Enlighten me. Now I know that you are the greatest power. My mother, take me into your heart, dissolve the obstacles.

A: My dear child,

Always nestle in my heart which is always ready to welcome you, in my arms which are always ready to enfold you, and fear no obstacles—we shall dispel them all.

With all my love." (CWM 16: 149)

(*In September 1937 the disciple went to France for six months, returning to the Ashram in March 1938.*)

Do not fear; I can see beyond appearances and understand in silence or beyond words.

My arm will always be around you, to uphold and guide you.

Certainly you are my dear child, but I want her to be happy, not sorrowful, illumined, not ignorant.

My blessings are very affectionately with you." 13 June 1938 (CWM 17: 190)

(*About a sadhak who had been a Sannyasi before joining the Ashram. During a meditation, he saw snakes all around him.*)

He must have a fear (perhaps subconscious) of the consequences of having rejected the Sannyasi's robe and this fear translates by the attacks of snakes, etc. You can tell him not to fear, that I am informed and nobody will hurt him." (CWM 15: 258)

"In any case, whatever happens and whatever you do, do not allow FEAR to invade you. At the slightest touch of it, react and call for help.

You must learn not to identify with your body and treat it as a young child who needs to be convinced that it must not fear.

FEAR is the greatest of all enemies and we must overcome it here, once and for all." (CWM 15: 183)

"Constantly thinking of the hostile forces and fearing them is a very dangerous weakness." (CWM 15: 21)

"As for your opening upward—fear nothing; it all depends on your sincerity. If it is the Divine alone that you want and not some personal advantage, it is the Divine alone who will answer your call. Adverse replies are a danger only when the motive is egoistic. With my blessings. 5 September 1964 (CWM 15: 25–26)

"During the bombardments, to those who fear for their skins and flee:

Why should you be in safety when the whole world is in danger? What is your special virtue, your special merit for which you should be so specially protected?

In the Divine alone is there safety. Take refuge in Him and cast away all fear." 26 May 1942 (CWM 15: 46)

"Soar ever higher, ever farther, without fear or hesitation!

The hopes of today are the realisations of tomorrow." (CWM 15: 73)

"Without care for time, without fear for space, surging out purified from the flames of the ordeal, we shall fly without

stop towards the realisation of our goal, the supramental victory.” 24 April 1956 (CWM 15: 97)

“Endurance and plasticity, cheerfulness and fearlessness are the qualities specially needed for the examinations of physical nature." (CWM 14: 43)

“Fear not, your sincerity is your safeguard.” 22 November 1934 (CWM 14: 66)

“All division in the being is an insincerity.

The greatest insincerity is to dig an abyss between your body and the truth of your being.

When an abyss separates the true being from the physical being, Nature fills it up immediately with all kinds of adverse suggestions, the most formidable of which is fear, and the most pernicious, doubt.

Allow nothing anywhere to deny the truth of your being—this is sincerity.” 7 July 1957 (CWM14: 69)

“When one remains perfectly quiet and without fear, nothing serious can happen.” (CWM 14: 136)

“Q: *All these years I have been hesitant to write all the details of my life for fear that the Mother will scold me. Now I have become a bit stronger and along with her*

scoldings I can feel her force working inside me. By her infinite compassion, I am out of the fear.

A: If you are afraid of the Mother's scoldings, how will you progress? Those who want to progress quickly, welcome even the blows of Mahakali because that pushes them more rapidly on the way." (CWSA 32: 353)

"Q: *My meetings with the Mother, instead of being occasions for giving and receiving love, joy and happiness, bring fear! There must be something wrong in my nature.*

A: It is the old vital with its ego which comes up again and again. It refuses to follow the higher being and be as the true bhaktas are who ask nothing and are content with all that the Mother does or does not do, because whatever she does must be good, since she is the Mother. You must impose the truth on this vital part." 6 May 1935 (CWSA 32: 478)

"Q: *It is a strange thing, but it seems to be absolutely clear that the Mother wants me to go to her. Everything in me says, 'Yes, yes, it is true—there is no doubt about it.' And I would surely go to her in spite of this fear that holds me so tight, if only I knew how and where to meet her.*

A: This fear is an absurd and irrational feeling in the subconscient Physical—there is no reason for its existence—unless it is the fear of the egoistic physical clinging to its own individuality and unwilling to be 'swallowed up' in the Mother. Otherwise it can only be a sort of tamasic counterpart to the rajasic revolt and pride—for these two things often go together or alternate. Mother was and is quite ready to see you. But you must get rid of the fear, distrust and unwillingness, for there should be a trust and openness in you, when you come. If you wish she can fix a time—next Thursday at 9.30. In the meantime we can try to get this obstacle out of you. (CWSA 32: 510) 21 April 1933

Q: *At times I feel a kind of peculiar fear as if I am going to lose my brain (especially at night when I go to bed).*

A: You can reply to him that if he has fears of this kind, it would be better not to try the sadhana. It is a difficult Yoga and faith, a steady and quiet will, courage and strength are necessary if one is to follow it." 21 March 1932 (CWSA 35: 546)

"If you keep your trust in the Divine and clear yourself of all that conflicts with it, there is no reason to fear that the Divine will abandon you. For the present what is necessary is to shake off this disturbance and get out of the condition

of fear and nervous disturbance altogether." (CWSA 35: 622)

"I have had innumerable examples of the power of right attitude. I have seen crowds saved from catastrophes by one single person keeping the right attitude. But it must be an attitude that does not remain somewhere very high and leaves the body to its usual reactions. If you remain high up like that, saying, "Let God's will be done", you may get killed all the same. For your body may be quite undivine, shivering with fear: the thing is to hold the true consciousness in the body itself and not have the least fear and be full of the divine peace. Then indeed there is no danger. Not only can attacks of men be warded off, but beasts also and even the elements can be affected. I can give you a little example. You remember the night of the great cyclone, when there was a tremendous noise and splash of rain all about the place. I thought I would go to Sri Aurobindo's room and help him shut the windows. I just opened his door and found him sitting quietly at his desk, writing. There was such a solid peace in the room that nobody would have dreamed that a cyclone was raging outside. All the windows were wide open, not a drop of rain was coming inside." (CWM 3: 155)

"On some days of each month, when I sleep at night on my cot, moonlight from the window of my room falls on

my face and body. Is there any harm in the moonlight falling on me while I am sleeping? I ask You because someone told me that it might have a bad effect and so it would be better to shut it out. But I love the moon and the moonlight very much for they remind me of Your White Light. Will you please let me know if there is any harm if moonlight falls on me while I sleep?

If you are not frightened, there is no harm—it is not the moon, it is the fear which harms." 9 May 1963 (CWM 14: 241–242)

Vital beings create the vibration of fear in you, which is their most powerful means of invading and possessing you

"One of the characteristics of activity in the vital space and time is that these beings are able to assume huge shapes at will and create the vibration of fear in you which is their most powerful means of invading and possessing you. You must bear in mind their power of terrifying illusion, and cast out all fear. Once you face them boldly, unflinchingly, and look them straight in the eyes, they lose three-quarters of their power. And if you call upon us for help, then even the last quarter is gone and they either take to their heels or dissolve." (CWM 3: 165–166)

Staring fearlessly into the eyes of a vital being has a magical effect

"A friend of mine who used to go out in his vital body once complained that he was always being confronted with a gigantic tiger which made the night very wretched for him. I told him to banish all fear and walk straight up to the beast and stare it in the face, calling of course for assistance if necessary. He did so and lo! the tiger suddenly dwindled into an insignificant cat! You have no idea of the almost magical effect of staring fearlessly into the eyes of a vital being. Even on earth, if you deal in this way with all those incarnations of the vital powers which we ordinarily call animals, you are assured of easy mastery. A physical tiger will also flee from you, if without the least tremor you look him straight in the eyes. A snake will never be able to bite you if you manage to rivet its gaze to yours without feeling the slightest dread." (CWM 3: 165–166)

"He who lies is constantly uneasy in the fear that his lie may be discovered; he who has acted wrongly is in a constant anxiety at the idea that perhaps he will be punished; he who tries to deceive has no peace lest it should be found out that he deceives." - The Mother on the Dhammapada (CWM 3: 197)

"The best way of facing hostile forces is always to aspire, always o remember the Divine. And never to fear." (CWM 4: 169)

"*Why is it so difficult to convince the body, when one has succeeded in liberating oneself mentally and vitally?*

Because in the large majority of men, the body receives its inspirations from the subconscient, it is under the influence of the subconscient. All the fears driven out from the active consciousness go and take refuge there and then, naturally, they have to be chased out from the subconscient and uprooted from there." (CWM 4: 211)

"Q: *When we are afraid, is that due to the mischief of these [beings of the vital world] beings?*

A: Yes, my child. Fear is the prettiest gift these beings have given to the world. It is their first present, and the most powerful. It is through fear that they hold human beings. First of all, they create a movement of fear; the movement of fear weakens you, then hands you over little by little into their power. And it is not even a reasonable fear; it is a kind of fear which seizes you, you don't know why, something that makes you tremble, gives you anxiety. You do not know why, it has no apparent reason. It is their action." (CWM 5: 117)

The difference between mental, vital and physical fear

"Q: *What is the difference between mental, vital and physical fear?*

A: If you are conscious of the movement of your mind, the movement of your vital and the movement of your physical, you know it.

As for the mental, it is very simple: thoughts come. You begin thinking, for example, there is this illness and this illness is very contagious, perhaps you are going to catch it, and if you catch it, it is going to be a terrible affair and what is to be done so as not to catch it?... So the mind begins to tremble: what is going to happen tomorrow? etc.

As for the vital, you feel it. You feel it in your sensations. All at once you feel hot, you feel cold, you perspire or all kinds of unpleasant things happen. And then you feel your heart beating fast and suddenly you have fever and then the circulation stops and you become cold.

Physically, well... When you do not any longer have the other two fears, you can become aware of the physical fear. Generally, the other two are much more conscious. They hide the physical fear from you. But when you have no longer any mental or vital fear, then you become aware of it. It is a curious little vibration that gets into your cells and they begin shivering that way. But the cells are not like a heart beating very fast. It is in the very cells: they tremble with just a slight quivering. And it is very difficult to control this. Yet it can be controlled.

I am sure that most of you have felt this as, for example, when one does an exercise which is not done often or does it for the first time; these are tiny little vibrations which seize you in all the cells. And then naturally, you lose your full control over the movement. The body does not answer to the Force any more. When you want to put your will to do something, that brings about a kind of resistance and incapacity in the body. Only, you are not aware of it usually because your attention is drawn more to the mental apprehension or to the kind of vital recoil which is very apparent in the consciousness, where as you are not so very conscious of the resistance produced in the body." (CWM 5: 167–168)

"Q: *Even so, there are microbes in water?*

A: These people are in such a physical, mental, and vital condition that they are liable to catch an illness, even without drinking water, I assure you! Their whole being is a constant disharmony, their whole physical being. I do not mean inwardly, they are perhaps all right there—but those who are all right resist everything.

And I have seen just the contrary. I have seen in this country, here, village people who had only such water as was no longer water to drink, it was mere mud, I have seen it with my own eyes. It was yellowish mud in which cows had bathed and done all the rest and people had waded

through it after walking on the roads. They threw their rubbish and everything was in it. And then I saw these people. They entered it, it was, as I said, yellowish mud and there at the end there was a little bit of water—it was not water, it was yellowish, you know—they bent over, collected this water in their palms and drank it. And there were some who did not even allow it to settle. Some knew what to put in it, the herbs needed to make it settle, and if one leaves it sufficiently long it becomes a little clearer. But there were some who knew nothing at all and drank it as it was. And I came to learn that there was just then an epidemic of cholera all round and I said: 'There are still people living in that village with that kind of water?' I was told: 'We do not have a single case of cholera....' They had become immune, they were habituated. But if there had been a single person who had caught it by chance, probably all would have been dead; for then fear would enter and with fear in them there would be no more resistance, for they were poor miserable things. But it is the moral conditions of these people that are terrible, more than the physical conditions—the moral conditions.

There are sadhus, you know, who accept the conditions of a dirty life through saintliness. They never wash themselves, they have nothing about them that hygiene demands. They live in a truly dirty condition—and they are free from all illness.

Probably because they have faith and they do so purposely. Their spirit is magnificent.... I am speaking of sincere people and not those who pretend. They have faith. They do not think of their body, they think of the life of their soul. They have no illness." (CWM 5: 169–170)

"Nothing can harm you if you *do not fear*.

So, fear not, be quiet and calm—all will be all right. With love and blessings. 15 October 1966 (CWM 14: 242)

"*Mother, I feel terribly ill at ease, there are doubts about the Power and all sorts of troublesome things. I feel as if I were suffocating little by little, I have a headache that drifts here and there, it is terrible; I feel bound something tamasic, inert and dark. I cannot get rid of this. Help me, Mother, I don't know what to do, everything is dark, dark, dark. I don't know how long I can hold out against this, a sort of something which gradually drains my energy and wants to draw me into itself. Mother, help me, I really don't know what to do.*

"You must not be afraid. Have full trust in the Divine who is Love, Light and Life." 8 March 1972 (CWM 14: 242)

"Each one has his own difficulty. And I have given the example already once, I think. For instance, a being who must represent fearlessness, courage, you know, a

capacity to hold on without giving way before all dangers and all fights, usually somewhere in his being he is a *terrible* coward, and he has to struggle against this almost constantly because this represents the victory he has to win in the world." (CWM 7: 415)

"They wouldn't be heavens if they were not immune [*from attacks by hostile powers*]—a heaven with fear in it would be no heaven." (CWSA 28: 199)

(*Message for broadcast by All India Radio, Pondicherry*)
"We want to be messengers of light and truth. At once a future of harmony offers itself to be proclaimed to the world.

The time has come for the old habit of governing by fear to be replaced by the government of love." *5 November 1970* (CWM 13: 370)

"Q: *What, according to you, are the three main barriers that stand between the vision* [of India to the Guru of the world] *and the reality* [big falsehood – hiding the eternal truth]*?*

A: (a) Ignorance; (b) fear; (c) falsehood." (CWM 13: 359)

"Besides, everything that happens on earth necessarily leads to its progress. Thus wars are schools of courage,

endurance, fearlessness; they may serve to destroy a past which refuses to disappear although its time is over, and they make room for new things. Wars can, like Kurukshetra, be a way to rid the earth of a domineering or destructive race so that justice and right may reign. They can, through the presence of danger, shake the apathy of a too Tamasic consciousness and awaken dormant energies. Finally they can, by contrast, and because of the horrors that accompany and follow them, drive men to seek an effective way to make such a barbarous and violent form of transformation unnecessary." (CWM 10: 52–53)

"Be very sincere and straightforward, harbour nothing within yourself which you cannot show me without fear, do nothing which you would be ashamed of before me." (CWM 13: 76)

Darshan Messages
21 February 1954
"When you fear death it has already defeated you." (CWM 15: 184)

24 November 1956
"Without care for time, without fear for space, surging out purified from the flames of the ordeal, we shall fly without

stop towards the realisation of our goal, the supramental victory." (CWM 15: 184)

21 February 1970

"Truth is a difficult and strenuous conquest. One must be a real warrior to make this conquest, a warrior who fears nothing, neither enemies nor death, for with or against everybody, with or without a body, the struggle continues and will end by Victory." (CWM 15: 186)

A daily prayer

"O Lord, let me be free from fear and worry so that I can always serve you to the best of my ability." December 1948 (CWM 15: 212)

"O my Lord, with your help and grace what is there to fear!

You are the supreme protection that defeats all the enemies." (CWM 15: 219)

III— Sexual Relations or Sexual Enjoyments Are Absolutely Forbidden in the Sadhana

III—A. Understanding human sex-impulse

1. Wherever there is conscious life, the sex-force is there

"The sexual sensations do not 'become' a principle of the physical consciousness—they are there in the physical nature already—wherever there is conscious life, the sex-force is there. It is physical Nature's means of reproduction and it is there for that purpose." (SABCL 24: 1517) (CWSA 31: 487)

2. In humans, the sexual urge is the strongest of all the impulses of Nature

"In most men the sexual is the strongest of all the impulses of Nature." (SABCL 24: 1519) (CWSA 31: 524)

"There is no universal rule. Women can be as sexual as men or more." (CWSA 31: 534)

"As for sex—well. You are always thinking that the things that are happening to you are unique and nobody else ever

had such trials or downfalls or misery before." (CWSA 35: 377)

"The sex exists in itself—put a number of sexual men together debarred from all possibility of feminine society—after a time they will begin to satisfy themselves homosexually." (CWSA 31: 487–488)

"Yes, it [*the sex-pull*] has become rampant everywhere, especially as men no longer believe in the old moral restraints and nothing else has been substituted." (CWSA 31: 488)

"She may not have the sex-feeling towards you, but there is a certain kind of vital push, throwing out of tentacles—I don't know exactly how to express it—the secret object of which in Nature is to attract the man, to draw his attention and fix it on the woman, hook and draw him in a less or greater degree. The intention may not be at all conscious in the woman's mind, that is to say, it may not be clear or even present to her mind,—it may be merely instinctive or subconscious. There need be no physical sexual intention, only the vital in spontaneous movement. All women of a strongly vital temperament (and X is that) have it—some more, some less. There may be no specific sex-impulse in it, but it will still raise the sex-idea in the man. X naturally has no psychological knowledge and these things are too

subtle for her to perceive or realise. She may easily think she is acting in a perfectly innocent and natural way and not at all know this activity of the Nature push in her." (SABCL 24: 1521–1522) (CWSA 31: 535)

"A smile or any movement, appearance or action of the woman can be the starting-point for these vibrations. I don't suppose it is anything inherent in the smile itself, but all these things have been the habitual means by which sex has been excited in men (*havabhava*) and the woman uses them, often unconsciously and by mere habit when coming into contact with man – whether she has or has not any intention of pleasing or moving the man, it still comes up as an instinctive movement. X is of the type of woman who has this instinctive movement to please the male. But even when the woman smiles quite casually and without even the habitual instinctive movement, still there may be the vibration on the man's side owing to the habit of response in him to feminine attraction. These things are almost mechanical in their starting. As I wrote before it is the automatic answer of the physical or vital mind (imagination etc.) that prolongs it and makes it effective. Otherwise the vibrations would die away after a time." (SABCL 24: 1521) (CWSA 31: 535–536)

"It is certainly naive to think that because a girl is simple, i.e. instinctive and impulsive and non-mental in her

movements, she can be relied upon to be an asexual friend. Some women can be, but it is usually those who have a clear mental consciousness and strong will of self-control or else those who are incapable of a passion for more than one person in their life and you are lucky enough not to be that person." (CWSA 31: 536–537)

3. Sex is a movement of general Nature seeking its play

"Sex, for instance, is a movement of general Nature seeking for its play and it uses this or that one—a man vitally or physically 'in love' as it is called with a woman is simply repeating and satisfying the world-movement of sex; if it had not been that woman, it would have been another; he is simply an instrument in Nature's machinery, it is not an independent movement. So it is with anger and other Nature-motives." (SABCL 24: 1520) (CWSA 31: 486)

"There is no how to these things—the sex-impulse exists for its own sake and it uses the person as an instrument and hooks him on to another—whenever it can throw the hook, it throws it and once the connection is there holds on for some time at least. This is the physical vital and subtle physical action—for if it is the gross physical that dominates, there is no choice—any woman will serve the fun. The sensation you feel is physical vital + subtle

physical, that is why it is so concrete. Naturally these sensations do not stop by enjoyment—they are recurrent and so long as the pressure lasts they continue. It is only by rejection or by the domination of a contrary force that they cease." (CWSA 31: 486–487)

4. Sex belongs to Nature in her lower working

"*Somebody has said, "Sex is of the mind. The act is no problem. Sex is a problem to us because we are not sufficiently creative."*
Is not sex a thing not only of the mind but also of the vital being and the physical? What is it essentially and intrinsically? And how is the attraction between the sexes to be completely erased from the being?

Sex seems rather to be more of the body. It is only when you pass from the lower to the higher hemisphere that you can completely erase the thing. Sex belongs to Nature in her lower working and as long as you belong to that Nature, her working will be there automatically in you." (CWM 14: 127)

5. Sexual desires come from thinking wrongly and concentrating on sex

"Sexual desires do not come from eating well but from *thinking* wrongly and concentrating on that. The less you think about it, the better it is. You should not concentrate on what you do not want to be, but on the contrary on what you want to become." 7 June 1964 (CWM 14: 128)

6. Human sex desire

"These things [sex-impulse] are a degradation of the source in the being from which bhakti, divine love and adoration arise." (CWSA 31: 511)

"What is this idea that this desire of the heart hungering to love women is not sex-desire? That and the physical lust are both forms of sex-desire." (CWSA 31: 491)

"Why hanker [*to meet and talk with women*] when it is a vital desire? It is a form of sex and usually calls up the more physical desire." (CWSA 31: 491)

The correspondent suggested that the 'lighter movements' of sex, such as embracing and kissing, seem justified as expressions of one's love for all.—Ed.

A: Oneness with all [*expressed through embracing and kissing*] would then mean satisfying the sex-instinct with

all—that would be a rather startling *siddhanta* ...” (CWSA 31: 491)

7. The sexual impulse is instinctive and irrational

“The sexual impulse is its own reason to itself—it acts for its own satisfaction and does not ask for any reason, for it is instinctive and irrational.” (SABCL 24: 1519) (CWSA 31: 487)

“Sex is not a rational force; it is purely irrational, a power of the inferior, animal nature; you cannot therefore be rightly astonished if it acts irrationally without any justification or reason and without any other cause than its own habit and instinct." (CWSA 31: 497–498)

8. The ordinary vital and ordinary body love are intimately connected with sex

“The difficulty about the kisses and embraces is that they are the expression of a vital love which is not based on the psychic or spiritual or at least does not keep to that basis, so that when it touches the body, it awakens the reactions of the ordinary body love. The ordinary vital and the ordinary body love are intimately connected with sex—and for sex procreative intention is not at all necessary." (CWSA31: 541)

9. Sex has a terrible tenacity

"[Why the illusion of sex does not disappear:] Too many roots in the human vital. Sex has a terrible tenacity. Besides, universal physical nature has such need of it that even when man pushes it away, she throws it upon him as long as possible." (SABCL 24: 1519)

10. Sex-sensations begin from

"Sex-sensation may begin anywhere. As vital love it begins in the vital centre, heart or navel—many romantic boys have this and it starts a love affair (often at the age of 10 or even 8) before they know anything about sex-connection. With others it begins with the nerves or with that and the sex-organ itself. There are others who do not have it. Many girls would not have it at all throughout life if they were not taught and excited by men. Some even then hate it and tolerate only under a sort of social compulsion or for the sake of having children." (CWSA 31: 488)

"Q: If a person is here from childhood, is it true that he has no sexual difficulties?

A: It is not automatically true—it is only possible—but on condition he gets fully into the influence of the Mother, is

not too open to the atmosphere of other sadhaks who have it, does not get upset at the critical age and also does not upset himself by reading erotic literature etc. There is no one who has been able to do all that yet." 8 November 1933 (CWSA 32: 400)

11. Sex-hunger does not cease by temporary satiation; it revives itself after a temporary abeyance and wants indulgence again

"The Mother has already told you the truth about this idea. The idea that by fully indulging the sex-hunger it will be finished and disappear for ever is a deceptive pretence held out by the vital to the mind in order to get a sanction for its desire; it has no other raison d'être or truth or justification. If an occasional indulgence keeps the sex-desire simmering, a full indulgence would only sink you in its mire. This hunger like other hungers does not cease by temporary satiation; it revives itself after a temporary abeyance and wants again indulgence. Neither sops nor gorgings are the right treatment for it. It can only go by a radical psychic rejection or a full spiritual opening with the increasing descent of a consciousness that does not want it and has the truer Ananda." (SABCL 24: 1513–1514) (CWSA 31: 495) (CWSA 32: 401–402)

12. The sex-pull is a general universal force which uses the individual

"The sex-pull is that of a general force, which uses the individual for its purpose and it takes advantage of any proximity of the other sex to work in. The remedy lies in oneself—in immediate detachment (standing apart, not accepting as one's own) and rejecting it." (SABCL 24: 1521) (CWSA 31: 536)

"It is of course the universal sex-force that acts, but certain people are more full of it than others, have the sex-appeal as they now say in Europe. This sex-appeal is exercised especially by women even without any conscious intention of putting it on a particular person. Consciously they may turn it on a particular person, but it may exercise itself on many others whom they do not wish particularly to capture. All women have not the sex-appeal, but some force of sex-pull there is in most. There is of course a similar pull in men for women." (SABCL 24: 1521) (CWSA 31: 536)

13. The attraction works on the sense and the vital

"Dress has always been used by woman as an aid to her 'sex-appeal' as it is now called and man has always been susceptible to it; women also often find dress in man a

cause of attraction (e.g. soldier's uniform). There are also particular tastes in dress—that a sari of a particular colour should attract is quite normal. The attraction works on the sense and the vital, while it is the mind that dislikes the psychological defects and gets cooled down by their exposure; but this repulsion of the mind cannot last as against the stronger vital attraction." (SABCL 24: 1522) (CWSA 31: 536)

14. Attraction happens when the sex forces are active; it is the pull of the sex-force

"It [*the desire to attract others by physical charms*] is the usual vanity of the lower vital—it is very common. Any man can have an attraction for any woman, and vice versa, when the sex forces are active, but that attraction is not his, it is the pull of the sex-force." (SABCL 24: 1520) (CWSA 31: 524)

15. It is a vital-physical consciousness that gives so much importance to the touch, embrace and sex-act

"It [*touch*] is vital-physical. All sex movement has a vital element in it, but the mere vital movement is not directly interested in touching or the sex-act. It is interested more in the play of the emotions, domination and subjection,

quarrels, reconciliations, the interchange of vital forces etc. It is a vital-physical consciousness that gives so much importance to the touch, embrace, sex-act etc." (SABCL 24: 1523) (CWSA 31: 540)

"The association [*of touch*] with sex is vital physical – otherwise there need be no connection between the expression of affection by touch and the sex-feeling. Except in unusual cases, when the mother and son or brother and sister embrace, they do not have the sex-feeling. It is a sort of habitual conversion operated in the passage from the emotional to the physical and, being a habit only, though a strong one, can be changed." (SABCL 24: 1522) (CWSA 31: 540)

"In ordinary society people touch each other more or less freely according to the manners of the society. That is quite a different matter because there the sex-impulse is allowed within certain more or less wide or narrow limits and even the secret indulgence is common, although people try to avoid discovery. In Bengal when there is purdah touching between men and women is confined to the family, in Europe there is not such restriction so long as there is no excessive familiarity or indecency; but in Europe sex is now practically free." (SABCL 24: 1523) (CWSA 31: 540) (CWSA 35: 718)

16. A number of women dislike physical sex compared to very few men

"But there are numbers of women who dislike sex and there are very few men. One Sukhdev in a million, but many Dianas and Pallas Athenes. The virgin is really a feminine conception; men are repelled by the idea of eternal virginity. Many women would remain without any wakening of the sexual instinct if men did not thrust it on them and that cannot be said of many, perhaps of any man!" (CWSA 31: 534)

17. There can be an instinct of possessing and being possessed

"But there is another side to the picture. Women are perhaps less physically sexual than men on the whole,—but what about vital sexuality? the instinct of possessing and being possessed etc. etc.?" (CWSA 31: 534)

"If there were not the sex-push in her, how could that [*feeling of unpleasant warmth*] be? The sex-push is not merely the impulse to the act, as she perhaps thinks, as the push to envelop and occupy the man and to possess and be possessed. That is so especially with women, the sex-act being very often less attractive to them than to men; but of course always, if the vital physical reaches a

certain point, the physical sex-movement tends to follow." (CWSA 31: 534–535)

18. Enslavement of men and women

"Yes, slaves; for so long as one has desires, preferences and attachments, one is a slave of these things and of the people on whom one is dependent for their satisfaction.

Thus woman is enslaved to man because of the attraction she feels for the male and his strength, because of the desire for a home and the security it brings, and lastly because of the attachment to motherhood. Man too on his side is enslaved to woman, because of his possessiveness, his thirst for power and domination, because of his desire for sexual relations and because of his attachment to the little comforts and conveniences of married life." (CWM 12: 103–104)

19. For the sexual impulse, have no moral horror, puritanic, or ascetic repulsion

"As to the sexual impulse—For this also you must have no moral horror, or puritanic, or ascetic repulsion. This also is a power of life and while you have to throw away the present form of this power (that is the physical act), the force itself has to be mastered and transformed. It is often strongest in people with a strong vital nature and this

strong vital nature can be made a great instrument for the physical realisation of the Divine Life. If the sexual impulse comes, do not be sorry or troubled, but look at it calmly, quiet it down, reject all wrong suggestions connected with it, and wait for the Higher Consciousness to transform it into the true force and ananda." (CWSA 36: 322) (SABCL 23: 1069)

20. Not everybody is intended to be a Brahmachari

"Everybody is not intended to be a Brahmachari. Men and women belong to every stage of development and need different kinds of experience suitable for their stage in order to grow and advance farther." (CWSA 31: 543)

21. Power, wealth, sex have the strongest attraction for the human ego and the Asura

"This is indeed one of the three forces—power, wealth, sex—that have the strongest attraction for the human ego and the Asura and are most generally misheld and misused by those who retain them." (SABCL 25: 11–12) (CWSA 32: 10)

22. All three have to be conquered to be sure of having conquered any one of them
23. They have their value in the world of desires, but lean upon each other

"Three things are interdependent (Sri Aurobindo says here): power, money and sex. I believe the three are interdependent and that all three have to be conquered to be sure of having any one—when you want to conquer one you must have the other two. Unless one has mastered these three things, desire for power, desire for money and desire for sex, one cannot truly possess any of them firmly and surely. What gives so great an importance to money in the world as it is today is not so much money itself, for apart from a few fools who heap up money and are happy because they can heap it up and count it, generally money is desired and acquired for the satisfactions it brings. And this is almost reciprocal: each of these three things not only has its own value in the world of desires, but leans upon the other two. I have related to you that vision, that big black serpent which kept watch over the riches of the world, terrestrial wealth—he demanded the mastery of the sex-impulse. Because, according to certain theories, the very need of power has its end in this satisfaction, and if one mastered that, if one abolished that from human consciousness, much of the need for power and desire for money would disappear automatically. Evidently, these are the three great obstacles in the terrestrial human life and, unless they are conquered, there is scarcely a chance for humanity to change." (CWM 4: 380–381)

"Q: *It is often said in fairy tales that a treasure is guarded by serpents. Is this true?*

A: Yes, but it is not a physical serpent, it is a vital serpent. The key to the treasures is in the vital world and it is guarded by an immense black serpent—a tremendous serpent, ten times, fifty times larger than an ordinary one. It keeps the gates of the treasure. It is magnificent, black, always erect and awake. I happened once to be standing before it (usually these beings obey me when I give them an order), and I said to it, 'Let me pass.' It replied, 'I would willingly let you pass, but if I do, they will kill me; so I cannot let you pass.' I asked, 'What must I bring you in order to gain entrance?' It said, 'Oh, only one thing would oblige me to give way to you: if you could become master of the sex impulse in man, if you succeeded in conquering that in humanity, I could no longer resist, I would allow you to pass.' It has not yet allowed me to pass. I must admit that I have not fulfilled the condition, I have not been able to obtain such a mastery of it as to conquer it in all men.

That is quite difficult." (CWM 4: 189–190)

24. In vision a human figure with a dog's face means a very coarse and material sexual energy

"It is the vital plane—probably the vital physical. It is mostly there that the beings of the vital world appear with animal heads or features. A human figure with a dog's face means a very coarse and material sexual energy. Of course, all such energies can be transformed and cease to be sexual—turned into material strength of some kind, just as the seminal force can be turned by brahmacharya into ojas." (CWSA 30: 108)

25. The dirtiest smell in subtle smell is that of sex

"The smell [*coming from a person*] is due to something in the person's vital-physical. That something may not be prominent at all times. When it is, the smell is there. … What has the dirtiest smell is sex." (CWSA 30: 113)

26. Apsaras generally indicate sexual desire—Goats usually indicate sex tendencies

"Apsaras generally indicate sexual desire." (CWSA 30: 159)

"Goats usually indicate sex tendencies." (CWSA 30: 169)

27. The end of the spine is the place of the physical centre, which is also the sex-centre

"It [*the end of the spine*] is the place of the physical centre which is also the sex-centre. The apex of it is at the end of the spine and it projects forward from there—commanding the organ and its action." (CWSA 28: 243)

"The lowest centre at the bottom of the spine [*is the sex centre*]. It contains many other things, but also it is in its front the support of the sexual movements." (CWSA 28: 243)

"The sex centre is the physical centre—it [*the physical centre*] happens to be the centre for sex and physical propagation also, but it is not separately and solely the centre of sex. If that were so, there would be no centre governing the physical consciousness, but only a centre governing the sex organ." (CWSA 28: 244)

"... the lower vital which is occupied with small desires and feelings, such as make the greater part of daily life, e.g. food desire, sexual desire, small likings, dislikings, vanity, quarrels, love of praise, anger at blame, little wishes of all kinds—and a numberless host of other things." (CWSA 28: 187)

III—B. The problems the sex-impulse creates in sadhana

1. Men use sex for pleasure and so it harasses them at all times

"Of course, it [*the sex-impulse*] is perfectly natural and all men have it. Nature has put it as part of her functioning for the purpose of procreation, so that the race may continue. In the animals it is used for that purpose, but men have departed from Nature and use it for pleasure mainly—so it has taken hold of them and harasses them at all times." (SABCL 24: 1516) (CWSA 31: 485)

2. The mind has perverted the original intention of Nature

"Certainly, Nature gave it [*sexual pleasure*] to encourage her aim of procreation. The proof is that the animal does it only by season and as soon as the procreation is over, drops it. Man having a mind has discovered that he can do it even when there is not the need of Nature—but that is only a proof that Mind perverts the original intention of Nature. It does not prove that Nature created it only to give man a brief and destructive sensual pleasure." (CWSA 31: 485)

3. The thrill, which is accompanied by a very gross excitement, is the lure for the vital's consent to this otherwise unpleasing process

"The terrestrial sex-movement is a utilisation by Nature of the fundamental physical energy for purposes of procreation. The thrill of which the poets speak, which is accompanied by a very gross excitement, is the lure by which she makes the vital consent to this otherwise unpleasing process; there are numbers who experience a recoil of disgust after the act and repulsion from the partner in it because of the disgust, though they return to it when the disgust has worn off for the sake of this lure." (SABCL 24: 1517) (CWSA 31: 485)

4. The thrill is a gross distortion and degradation of the physical Ananda

"As for the thrill,—the poets make so much of—it is simply a very gross distortion and degradation of the physical Ananda which by the yoga can establish itself in the body, but this it cannot do so long as there is the sex-deviation." (SABCL 24: 1517)

"Q: If I become wholly pure I might merge in the Mother, but then there would be no excitement left.

A: There would be many things left better than excitement." (CWSA 32: 401)

5. If one is under the domination of his passions, one would find Yoga difficult

"Equally, one who is under the domination of his passions, would find the Yoga difficult and, unless supported by a true inner call and a sincere and strong aspiration for the spiritual consciousness and union with the Divine, might very easily fall fatally and his effort come to nothing." (CWSA 29: 116)

6. Repulsion and shrinking usually give more force to what you want to throw from you

"Repulsion and shrinking (*jugupsa*) are a bad way of getting rid of things; they usually give more force to what you want to throw from you." (CWSA 36: 326)

7. People who have strong sexual desires are surrounded by a small swarm of entities who torment them constantly, awakening desire in them and giving no peace

"You have perhaps read the books of Maurice Magre; there are some in the library. He describes this; he had come

here, Maurice Magre, and we spoke and he told me that he had always noticed—he was highly sensitive—he had always noticed that people who have sexual desires are surrounded by a kind of small swarm of entities who are somewhat viscous and rather ugly and which torment them constantly, awakening desire in them. He said he had seen this around certain people. It was like being surrounded by a swarm of mosquitoes, yes! But it is more gross, and much uglier still, and it is viscous, it is horrible, and it turns round and round the person and gives him no peace, and it awakens in him the desire that has formed these entities and they batten on it. It is their food. This is absolutely true. His observation was quite correct. His vision was very true. It is like that." (CWM 6: 279)

"I don't know if you have heard of Maurice Magre, the writer who had come here. He has said in one of his books that people who have a very strong sexual instinct are surrounded by a swarm of these small beings, who plague them to satisfy themselves, to feed upon the vital force. He knew the thing quite well, he had observed it. To those who are ever so little sensitive, it is very perceptible. Even the people who are tormented very often feel that the impulse comes from outside—it arouses something inside them, but they feel that the excitation comes from outside. And there are hundreds of thousands of them, for

unfortunately it is one of the greatest difficulties of mankind, it is a terrible slavery." (CWM 4: 192)

8. After death, the entities of strong sexual desire settle in the atmosphere of sensitive persons to goad them

"There are also lots of little entities, quite repugnant, in very large numbers, which originate from that wretched sexual desire. If this desire (with its corresponding entities) is not dissolved at the time of death, these entities continue to exist and they come and settle in the atmosphere of sensitive persons to goad them, spur them on. These entities feed upon the vital force emanated at the time of the act and naturally their only desire is to get as much nourishment as they can. I have seen people enringed by dozens of these beings. It is a very concrete thing." (CWM 4: 192)

9. Sexual excess ruins your health

"You complain that you live in misery; and I tell you that you live in misery because you waste your money on drinking and smoking and because you waste your energy in sexual excess. All these—alcohol, tobacco and sexual excess—ruin your health." (CWM 13: 174)

10. Every sexual act is a step towards death

"For every sexual act is a step towards death." (CWM 12: 54)

11. The sex-energy is also meant for feeding the spiritual energies of the body

"The sex-energy itself is a great power with two components in its physical basis, one meant for procreation and the process necessary for it, the other for feeding the general energies of the body, mind and vital,—also of the spiritual energies of the body. The old yogis call these two components retas and ojas." (SABCL 24: 1517)

12. The difficulty lies in the enormous place given to sex in the lower Nature

"In an Asram or other religious institution men and women are not usually allowed to live together. Where they do, as among the Vaishnavas, these difficulties [of sex] invariably arise. The difficulty lies in the enormous place given to sex in the lower Nature. But there is no reason if one fixes oneself firmly in the spiritual consciousness why one should not speak and act between men and women without the least reference to sex." (CWSA 31: 538) (CWSA 35: 712)

"The strength of such impulses as those of sex lies usually in the fact that people take too much notice of them; they

protest too vehemently and endeavour to control them by coercion, hold them within and sit upon them. But the more you think of a thing and say, "I don't want it, I don't want it", the more you are bound to it. What you should do is to keep the thing away from you, to dissociate from it, take as little notice of it as possible and, even if you happen to think of it, remain indifferent and unconcerned." (CWM 3: 5)

"You are attaching too much importance to this sex affair. Do not think of it at all—be interested in *more interesting* activities, try to grow in knowledge and consciousness and kick away the sex thought and the sex impulse when it comes—then you can hope of becoming one of my soldiers." 1965 (CWM 12: 157)

13. Yoga in its process of purification will lay bare and throw up all hidden impulses and desires—you have to face them, conquer them, and remould them

"There is another danger; it is in connection with the sex impulses. Yoga in its process of purification will lay bare and throw up all hidden impulses and desires in you. And you must learn not to hide things nor leave them aside, you have to face them and conquer and remould them. The first effect of Yoga, however, is to take away the mental control, and the hungers that lie dormant are

suddenly set free, they rush up and invade the being. So long as this mental control has not been replaced by the Divine control, there is a period of transition when your sincerity and surrender will be put to the test." (CWM 3: 5)

14. One is unable to obey the dictates of the higher mind and obliged to act under the waves of impulsion

"The cause [of vital impulses] is almost always a weakness of the vital being itself, for, when there is this weakness it finds itself unable to obey the dictates of the higher mind and obliged to act instead under the waves of impulsion that come from certain forces in nature. These forces are really external to the person but find in this part of him a sort of mechanical readiness to satisfy and obey them." (CWSA 36: 304)

15. Impotence comes from over-indulgence or wrong indulgence

"The idea about impotence [*being caused by celibacy*] is rather irrational—impotence comes from overindulgence or wrong indulgence (certain perverse habits); it does not come from self-control." (SABCL 24: 1519) (CWSA 31: 542)

16. Sadhaks, when moved by the sexual force, under the pleas of affection, are subject to the usual

tricks by which women (and men too) cover their approach to vital and sexual interchange

"Write to X that this case of Y and Z is perfectly clear. The girl [Z] is moved by sexual desire and its impulse of vital interchange; not being satisfied in her married life, she seeks the satisfaction from others. All these pleas about affection etc. are the usual tricks with which women (and men too) cover their approach to the vital and sexual interchange. Sometimes they use the trick knowingly, sometimes they try to deceive themselves also with it—or in some cases they actually believe in it, the vital covering up the mind and deluding it. It does not matter which it is,—the actual fact behind the cover and the final outcome are the same. Even sadhaks when moved by the sexual force are deceived by their vital or try to deceive themselves, alleging spiritual affinities, psychic ties or anything else that can justify their lapse; if they yield they can go far out of the way." (CWSA 31: 537)

17. If one yields to sex, one is likely to lose one's sadhana

"For Y it is a test,—difficult for him because he is at an age when the sexual element is awake but there is not sufficient experience for a true understanding of its workings and not sufficient maturity of mind to make up for want of experience. If he yields to the girl's pressure,

he is likely to lose his sadhana, perhaps for a long time—if he is led too far it might even be a decisive fall. If he wants the spiritual life, he must be on his guard and draw back entirely from this movement." (CWSA 31: 537–538)

18. Withdrawal of the gift of grace when there is a breach of the main rules of spiritual life, such as an act of sexual intercourse

"The only circumstance under which Mother's attitude at Pranam is likely to be influenced by the actions of the sadhak is when there is some great betrayal or a violent breach of the main rules of spiritual life such as an act of sexual intercourse or when the sadhak has become pointedly hostile to the Mother and the Yoga. But then it is not a special show of displeasure at Pranam, but a withdrawal of the gift of grace which is quite a different matter." (CWSA 32: 546–547)

19. In neurasthenia tendency, what is needed is a quiet mind and a quiet will, patient and persistent, refusing to yield either to excitement or discouragement

"The difficulty is aggravated if the *seat* of the weakness is in the nervous system. There is then what is called by European science a neurasthenia tendency and under

certain circumstances it leads to nervous breakdowns and collapses. This happens when there is too great a strain on the nerves or when there is excessive indulgence of the sexual or other propensities and sometimes also when there is too acute and prolonged a struggle between the restraining mental will and these propensities. This is the illness from which you are suffering and if you consider these facts you will see the real reason why you broke down at Pondicherry. The nervous system in you was weak; it could not obey the will and resist the demand of the external, vital forces, and in the struggle there came an overstrain of the mind and the nerves and a collapse taking the form of an acute attack of neurasthenia. These difficulties do not mean that you cannot prevail and bring about a control of your nerves and vital being and build up a harmony of mind and character. Only you must understand the thing rightly, not indulging in false and morbid ideas about it and you must use the right means. What is needed is a quiet mind and a quiet will, patient, persistent, refusing to yield either to excitement or discouragement, but always insisting [tranquillity] on the change needed in the being. A quiet will of this kind cannot fail in the end. Its effect is inevitable." (CWSA 36: 304–305)

20. After the Higher Consciousness has descended into the inner being, this experience does not last or become frequent because of the sex-sensation

"When the higher consciousness touches it creates so long as it is there an essential purity in which all parts of the being can share. Or, even if the exterior being does not share actively in it, it may fall quiescent so that there is nothing to interfere with the whole inner being realising the truth of a certain experience. The state does not last because it is only a preparatory touch, not the full or permanent descent; but while it is there it is real. The sex-sensation is of course the thing in the external being, the perversion or false representation in nature, that is the chief obstacle to the experience becoming frequent and then normal. It usually happens that such an opposite tries to assert itself after an experience." (CWSA 30: 443)

"You are dealing in the right way with the sex feeling. As to why it rose when you were using the name there are two reasons. One is that when you use the name, it is the Mother's power that you call there and the first result often is that the difficulty rises like a snake whose head is touched to resist the pressure or—if you look at it from another point of view—it rises to be dealt with. The other is that when what is to be brought down is the Ananda—of the force, light etc., but especially of the love—then the

vital-physical passion rises up to try and mix with and get hold of the Ananda hoping to turn it to a sort of sublimated vital pleasure. It is well known that this happens to Vaishnavas very often when they do the Sankirtan. In your case it is probably the first reason, because the love-Ananda or any other is not yet coming, so that explanation is improbable.

As for the Force descending into the head, it has two sides to it—one is peace and when that is prominent, there is the sense of coolness; when there is a strong dynamic action instead, the feeling may be of heat, Agni-power. Most people feel these two things; they are not imagination." (CWSA 30: 462)

"He is to be congratulated on the victory in the matter of sex—it is very important to have that when the intense definitive experiences are beginning. For if once the actual penetrative descent is felt, the less the higher consciousness is met by the sex force the better, for then a dangerous mixture may take place or else a struggle which is better avoided." (CWSA 30: 484)

III—C. Why are sexual relations forbidden in the Integral Yoga?

1. Vital relations or interchanges with others prevents the true and full union with the Divine

"In this yoga, therefore, there can be no place for vital relations or interchanges with others; any such relation or interchange immediately ties down the soul to the lower conscious and its lower nature, prevents the true and full union with the Divine and hampers both the ascent to the supramental Truth-consciousness and the descent of the supramental Ishwari Shakti." (SABCL 24: 1507) (CWSA 31: 499)

"The Mother is pressing for the sex trouble to go out of the sadhaks—as it is a great obstacle. So it must go." 29 October 1934 (CWSA 32: 401)

2. The total ascent is impossible so long as sex-desire blocks the way—The descent is dangerous so long as sex-desire is powerful in the vital

"This yoga demands a full ascension of the whole lower or ordinary consciousness to join the spiritual above it and a full descent of the spiritual (eventually of the supramental) into the mind, life and body to transform it. The total

ascent is impossible so long as sex-desire blocks the way; the descent is dangerous so long as sex-desire is powerful in the vital. For at any moment an unexcised or latent sex-desire may be the cause of a mixture which throws back the true descent and uses the energy acquired for other purposes or turns all the action of the consciousness towards wrong experience, turbid and delusive. One must, therefore, clear this obstacle out of the way; otherwise there is either no safety or no free movement towards finality in the sadhana." (SABCL 24: 1511) (CWSA 31: 502–503)

3. An inrush of vital forces whose business is to prevent the descent of the supramental Light

"But the vital excitement that accompanies it makes the most favourable opportunity and vibration in the atmosphere for the inrush of those very vital forces and beings whose whole business is to prevent the descent of the supramental Light." (SABCL 24: 1508) (CWSA 31: 500)

"But no error can be more perilous than to accept the immixture of the sexual desire and some kind of subtle satisfaction of it and look on this as a part of the sadhana. It would be the most effective way to head straight towards spiritual downfall and throw into the atmosphere forces that would block the supramental descent, bringing

instead the descent of adverse vital powers to disseminate disturbance and disaster. This deviation must be absolutely thrown away, should it try to occur and expunged from the consciousness, if the Truth is to be brought down and the work is to be done. " (SABCL 24: 1507–1508) (CWSA 31: 500)

"Q: In Bases of Yoga, it is said about the sex-movements that they "throw into the atmosphere forces that would block the supramental descent, bringing instead the descent of adverse vital powers". Is it meant that any kind of sex-movement in the Ashram atmosphere would block the supramental descent? If it were so, the descent would hardly be possible because new sadhaks or temporary visitors may indulge in sex-movements and throw these forces in the atmosphere.

A: That is not what is said in that passage. What is spoken of is the taking of sex indulgence as a part of the aim and method of the sadhana. It is said that if that were done, the sadhana would bring down vital Forces of a type adverse to the supramental change which would serve to block (stand in the way of) the supramental descent." 1 August 1936 (CWSA 35: 136)

4. One must overcome sex, otherwise there can be no transformation of the lower vital and physical nature

"In this yoga the position is that one must overcome sex, otherwise there can be no transformation of the lower vital and physical nature. All physical sexual connection should cease, otherwise one exposes oneself to serious dangers. The sex-push must also be overcome but it is not a fact that there can be no sadhana or no experience before it is entirely overcome, only without that conquest one cannot go to the end and it must be clearly recognised as one of the more serious obstacles and indulgence of it as a cause of considerable disturbance." (SABCL 24: 1527–1528) (CWSA 31: 542)

5. When one's experiences extend to the life-plane and the physical, sex can become a disturbing, upsetting, and deforming force in sadhana

"I do not deny that so long as one allows a sort of separation between inner experience and outer consciousness, the latter being left as an inferior activity controlled but not transformed, it is quite possible to have spiritual experiences and make progress without any entire cessation of the sex-activity. The mind separates itself from the outer vital (life-parts) and the physical consciousness and lives its own inner life. But only a few can really do this with any completeness and the moment one's experiences extend to the life-plane and the physical, sex can no longer be treated in this way. It can become at any moment a

disturbing, upsetting and deforming force. I have observed that to an equal extent with ego (pride, vanity, ambition) and rajasic greeds and desires it is one of the main causes of the spiritual casualties that have taken place in sadhana. The attempt to treat it by detachment without complete excision breaks down; the attempt to sublimate it, favoured by many modern mystics in Europe, is most rash and perilous experiment." (SABCL 24: 1510) (CWSA 31: 502)

6. Even those who have sincerely given up the physical form of sex are liable to the vital form of the impulse, which allows a subtle infiltration of the forces that stand in the way of the sadhana

"It [*the pleasure of sex*] is the reason why the vital sex-difficulty is the hardest to get rid of—even those who have sincerely given up the more physical form are liable to the vital form of the impulse. But it is harmful because it allows a subtle infiltration of the forces that stand in the way of the sadhana. One must get rid of them if the vital is to become entirely pure and able to contain the divine love and Ananda." (SABCL 24: 1533) (CWSA 31: 516)

7. Adverse forces live on the energy wasted when the sexual act takes place

"Q: *Tonight again there is a severe attack of the hostile forces. My sleep has completely vanished. I pray to you with utmost sincerity to liberate me from the clutches of these furies. They attack my abdomen, thighs and knees. Pray give me the promised advice, so that I may be able to get rid of them completely for ever.*

A: These adverse forces are connected with sexual desire. They live on the energy wasted when the act takes place. And even a thought, a mental or vital desire is sufficient to let them come in and settle in the atmosphere. Thus it is in the mind itself that the purification must take place. My blessings." 12 September 1950 (CWM 15: 21–22)

8. The sexual act is followed by a period of unconsciousness that opens the door to all kinds of influences and causes a fall in consciousness

"One's entire physical activity should be organised to help the body to grow in balance and strength and beauty. For this purpose, one must abstain from all pleasure-seeking, including sexual pleasure. For every sexual act is a step towards death. That is why from the most ancient times, in the most sacred and secret schools, this act was prohibited to every aspirant towards immortality. The sexual act is always followed by a longer or shorter period of unconsciousness that opens the door to all kinds of

influences and causes a fall in consciousness. But if one wants to prepare oneself for the supramental life, one must never allow one's consciousness to slip into laxity and inconscience under the pretext of pleasure or even of rest and relaxation." (CWM 12: 54)

9. Sex, whether open or masquerading as deep romantic affection, ties the being down to the vital and prevents spiritual liberation

"The whole mistake is not to have a clear and unmistakable direction that sex (whether open or masquerading as deep romantic affection) and this Yoga cannot go together. This notion of making sex help the sadhana is one that has been taken hold of by many under one form or another and it has always proved an immense stumbling block to all who indulged it. It ties the being down to the vital and prevents the spiritual liberation which is essential as the basis of the transformation of the nature. Even the higher experiences begin to get coloured with the sexual tinge and falsified in their substance." (CWSA 31: 494–495)

10. Having a rasa of sex is an obstacle to spiritual perfection

"It is not a question of fear—it is a question of choosing between the Divine Peace and Ananda and the degraded

pleasure of sex, between the Divine and the attraction of women. Food has to be taken to support the body but sex-satisfaction is not a necessity. Even for the rasa of food it can only be harmonized with the spiritual condition if all greed of food and desire of the palate disappears. Intellectual or aesthetic delight can also be an obstacle to the spiritual perfection if there is attachment to it, although it is much nearer to the spiritual than a gross untransformed bodily appetite; in fact in order to become part of the spiritual consciousness the intellectual and aesthetic delight has also to change and become something higher. But all things that have a rasa cannot be kept. There is a rasa in hurting and killing others, the sadistic delight, there is a rasa in torturing oneself, the masochistic delight—modern psychology is full of these two. Merely having a rasa is not a sufficient reason for keeping things as part of the spiritual life." (CWSA 31: 496) (SABCL 24: 1514)

"Q: The correspondent wrote that the feeling of anger is not pleasant, whereas the taste of sugar and the sex-sensation are pleasant. Is it possible, he asked, to eliminate the liking for sugar or for sex?—Ed.

A: It is possible for anger to be felt as pleasant—there are many people who dislike sweet things—so also there are

many, especially women, who dislike the sex-sensation, even hate it.

For the taste, when it exists—some eliminate it by rejection and the calling down of peace and purity into the cells, others by substituting for the lower rasa the higher Ananda—some like the Vaishnavas try to sublimate it by the *madhura bhava* taking up the sexual rasa from the sex-centre into the heart and turning it there towards the Divine, but the last is a rather risky method." (CWSA 31: 496)

III—D. Marriage and spiritual life

1. Marriage would be an absolute contradiction of your spiritual life

"Again, you are entirely right in your resolution not to marry again; to do so would be in any case to invite serious and probably insuperable difficulties in your following the path of Yoga, and, as in this path of Yoga it is necessary to put away sexual desire, marriage would be not only meaningless but an absolute contradiction of your spiritual life. You can expect full support and protection from us in your resolve and, if you keep a sincere will and resolution in this matter, you may be sure that the Divine Grace will not fail you." (SABCL 24: 1529) (CWSA 31: 545)

"As to the question of marriage in general, we do not consider it advisable for one who desires to come to the spiritual life. Marriage means usually any amount of trouble, heavy burdens, a bondage to the worldly life and great difficulties in the way of single-minded spiritual endeavour. Its only natural purpose would be, if the sexual trend was impossible to conquer, to give it a restricted and controlled satisfaction." (SABCL 24: 1528) (CWSA 31: 544)

"There is only one answer to X's question—marriage and Yoga are two different movements going opposite ways; if

he follows one, he will be moving away from the other. So if he marries, either of two things will happen—he will sink into the ordinary life and go far away from us in spirit or he will find married life unsatisfactory, renounce his wife and return to the path that leads towards the Divine. Marriage with the first result would be only a stupidity; marriage for the second result would be an irrational inconsequence. So in either way—" (CWSA 35: 727)

2. Marriage would be the right thing only if the sexual push was so strong that there was no hope of overcoming it except by controlled and rational indulgence

"Marriage would be the right thing only if the sexual push was so strong that there was no hope of overcoming it except by a controlled and rational indulgence for sometime during which it could be slowly brought under subjection to the will. But you say its hold on you is diminishing, so that does not seem indispensable." (SABCL 24: 1528–1529) (CWSA 31: 544)

"It is not helpful to abandon the ordinary life before the being is ready for the full spiritual life. To do so means to precipitate a struggle between the different elements and exasperate it to a point of intensity which the nature is not ready to bear. The vital elements in you have partly to be

met by the discipline and experience of life, while keeping the spiritual aim in view and trying to govern life by it progressively in the spirit of Karmayoga.

It is for this reason that we gave our approval to your marriage." (CWSA 31: 543)

"Q: *Y, a lady teacher, is presently here on a visit. She decided some years ago to turn to spiritual life and has been trying her best to do so. But she finds the pull of sex too strong and does not know how to proceed. She prays for Mother's guidance on whether it is advisable for her to marry or to persist in sadhana, whatever the difficulty. Her photo is enclosed.*

A: Let her marry now and take to spiritual life later on; she is not yet ready.

When the call really comes, there is no possible hesitation. Blessings." October 1962 (CWM 17: 391–392)

3. Talk about a complementary soul is a camouflage with which the mind tries to cover the wants of the lower vital nature

"The first was about a complementary soul and marriage. The answer is easy to give; the way of the spiritual life lies for you in one direction and marriage lies in quite another and opposite. All talk about a complementary soul is a

camouflage with which the mind tries to cover the sentimental, sensational and physical wants of the lower vital nature. It is that vital nature in you which puts the question and would like an answer reconciling its desires and demands with the call of the true soul in you. But it must not expect a sanction for any such incongruous reconciliation from here. The way of the supramental Yoga is clear; it lies not through any concession to these things,—not, in your case, through the satisfaction, under a spiritual cover if possible, of its craving for the comforts and gratifications of a domestic and conjugal life and the enjoyment of the ordinary emotional desires and physical passions, but through the purification and transformation of the forces which these movements pervert and misuse. Not these human and animal demands, but the divine Ananda which is above and beyond them and which the indulgence of these degraded forms would prevent from descending, is the great thing that the aspiration of the vital being must demand in the sadhaka." (CWSA 35: 724)

"No member of the Asram can while he is a member contract a marriage whether it is spiritual or sexual or bring in a woman to be his life-companion or establish such a relation with anyone outside. This is no part of the Asram life. He can do it outside by leaving the Asram, for then he is no longer a member and can order his life as he pleases; he is then responsible to himself alone for his action and

its spiritual or other consequences concern only himself and that other person." (CWSA 35: 726)

4. There will always be plenty of people who will continue the race

"It is only a minority that is called to the strict yogic life and there will be always plenty of people who will continue the race. Certainly, the yogi has no contempt or aversion for human nature; he understands it and the place given to each of its activities with a clear and calm regard." (SABCL 24: 1513) (CWSA 31: 486)

"In its human action on the mental and vital level sex is not altogether an undivine principle; it has its nobler aspects and idealities and it has to be seen in what way and to what extent these can be admitted into the new and larger life. All gross animal indulgence of sex desire and impulse would have to be eliminated; it could only continue among those who are not ready for the higher life or not yet ready for a complete spiritual living." (SABCL 16: 27–28) (CWSA 13: 543–544)

"If there is to be no sex in the Divine Life, how is the human race to continue?

Why concern yourself with the continuity of the race? There will be plenty of people to continue it. If the

supermind has to intervene in the continuity, it will surely do it in its own way, but what that way will be will be found out if and when there is a necessity." (CWSA 35: 717)

"There is one problem raised by sex for those who would reject in *toto* the obligations imposed by the animality of the body and put forward by it as an insistent opposition in the way of the aspirant to a higher life: it is the necessity of the prolongation of the race for which the sex activity is the only means already provided by Nature for living beings and inevitably imposed upon the race. It is not indeed necessary for the individual seeker after a divine life to take up this problem or even for a group who do not seek after it for themselves alone but desire a wide acceptance of it by mankind as at least an ideal.

There will always be the multitude who do not concern themselves with it or are not ready for its complete practice and to these can be left the care for the prolongation of the race." (SABCL 16: 31) (CWSA 13: 547)

"The number of those who lead the divine life can be maintained and increased, as the ideal extends itself, by the voluntary adhesion of those who are touched by the aspiration and there need be no resort to physical means for this purpose, no deviation from the rule of a strict sexual abstinence. But yet there may be circumstances in which, from another standpoint, a voluntary creation of

bodies for souls that seek to enter the earth-life to help in the creation and extension of the divine life upon earth might be found to be desirable. Then the necessity of a physical procreation for this purpose could only be avoided if new means of a supraphysical kind were evolved and made available. A development of this kind must necessarily belong to what is now considered as the sphere of the occult and the use of concealed powers of action or creation not known or possessed by the common mind of the race." (SABCL 16: 31) (CWSA 13: 547–548)

III—E. Sex and love

1. What is love?

"Love is not sexual intercourse.
Love is not vital attraction and interchange.
Love is not the heart's hunger for affection.
Love is a mighty vibration coming straight from the One, and only the very pure and very strong are capable of receiving and manifesting it.

To be pure is to be open only to the Supreme's influence and to no other." (CWM 14: 125)

"There is only one love, the Divine Love, eternal, universal, equal for everyone and everything.

It is man (the human being) who calls all kinds of feelings "love": all the desires, attractions, vital exchanges, sexual relations, attachments, even friendships, and many other things besides.

But all that is not even the shadow of love nor even its deformation. These are all mental and vital, sentimental or sexual activities, and nothing more.

Blessings." 6 September 1969 (CWM 16: 411)

"As for love, the love must be turned singly towards the Divine. What men call by that name is a vital interchange for mutual satisfaction of desire, vital impulse or physical

pleasure. There must be nothing of this interchange between sadhaks; for to seek for it or indulge this kind of impulse only leads away from the sadhana.” (SABCL 24: 1402) (CWSA 31: 264)

“The Ashram is not a place for being in love with anyone. If you want to lapse into such a stupidity, you may do so elsewhere, not here." (CWM 13: 118)

“I do not like that the word love should be polluted to speak of sexual desire, the human inheritance of the animal." (CWM 14: 125)

“You are making a great confusion between maternal sentiment which is, in the physical, an expression of the force of the universal Mother, and the physical act of procreation which is something wholly animal, most often even bestial, and which is only a means that Nature has found to perpetuate the different species.” 6 October 1952" (CWM 14: 125)

2. Why does man associate love with sex?

“Nature in the material world started with the physical sex-pull for her purpose of procreation and brought in the love

on the basis of the sex-pull, so the one has a tendency to wake the other." (CWSA 31: 490)

3. Love and sex-desire are near each other, twined together in the animal beginnings of the race, and so are not easy to keep altogether separate

"It is not that it is not possible to keep the love pure, but the two things [*love and sex-desire*] are so near each other and have been so much twined together in the animal beginnings of the race that it is not easy to keep them altogether separate. In the pure psychic love there is no trace of the sex-desire, but usually the vital affection gets very strongly associated with the psychic which is then mixed though still not sexual; but the vital affection and the vital physical sex-emotion are entirely close to each other, so that at any moment or in any given case one may awake the other. This becomes very strong when the sex-force is strong in an individual as it is in most vitally energetic people." (CWSA 31: 490)

4. Turning the love towards the Divine is the true remedy in Yoga

"Sexual activities bind man to the animal and they will be completely transformed in the future. Those who want to work for the future and prepare themselves to live it, would

do well not to be hypnotised by this subject which animalises the consciousness. Above all, do not associate it with love in your thought, for they really have nothing to do with each other." 23 November 1971 (CWM 13: 240–241)

"Human passions changed into love for the Divine: may they become a real fact, and their abundance will save the world." (CWM 14: 128)

"In the pure psychic love there is no trace of the sex-desire … To increase always the force of the psychic, to control the sex impulse and turn it into the ojas, to turn the love towards the Divine are the true remedies for this difficulty. Seminal force not sexually spent can always be turned into ojas." (CWSA 31: 490)

"What is real love? Get clear of all the sentimental sexual turmoil and go back to the soul,—then there is real love. It is then also you would be able to receive the overwhelming love without getting the lower being into an excitement which might be disastrous." (CWSA 31: 491)

"So long as the whole consciousness is not clear of doubtful stuff and the realisation of oneness confirmed in the supreme purity, the expression of the all-love is not advisable. It is by holding it in oneself that it becomes a

real part of the nature, established and purified by joining with it the other realisations still to come. At present it is only a first touch and to dissipate it by expression would be very imprudent. The sex and vital might easily become active—I have known cases of very good yogis...in whom the *visvaprema* became the *visvakama*, all-love becoming all-lust. This has happened with many both in Europe and the East. Even apart from that it is always best to solidify or confirm rather than to throw out and disperse. When the sadhana has progressed and the knowledge from above comes to enlighten and guide the love, then it will be another matter. My insistence on rejection of all untransformed vital movements is based on experience, mine and others' and that of past yogas like the Vaishnava movement of Chaitanya (not to speak of the old Buddhist Sahaja dharma) which ended in much corruption. A wide movement such as that of all-love can only take place when the ground of Nature has been solidly prepared for it. I have no objection to your mixing with others, but only under a continual guard and control by a vigilant mind and will." (SABCL 23: 767–768) (CWSA 31: 305–306)

5. Human love would undergo an elevation and widen into universal love

"In all who aspired to it but could not yet take it up in its fullness sex will have to be refined, submit to the spiritual

or psychic impulse and a control by the higher mind and the higher vital and shed all its lighter, frivolous or degraded forms and feel the touch of the purity of the ideal. Love would remain, all forms of the pure truth of love in higher and higher steps till it realised its highest nature, widened into universal love, merged into the love of the Divine. The love of man and woman would also undergo that elevation and consummation; for all that can feel a touch of the ideal and the spiritual must follow the way of ascent till it reaches the divine Reality. The body and its activities must be accepted as part of the divine life and pass under this law; but, as in the other evolutionary transitions, what cannot accept the law of the divine life cannot be accepted and must fall away from the ascending nature." (SABCL 16: 27–28) (CWSA 13: 544)

"You have spoken of Divine Love; but Divine Love, when it touches the physical, does not awaken the gross lower vital propensities; indulgence of them would only repel it and make withdraw again to the heights from which it is already difficult enough to draw it down into the coarseness of the material creation which it alone can transform. Seek the Divine Love through the only gate through which it will consent to enter, the gate of the psychic being, and cast away the lower vital error." (SABCL 24: 1508) (CWSA 31: 500)

6. It is the incapacity of finding the true words and the correct language that makes the love between Radha and Krishna look like sexual cravings

"Q: *Some of the best poets of Sanskrit and other Indian languages have sung of Radha and Krishna in such a way that it seems they speak of carnal desire and sexual cravings. There is something that says that it is not mere sex mania. Perhaps they could not get any other language to depict the contact with the Divine on the vital and physical planes and the total surrender of the emotions and the body. This question comes up often.*

A: I always considered it as an incapacity of finding the true words and the correct language." 17 July 1964 (CWM 17: 239)

III—F. Divine Ananda and sex-impulse

1. The sex-impulse is a degradation of Ananda

"It is true that the sex-centre and its reactions can be transformed and that an Ananda from above can come down to replace the animal sex-reaction. The sex-impulse is a degradation of this Ananda. But to receive this Ananda before the physical (including the physical vital) consciousness is transformed, can be dangerous; for other and lower things can take advantage and mix in it and that would disturb the whole being and might lead into a wrong road by the impression that these lower things are part of the sadhana and: sanctioned from above or simply by the lower elements overpowering the true experience. In the last case the Ananda would cease and the sex-centre be possessed by the lower reactions." (SABCL 24: 1509–1510) (CWSA 31: 488–489)

"Sex is a degradation or distortion of the Ananda Force." (CWSA 31: 488)

"... all intense pleasure goes back at its root to Ananda—the pleasure of poetry, music, production of all kinds, battle, victory, adventure too ... We can say that there is a physical Ananda born of Brahmananda which is far higher, finer and more intense than the sexual, but of which the

sexual is a coarse and excited degradation—that is all." (CWSA 31: 489–490)

2. There is no 'delight' in the sex-affair

"There is no 'delight' in the sex-affair, it is necessarily and can only be a passing excitement and pleasure which finally wears itself out with the wearing out of the body." (SABCL 24: 1514) (CWSA 31: 488)

3. The Ananda descending cannot be held if there is too much sexual impurity

"The Ananda descending cannot be held if there is too much sexual impurity creating an intoxicant or degrading mixture; … Or some undivine Force may try to seize hold, not of the Power itself, for that withdraws, but of the result of force it leaves behind in the instrument and use it for the purposes of the Adversary." (CWSA 22: 948–949)

4. If one does not conquer the sex-impulse, there can be no settling of the divine Ananda in the body

"The sadhak has to turn away entirely from the invasion of the vital and the physical by the sex-impulse—for, if he does not conquer the sex-impulse, there can be no settling

in the body of the divine consciousness and the divine Ananda." (CWSA 31: 489)

5. The Ananda of the Divine cannot be turned into a vital pleasure

"The *hlādikā śakti* is the Shakti of the Divine Ananda and Love taking possession of the whole being down to the vital and physical. But it is the Ananda and love of the Divine—the spiritual, it cannot be turned to a human love and vital pleasure." (CWSA 31: 485)

6. Sex pleasure is not the true Divine Ananda in the physical

"The pleasure attached to it is a degradation and not a true form of the divine Ananda. The true divine Ananda in the physical has a different quality and movement and substance; self-existent in its essence, its manifestation is dependent only on an inner union with the Divine." (SABCL 24: 1508) (CWSA 31: 500)

7. One must refuse pleasure if one wants to open to the delight of existence

"One must refuse pleasure if one wants to open to the delight of existence, in a total beauty and harmony." (CWM 12: 55)

8. One can change the sex-centre into a pure Divine Ananda by the infusion of light into the centre

"*How does one change the sex-centre and its energy into a mass and a movement of the inner Light, into a creative power, into a pure divine Ananda?*

By the gradual infusion of light into the centre." 15 January 1935 (CWM 17: 76)

III—G. To women about their body

To Women about Their Body
(*Answers to Some Questions*)

> For God's sake can't you forget that you are a girl or a boy and try to become a human being?
>
> Each idea (or system of ideas) is true in its own time and place. But if it tries to be exclusive or to persist even when its time is over, then it ceases to be true.
>
> The Mother

…

Before answering your questions I wish to tell you something which you know no doubt, but which you must never forget if you wish to learn how to lead a wise life.

It is true that we are, in our inner being, a spirit, a living soul that holds within it the Divine and aspires to become it, to manifest it perfectly; it is equally true, for the moment at least, that in our most material external being, in our body, we are still an animal, a mammalian, of a higher order no doubt, but made like animals and subject to the laws of animal Nature.

You have been taught surely that one peculiarity of the mammal is that the female conceives the child, carries it and builds it up within herself until the moment when the

young one, fully formed, comes out of the body of its mother and lives independently.

In view of this function Nature has provided the woman with an additional quantity of blood which has to be used for the child in the making. But as the use of this additional blood is not a constant need, when there is no child in the making, the surplus blood has to be thrown out to avoid excess and congestion. This is the cause of the monthly periods. It is a simple natural phenomenon, result of the way in which woman has been made and there is no need to attach to it more importance than to the other functions of the body.

It is not a disease and cannot be the cause of any weakness or real discomfort. Therefore a normal woman, one who is not ridiculously sensitive, should merely take the necessary precautions of cleanliness, never think of it any more and lead her daily life as usual without any change in her programme. This is the best way to be in good health.

Besides, even while recognising that in our body we still belong dreadfully to animality, we must not therefore conclude that this animal part, as it is the most concrete and the most real for us, is one to which we are obliged to be subjected and which we must allow to rule over us. Unfortunately this is what happens most often in life and men are certainly much more slaves than masters of their

physical being. Yet it is the contrary that should be, for the truth of individual life is quite another thing.

We have in us an intelligent will more or less enlightened which is the first instrument of our psychic being. It is this intelligent will that we must use in order to learn to live not like an animal man, but as a human being, candidate for Divinity.

And the first step towards this realisation is to become master of this body instead of remaining an impotent slave.

One most effective help towards this goal is physical culture.

For about a century there has been a renewal of a knowledge greatly favoured in ancient times, partially forgotten since then. Now it is reawakening, and with the progress of modern science, it is acquiring quite a new amplitude and importance. This knowledge deals with the physical body and the extraordinary mastery that can be obtained over it with the help of enlightened and systematised physical education.

This renewal has been the result of the action of a new power and light that have spread upon the earth in order to prepare it for the great transformations that must take place in the near future.

We must not hesitate to give a primary importance to this physical education whose very purpose is to make

our body capable of receiving and expressing the new force which seeks to manifest upon earth.

This said, I now answer the questions you put to me.

1. *What attitude should a girl take towards her monthly periods?*

The attitude you take towards something quite natural and unavoidable. Give it as little importance as possible and go on with your usual life, without changing anything because of it.

2. *Should a girl participate in her normal programme of Physical Education during her periods?*

Certainly if she is accustomed to physical exercise, she must not stop because of that. If one keeps the habit of leading one's normal life always, very soon one does not even notice the presence of the menses.

3. *Why are some girls completely run down during their periods and suffer from pain in the lower back and abdomen while others may have slight or no inconvenience at all?*

It is a question of temperament and mostly of education. If from her childhood a girl has been accustomed to pay

much attention to the slightest uneasiness and to make a big fuss about the smallest inconvenience, then she loses all capacity of endurance and anything becomes the occasion for being pulled down. Especially if the parents themselves get too easily anxious about the reactions of their children. It is wiser to teach a child to be a bit sturdy and enduring than to show much care for these small inconveniences and accidents that cannot always be avoided in life. An attitude of quiet forbearance is the best one can adopt for oneself and teach to the children.

It is a well-known fact that if you expect some pain you are bound to have it and, once it has come, if you concentrate upon it, then it increases more and more until it becomes what is usually termed as "unbearable", although with some will and courage there is hardly any pain that one cannot bear.

4. How can a girl overcome her suffering and pain during periods?

There are some exercises that make the abdomen strong and improve the circulation. These exercises must be done regularly and continued even after the pains have disappeared. For the grown-up girls, this kind of pain comes almost entirely from sexual desires. If we get rid of the desires we get rid of the pain. There are two ways of getting rid of desires; the first one, the usual one, is

through satisfaction (or rather what is called so, because there is no such thing as satisfaction in the domain of desire). That means leading the ordinary human-animal life, marriage, children and all the rest of it.

There is, of course, another way, a better way,—control, mastery, transformation; this is more dignified and also more effective.

5. *Do you think there should be different types of exercises for boys and girls? Will a girl bring harm on her genital organs by practising the so-called manly sports?*

In all cases, as well for boys as for girls, the exercises must be graded according to the strength and the capacity of each one. If a weak student tries at once to do hard and heavy exercises, he may suffer for his foolishness. But with a wise and progressive training, girls as well as boys can participate in all kinds of sports, and thus increase their strength and health.

To become strong and healthy can never bring harm to a body, even if it is a woman's body!

6. *Will a girl's appearance change and become muscular like a muscular man's and make her look ugly if she practises vigorous exercises?*

Weakness and fragility may look attractive in the view of a perverted mind, but it is not the truth of Nature nor the truth of the Spirit.

If you have ever looked at the photos of the women gymnasts you will know what perfectly beautiful bodies they have; and nobody can deny that they are muscular!

7. Will the practice of vigorous types of exercises bring difficulties in child-birth if the girls want to marry and have children afterwards?

I never came across such a case. On the contrary, women who are trained to strong exercises and have a muscular body go through the ordeal of child-formation and child-birth much more easily and painlessly.

I heard the authentic story of one of these African women who are accustomed to walk for miles carrying heavy loads. She was pregnant and the time of delivery came during one of the day's marches. She sat on the side of the track, under a tree, gave birth to the child, waited for half an hour, then she rose and adding the new-born babe to the former luggage, went on her way quietly, as if nothing had happened. This is a splendid example of what a woman can do when she is in full possession of her health and strength.

Doctors will say that such a thing cannot occur in a civilized world with all the so-called progress that humanity

has achieved; but we cannot deny that, from the physical point of view, this is a more happy condition than all the sensitiveness, the sufferings and the complications created by the modern civilisations.

Moreover, usually doctors are more interested in the abnormal cases, and they judge mostly from that point of view. But for us, it is different; it is from the normal that we can rise to the supernormal, not from the abnormal which is always a sign of perversion and inferiority.

8. *What should be the ideal of physical education for a girl from the point of view of her sex?*

I do not see why there should be any special ideal of physical education for girls other than for boys.

Physical education has for its aim to develop all the possibilities of a human body, possibilities of harmony, strength, plasticity, cleverness, agility, endurance, and to increase the control over the functioning of the limbs and the organs, to make of the body a perfect instrument at the disposal of a conscious will. This programme is excellent for all human beings equally, and there is no point in wanting to adopt another one for girls.

9. *What roles should man and woman play in our new way of life? What shall be the relation between them?*

Why make at all a distinction between them? They are all equally human beings, trying to become fit instruments for the Divine Work, above sex, caste, creed and nationality, all children of the same Infinite Mother and aspirants to the one Eternal Godhead.

10. What should be the ideal of a woman's physical beauty?

A perfect harmony in the proportions, suppleness and strength, grace and force, plasticity and endurance, and above all, an excellent health, unvarying and unchanging, which is the result of a pure soul, a happy trust in life and an unshakable faith in the Divine Grace.

One word to finish:

I have told you these things, because you needed to hear them, but do not make of them absolute dogmas, for that would take away their truth.

Published in September 1960 (CWM 12: 290–297)

III—H. Friendship in the Ashram

1. The friendship which is of the nature of comradeship, mental affinity, or a psychic character need not be a vital relation

Q: "'In this Yoga . . . there can be no place for vital relations or interchanges with others. . . . Still worse would it be if this interchange took the form of a sexual relation . . .' The first of these sentences seems to refer to relations between men and men or women and women. But didn't you once say that ordinary interchanges between people are almost unavoidable? Moreover, almost everyone here [in the Ashram] has friends. Do friendships fall in the category of 'vital relations'?

A: I suppose I must have been referring to the interchanges which are the result of vital relations. The involuntary vital or other involuntary interchange which takes place by the mere fact of meeting, talking or being together are those which are practically unavoidable. That is to say, they are avoidable only when one has become entirely conscious and is able to put a wall of Force around oneself which nothing can penetrate except the things which one wills to accept. But the reference in the passage cannot be to these, but to the interchange due to vital attachments, passions, vital love or hate etc. Friendships

can be vital relations if there is strong attachment or desire but the friendship which is the nature of comradeship or mental affinity or of a psychic character need not be a vital relation." 4 January 1937 (CWSA 35: 135–136)

2. A friendly relation that is permissible is between followers of the same path of Yoga and children of the Mother

"Q: Someone else also said that a special, though not sexual, relation can exist between sadhaka and sadhika.

A: The only relation permissible here is the same as between a sadhak and sadhak or between a sadhika and sadhika—a friendly relation as between followers of the same path of Yoga and children of the Mother." 5 September 1936 (CWSA 35: 723)

3. Husband and wife here are only sadhaks offering to the Mother alone—the obedience of the disciple to the Master

"As special cases they are allowed to live in the same house for certain outward conveniences, but it is clearly understood that the old dependence of husband and wife on each other has to cease; they have to accustom themselves to be only sadhaks having no inner

dependence on each other, but separately depending on the Mother alone, receiving spiritual help from her alone, offering to her alone the obedience of the disciple to the Master." (CWSA 35: 726)

"Q: Can we not justify Buddha, Ramakrishna and others who advocated isolation from women? After all, is it not essentially the same principle here, because if vital relations are debarred, nothing remains except a simple exchange of words?

A: What about the true (not the pretended) psychic and spiritual—forgetting sex? The relation has to be limited as it is because sex immediately trots into the front. You are invited to live above the vital and deeper than the vital—then only you can use the vital aright. Buddha was for Nirvana and what is the use of having relations with anybody if you are bound for Nirvana? Ramakrishna insisted on isolation during the period when a man is spiritually raw—he did not object to it when he became ripe and no longer a slave of sex." 26 January 1935 (CWSA 35: 712–713)

"Do not receive X *in your own room*. That may disturb the atmosphere of the Asram. What was meant when we said you need not avoid her or cut all relations was that if you meet in the ordinary way in the Asram, you need not avoid

speaking to her if occasion demands it or if she speaks to you avoid replying etc. Any relations kept should be natural, but not *intimate*." (CWSA 35: 713)

III—I. Any sadhaka indulging in sex is going against the law of Ashram life

"In view of your last letter and of the disturbances in you which you hint there, we consider and you must yourself realise that it is better for you to return to your family life and not to stay here too long. The conquest of sexual desire can only be done if one is truly ready and has the spiritual call and is prepared, however difficult it may be, to give up for it everything else. There is no place for the sexual impulse and its desires in spiritual life and any sadhaka indulging it, either physically or vitally, is going against the law of the Asram life and injuring gravely his or her sadhana. The sexual desire must be either satisfied in the ordinary family life or it must be thrown aside. But you are not now able to conquer it. To remain here with the unsatisfied desire will only confuse your mind, bring wrong ideas, create a struggle in you and injure the basis of such sadhana as you can do. Make up your mind therefore to return to your family and do what you can there. It is always better to do what you can than to attempt prematurely something for which you are not ready." 16 April 1932 (CWSA 35: 713)

"Your daughter has now been here for a fairly long time and we think it due to you to let you know what we consider best for her. It appears from our observation of

her that she is not at all ready for Asram life or for intensive sadhana; she has too much of the ordinary movements and the instinct of sexual desire is too strong in her and unsatisfied and this indicates the need of the social and family life, not a life of Yoga. The family life accompanied with whatever religious worship or practice of bhakti she can manage is her proper field at present. For one with these unsatisfied instincts to live in the Asram would on one side be bad for her,—it would raise up a vital struggle and a confusion of ideas adverse to spiritual progress—for she has not yet the necessary inner force or intensity of the spiritual call that would help her to overcome. On the other side it would be likely to create movements that would be disturbing to the Asram atmosphere.

It is better for her therefore to return home and do what she can there. I trust our decision will not in any way disturb or disappoint you; for it was not, I think, your intention in bringing her here that she should remain for a long time. It is in her own interest that she should not be pushed towards an effort that is premature." 16 April 1932 (CWSA 35: 714)

"Your diagnosis of the origin of the trouble in X agrees with what we have seen of it. But here a question arises. You say that one thing that has contributed is a suppressed sexuality which could not find satisfaction. Now it is obviously impossible for him to have that in the Asram—

for the rule of life is against it and it is impossible to give any even limited expression to it without at once hurting the sadhana while at the same time it does not satisfy because of the restriction and wrong conditions of mind which attend it. It is only by going outside that it can be done. In X there is the constant push to go away and this along with a vital restlessness is likely to be the cause. The question then is whether it is necessary for the cure of his neurasthenia that he should satisfy it and therefore leave the Asram so that he may be free to follow his vital impulse?" (CWSA 35: 720)

"Q: Is it true that there is the spiritual relation of husband and wife between sadhaka and sadhika?

A: Are you all becoming cracked in the head? How is it that after all this time such a question can be put? Have you not read my letters and messages on the subject of sex? You have not gone through the Bases of Yoga where the subject of sex is treated through many pages and it is clearly insisted on that all sex impulse and sex relation must go. If any sadhak and sadhika want to establish this relation, they should immediately pack up their things and go—for it is forbidden here." (CWSA 35: 721–722)

"Q: If there exists between a man and a woman the high spiritual relation of husband and wife, purusha and shakti,

and the woman demands consummation, is the man bound to satisfy her?

A: You have not read the rule that conjugal relations are forbidden here? You do not know that X and Y and Z and A had to leave because they followed this way? Under no pretence or cloak whatever is sex to be indulged by anyone practising this sadhana." (CWSA 35: 722)

"There is with regard to sex no change whatever. Babies may be allowed in the Asram but the manufacture of babies there is an industry which has no sanction. Married people (that is not new) or families may be living here, but on the old condition of the complete cessation of marital activities. The ban on sex here stands, unchanged by an iota." 2 January 1945 (CWSA 35: 722)

"Q: You say physical sex action must be avoided by all means. Why so strict on it while tolerating vital-physical lapses?

A: Because the physical action breaks a law without which the Asram cannot stand and the work cannot be done. It is not a personal matter, but a blow aimed at the very soul of the Mother's work.

Outside sadhaks indulge and get a child, e.g. X and others. Mother disapproves and the man who does it has

no longer the same grace as before, but he is not in the Asram and his lapse hurts only himself and his wife.” 2 August 1937 (CWSA 32: 402)

“One has only to think what would have been the result if there had been no rules and no discipline prohibiting sex-indulgence; even with them things have not been so very good. On that principle the work also would have gone to pot, there would have been nothing but strife, assertion by each worker of his own idea and self-will and constant clashes; even as it is, that has abounded and it is only the Mother’s authority, the frame of work she has given and her skill in getting incompatibles to act together that has kept things going." (CWSA 32: 579)

“As girls and boys are educated together here we have always insisted on the relations between them to be those of simple comradeship without any mixture of sex feeling and sensuality; and to avoid all temptation they are forbidden to go in one another’s room and to meet anywhere privately. This has been made clear to everybody. And if these rules are strictly followed, nothing unpleasant can happen.” 16 August 1960 (CWM 12: 156–157)

IV– Complete Mastery over the Sex-Force in Sadhana

IV—A. The necessity of the sadhana—complete mastery over the sex-force

"At any rate in this yoga which seeks not only the essential experience of the Divine but a transformation of the whole being and nature, I have found it an absolute necessity of the sadhana to aim at a complete mastery over the sex-force; otherwise the vital consciousness remains a turbid mixture, the turbidity affecting the purity of the spiritualised mind and seriously hindering the upward turn of the forces of the body." (SABCL 24: 1511) (CWSA 31: 502)

"Still worse would it be if this interchange took the form of a sexual relation or a sexual enjoyment, even if kept free from any outward act; therefore these things are absolutely forbidden in the sadhana. It goes without saying that any physical act of the kind is not allowed; but also any subtler form is ruled out. It is only after becoming one with the supramental Divine that we can find our true spiritual relations with others in the Divine; in that higher unity this kind of gross lower vital movement can have no place." (SABCL 24: 1507) (CWSA 31: 499–500)

"Sexual relations belong to the past, when man was closer to the animal than to the Divine. All depends on what you expect from life, but if you sincerely want to do the Yoga, you must abstain from all sexual activities." 23 March 1968 (CWM 14: 125)

"This movement [*of vital interchange*] is a wrong and a dangerous one. It is not so much repeating the old game under the garb of Yoga, but, what is worse, turning the Yoga-power itself into the instrument of satisfaction of a vital force. There must be absolute abstention from all vital interchange with others.

The warning has often been given that no special or personal relation, even under the colour of a psychic connection or otherwise, must be formed with the women sadhakas. The whole principle of this Yoga is to give oneself entirely to the Divine alone and to nobody and to nothing else, and to bring down into ourselves by union with the Divine Mother Power all the transcendent light, force, wideness, peace, purity, truth-consciousness and Ananda of the supramental Divine." (CWSA 31: 499)

"What has this yoga got to do with sex and sex-contact? I have told you repeatedly that sex has to be got rid of and overcome before there can be siddhi in this yoga." (SABCL 24: 1513) (CWSA 31: 494)

"I have stated very briefly in my previous letter my position with regard to the sex-impulse and yoga. I may add here that my conclusion is not founded on any mental opinion or preconceived moral idea, but on probative facts and on observation and experience." (SABCL 24: 1510) (CWSA 31: 502)

"Any suggestion about Tantric practices must certainly be a trick of the vital. The sex-impulsions can be got rid of without them. They persist only because something still wants to reserve a place for them. So the best answer to the question about the sadhana (What is the place of sex in our sadhana?) is 'No place'. One must give up the sex-satisfaction and be satisfied with the Divine Love and Ananda." (CWSA 31: 494) (CWSA 35: 722–723)

"In this way of Yoga an absolute mastery of the sex-movements and an entire abstention from the physical (animal) indulgence are first conditions, because this way aims not only at a mental and vital but a physical transformation. A psychic purity is demanded in all the consciousness and there is needed a transformation of all the vital and physical energies which in the absence of these conditions is impossible." (CWSA 31: 495)

"Sexual relations are forbidden in the Ashram.

So, honesty demands a choice between the Ashram and sexual relations. It is a matter of conscience." 12 June 1971 (CWM 13: 118)

"About sex and Yoga—my teaching has been clearly written in the *Bases of Yoga* and everyone knows how strongly the Mother has discountenanced these things and considers purity from them a first requisite for success in the path of sadhana." (CWSA 35: 721)

"To those who want to practise the integral Yoga, it is strongly advised to abstain from three things:

1) Sexual intercourse
2) Smoking
3) Drinking alcohol." 12 June 1965 (CWM 14: 35)

"The things that have to be established are—*brahmacaryaṁ śamaḥ satyaṁ praśāntir ātmasaṁyamaḥ*: *brahmacaryam*, a complete sex-purity; *śamaḥ*, quiet and harmony in the being, its forces maintained but controlled, harmonised, disciplined; *satyam*, truth and sincerity in the whole nature; *praśāntiḥ*, a general state of peace and calm; *ātmasaṁyamaḥ*, the power and habit to control whatever needs control in the movements of the nature. When these are fairly established one has laid a foundation on which one can develop the Yogic consciousness and

with the Yogic consciousness there comes an easy opening to realisation and experience." (CWSA 30: 32)

"Of course, renunciation of sex is indispensable for the purification you seek ..." (CWSA 30: 43)

"I do not know what you mean by harm, but the harm of sex to a sadhak is that it stands as a strong barrier to the realisation and spiritual progress and in that way it harms not only oneself but the person on whom one imposes the sex-touch." (CWSA 31: 495–496)

"It is surprising you should not see that these things [*kisses and caresses*] belong to the vital sex-movement, even if there is no physical sex-act. If one wants to live in the unreformed vital plane, one can indulge them—but it is certainly unyogic." (CWSA 31: 541)

"Here all sex-indulgence inner or outer is considered undesirable as an obstacle to the sadhana—as it very evidently is." (SABCL 24: 1523)

"A married man can get experiences, especially if he is not gross or over-sexy by nature. But if he follows this Yoga, he will have to drop copulation or he will get upsettings." (CWSA 31: 497)

"Certain of these impulses and instincts of the body have been found especially harmful by the spiritual aspirant and weighed considerably in favour of an ascetic rejection of the body. Sex and sexuality and all that springs from sex and testifies to its existence had to be banned and discarded from the spiritual life, and this, though difficult, is not at all impossible and can be made a cardinal condition for the spiritual seeker. This is natural and unescapable in all ascetic practice and the satisfaction of this condition, though not easy at first to fulfil, becomes after a time quite feasible; the overcoming of the sex instinct and impulse is indeed binding on all who would attain to self-mastery and lead the spiritual life. A total mastery over it is essential for all spiritual seekers, the eradication of it for the complete ascetic. This much has to be recognised and not diminished in its obligatory importance and its principle." (SABCL 16: 26–27) (CWSA 13: 542–543)

"Q: *X says that he wants to take up this path and has been doing sadhana (meditation etc.). But his wife comes in the way of his sadhana by insisting that he shall not deny her sex-life. He prays for guidance. Should he break with her in the interest of sadhana? Or is there any other way out?*

A: No advice can be given, except to be sincere and follow the inner guidance.

I see no legitimation of sexual intercourse (from the point of view of sadhana) unless it is in view to have children." December 1963 (CWM 17: 395)

IV—B. Sex Suppressed in Outward Action but Indulged in Other Ways May Lead to Havoc

"For it is when one mixes up sex and spirituality that there is the greatest havoc. Even the attempt to sublimate it by turning it towards the Divine as in the Vaishnava *madhura bhava* carries in it a serious danger, as the results of a wrong turn or use in this method so often show." (SABCL 24: 1510) (CWSA 31: 502)

"The contrary opinion of which you speak may be due to the idea that sex is a natural part of the human vital-physical whole, a necessity like food and sleep, and that its total inhibition may lead to unbalancing and to serous disorders. It is a fact that sex suppressed in outward action but indulged in other ways may lead to disorders of the system and brain troubles. That is the root of the medical theory which discourages sexual abstinence. But I have observed that these things happen only when there is either secret indulgence of a perverse kind replacing the normal sexual activity or else an indulgence of it in a kind of subtle vital way by imagination or by an invisible vital interchange of an occult kind…" (SABCL 24: 1511) (CWSA 31: 503)

"But no error can be more perilous than to accept the immixture of the sexual desire and some kind of subtle

satisfaction of it and look on this as a part of the sadhana. It would be the most effective way to head straight towards spiritual downfall and throw into the atmosphere forces that would block the supramental descent, bringing instead the descent of adverse vital powers to disseminate disturbance and disaster. This deviation must be absolutely thrown away, should it try to occur and expunged from the consciousness, if the Truth is to be brought down and the work is to be done.

It is an error too to imagine that, although the physical sexual action is to be abandoned, yet some inward reproduction of it is part of the transformation of the sex-centre." (SABCL 24: 1507–1508) (CWSA 31: 500)

"Sex-energy misused turns to disorder and disintegration of the life-energy and its powers." (SABCL 24: 1516) (CWSA 31: 505)

"If she consents to marry, that would be the best. All these vital disturbances proceed from suppressed sex-instinct, suppressed but not rejected and overcome. A mental acceptance or enthusiasm for the sadhana is not a sufficient guarantee nor sufficient ground for calling people, especially young people, to begin it. Afterwards these vital instincts rise up and there is nothing sufficient to balance or prevail against them,—only mental ideas which do not prevail against the instincts, but on the other

hand, also stand in the way of the natural social means of satisfaction. If she marries now and gets experience of the human vital life, then thereafter there may be a chance of her mental aspiration for sadhana turning into the real thing." (SABCL 24: 1529) (CWSA 31: 543)

"It is the reason why the vital sex-difficulty is the hardest to get rid of—even those who have sincerely given up the more physical form are liable to the vital form of the impulse. But it is harmful because it allows a subtle infiltration of the forces that stand in the way of the sadhana. One must get rid of them if the vital is to become entirely pure and able to contain the divine love and Ananda." (SABCL 24: 1533) (CWSA 31: 516)

"In the vital physical the 'response' lingers long after the mind and higher vital have turned from it. I have seen that in men who were mentally and emotionally quite sincere. A few get rid of it easily, but these are a small minority. But there must be no justification on the 'what harm' basis—that is an attempt of the lower vital to get the mind and higher vital to adhere. There is always room for harm so long as the sex-response is not eliminated in both, not in you only." (SABCL 24: 1533) (CWSA 31: 518)

"Doctors advise marriage because they think satisfaction of the sexual instinct is necessary for the health and

repression causes disturbances in the system. This is true only when there is no true giving up of the sexual indulgence, but only a change in the way of indulging it. Nowadays a new theory has come up which confirms the Indian theory of Brahmacharya, viz. that by continence *retas* can be changed into *ojas* and the vigour and power of the being enormously increase." (CWSA 31: 505–506)

"The energies that are used in human beings for reproduction and which take such a predominant place in their existence should on the contrary be sublimated and used for progress and higher development, to prepare the advent of the new race. But first the vital and the physical must be freed from all desire, otherwise there is a great risk of disaster." 1 February 1972 (CWM 12: 378)

IV—C. No harm occurs when there is a true spiritual effort at mastery and abstinence from sex

"I do not think harm ever occurs when there is a true spiritual effort at mastery and abstinence. It is now held by many medical men in Europe that sexual abstinence, *if it is genuine*, is beneficial; for the element in the *retas* which serves the sexual act is then changed into its other element which feeds the energies of the system, mental, vital and physical—and that justifies the Indian idea of Brahmacharya, the transformation of *retas* into *ojas* and the raising of its energies upward so that they change into a spiritual force." (SABCL 24: 1511–1512) (CWSA 31: 503)

"The correspondent wrote, 'Some scientists say that sex is an absolute physiological necessity.'"—Ed.

A: You mean the doctors. But even all doctors do not agree on that; there are many (I have read their opinions) who say that sex-satisfaction is not an absolute necessity and sex-abstinence can be physically very beneficial and is so—of course under proper conditions. As for scientists, the product of sex-glands is considered by them (at least so I have read) as a great support and feeder of general energies. It has even been considered that sex-force has a great part to play in the production of poetry, art, etc. and in the action of genius generally. Finally, it is a doctor who

has discovered that the sex-fluid consists of two parts, one meant for sex-purposes, the other as a basis of general energy, and if the sex-action is not indulged, the first element tends to be turned into the second (retas into ojas, as the Yogis had already discovered).” (SABCL 24: 1518) (CWSA 31: 506–507)

“You have not understood. I was answering the statement that scientists don't attach any value to sex-gland product and think it is only of use for an external purpose. Many scientists on the contrary consider it a base of productive energy; among other things it plays a part in artistic and poetic production. Not that artists and poets are anchorites and Brahmacharis but that they have a powerful sex-gland activity, part of which goes to creative and part to (effectual or ineffectual) procreative action.

On the latest theory and yoga theory, the procreative part would be *retas,* the creative part the basis of *ojas*. Now supposing the poet or artist to conserve his *retas* and turn it into *ojas*, the result would be an increased power of creative productivity.” (SABCL 24: 1518–1519) (CWSA 31: 507)

IV—D. What does mastery over the sex impulse mean?

1. The sexual energy would be drawn upwards, not wasted

"To master the sex-impulse,—to become so much master of the sex-centre that the sexual energy would be drawn upwards, not thrown outwards and wasted—it is so indeed that the force in the seed can be turned into a primal physical energy supporting all the others, *retas* into *ojas*." (SABCL 24: 1507) (CWSA 31: 500)

"On the latest theory and yoga theory, the procreative part would be *retas*, the creative part the basis of *ojas*." (SABCL 24: 1519) (CWSA 31: 507)

2. The sex-centre has to be changed into a movement of intimate Light, creative Power, and pure Divine Ananda

"The transformation of the sex-centre and its energy is needed for the physical siddhi; for this is the support in the body of all the mental, vital and physical forces of the nature. It [sex-centre] has to be changed into a mass and a movement of intimate Light, creative Power, pure divine Ananda. It is only the bringing down of the supramental

Light, Power and Bliss into the centre that can change it. As to the working afterwards, it is the supramental Truth and the creative vision and will of the Divine Mother that will determine it. But it will be a working of the conscious Truth, not of the Darkness and Ignorance to which sexual desire and enjoyment belong; it will be a power of preservation and free desireless radiation of the life-forces and not of their throwing out and waste." (SABCL 24: 1508–1509) (CWSA 31: 501)

3. For radical and durable transformation, all sexual impulses and desires must be eliminated from the mental and vital consciousness and from the physical will

"Continence [self-restraint] is therefore the rule for all those who aspire for progress. But especially for those who want to prepare themselves for the supramental manifestation, this continence must be replaced by a total abstinence, achieved not by coercion and suppression but by a kind of inner alchemy, as a result of which the energies that are normally used in the act of procreation are transmuted into energies for progress and integral transformation. It is obvious that for the result to be total and truly beneficial, all sexual impulses and desires must be eliminated from the mental and vital consciousness as well as from the physical will. All radical and durable

transformation proceeds from within outwards, so that the external transformation is the normal, almost inevitable result of this process." (CWM 12: 54)

4. Self-control means a diversion of the life-energies to the powers of the mind and the spiritual consciousness

"Self-control means only a diversion to other powers, because the controlled sexpower becomes a force for the life-energies, the powers of the mind and the more and more potent workings of the spiritual consciousness." (SABCL 24: 1519) (CWSA 31: 542–543)

5. The energies concentrated in the sex-centre are pulled upwards and placed in the seat of Agni—the energies of progress

"This is quite well known in yogic disciplines in India, when one begins to become conscious of one's energies and have control over them. You know, don't you, the theory of the different 'centres' where the energies are concentrated? Generally, it is said that there are five. But the true number is seven or even twelve. Anyway, these centres are centres of accumulation of energy, energies which control certain activities. Thus, there is an accumulation of energy at the sex-centre, a great

accumulation of energy, and those who have control over these energies succeed in mastering them and raising them up, and they place them here (*Mother points to the centre of the chest)*. And here is the centre of the energies of progress. This is what is called the seat of *Agni*, but it is the energies of progress, the will to progress, that are here. So the energies concentrated in the sex-centre are pulled upwards and placed here. And they increase considerably, so that the sex-centre becomes absolutely calm, peaceful, immobile." (CWM 6: 77)

6. Allow your psychic being to establish its rule and open to the Divine Shakti

"If you want a true mastery and transformation of the vital movements, it can be done only on condition you allow your psychic being, the soul in you, to awake fully, to establish its rule and open to the permanent touch of the divine Shakti and impose its way of devout aspiration and complete surrender on the mind and heart and vital nature. There is no other way and it is no use hankering after a more comfortable path. *Nānyaḥ panthā vidyate ayanāya*." (CWSA 35: 725)

IV—E. The problems one has to face in order to gain mastery over the sex-impulse

1. The sexual urge has a power of temporary possession—the vital physical feels this possessive force

"The sexual urge is something that tries to take complete hold and leave no room for inhibition or control. It has a power of temporary possession which no other passion or life-impulse has to the same degree, more even than anger which comes second to it. That is why it is so difficult to get rid of it—because even when the mind or higher vital refuses, the vital physical feels this possessive force and has an ingrained tendency to be passive to its urge." (SABCL 24: 1533) (CWSA 31: 518)

2. The obstinacy with which they return is due to the obscurity of the physical

"These difficulties [*of human relationship*] in one form or another are felt by all—but they take a stronger form when the root is sexual. The obstinacy with which they return is due to the obscurity of the physical which always responds to an old habit of the nature (even when the mind has rejected it) and it is this obscurity and subjection to habit

that the adverse vital forces take advantage of to repeat the trouble." (CWSA 31: 519)

"Q: It seems to take a lot more effort to free myself from sexual and other problems now than ever before. Even in the very beginning it was easier for me.

A: The greater difficulty is because the sadhana is now taking place directly on the physical plane, where the force of a habit or habitual movement once formed is very great. When the sadhana is taking place on the mental or vital plane, it is more easy to control or change, because the mind and vital are more plastic than the physical. But on the other hand if something is definitely gained on the physical plane, there is a more lasting and complete fulfilment than when it is on the mental or vital alone." 19 March 1935 (CWSA 35: 337)

"There was certainly a real sadhana then and a very persistent preparation on the mental and vital planes. If there had not been, the descents of peace would not have begun. The fall came because when you descended into the physical consciousness to complete the preparation there, you became too passive, not continuing your will of tapasya, with the result that this sex force took advantage of the inertia of the physical consciousness to assert itself fully. That kind of passivity to the forces comes upon many

when there is the descent into the physical; one then feels different forces playing in the consciousness without having the same power of reaction as one had in the mind and the vital—sometimes peace etc. from above, sometimes disturbing forces. … To develop in the physical itself a constant will for the drawing down of the higher consciousness—especially the Peace and Force from above, is the best way out of it." (CWSA 35: 379)

3. Tamasic inertia, inactivity, is always favourable for the sex-force to act

"When there is the dullness—tamas of any kind—it is much easier for the sex-force to act." (CWSA 31: 522)

"Inactivity is an atmosphere in which sex easily rises." (CWSA 31: 522)

"A state of tamasic inertia of the mind and body is always favourable to the sex-urge by the sex-impulse. What I meant was that there is something (not the whole) of your lower vital and physical that can respond to the sex-impulse. There may be another part that has already the aspiration—but when the condition favourable to the sex-invasion comes, then the aspiration is quiescent or not strong enough and the other elements allow the sex-force to come in." (CWSA 31: 522)

"Sex always increases when the vital physical is indolent, unoccupied or without tone." (CWSA 31: 522)

4. There is a struggle between the spiritual mind which demands control and the vital movements which wish to continue the old life

"In the ordinary life, people accept the vital movements, anger, desire, greed, sex etc. as natural, allowable and legitimate things, part of the human nature. Only so far as society discourages them or wishes to keep them within fixed limits or subject to a decent restraint or measure, people try to control them so as to conform to the social standard of morality or rule of conduct. Here on the contrary as in all spiritual life, the conquest and complete mastery of these things is demanded. That is why the struggle is more felt, not because these things rise more strongly in sadhaks than in ordinary men, but because of the intensity of the struggle between the spiritual mind which demands control and the vital movements which rebel and wish to continue in the new as they did in the old life." (CWSA 28: 420)

"But the tussle between the inward and the outward man can create a lot of trouble, because the inward man pushes towards the Divine and will not let go and the outward man regrets, repines, pulls back, asks what is this shadowy

thing to which he is being brought, this Unknown, this (to him) far-off Ineffable. That, and not merely sex, food or society, is the genesis of the struggle and trouble in you. And yet it is all a misunderstanding—for if the outer gave way entirely to the inner Yogi, he would find that what he lost or thought he was losing would be repaid a hundredfold—though he would get it in another spirit and consciousness, not any longer the transient and deceptive delight of the world for its own sake, but the delight of the Divine in the world, a thousand times more intense, sweet and desirable." (CWSA 29: 35)

5. Pranayama and asana do not root out sexual desire

"Pranayama and other physical practices like asana do not necessarily root out sexual desire—sometimes by increasing enormously the vital force in the body they can even exaggerate in a rather startling way the force too of the sexual tendency, which, being at the base of the physical life, is always difficult to conquer." (SABCL 24: 1537) (CWSA 31: 511)

6. Hurting the flesh is no remedy for the sex-impulse

"Hurting the flesh is no remedy for the sex-impulse, though it may be a temporary diversion. It is the vital and mostly the vital physical that takes the sense-perception as

pleasant or otherwise. If by the real Being you mean the silent Atman, that does not identify itself [*with the sex-sensation*], but is felt as standing aloof. If you mean the Purusha, the sensation is a movement of Prakriti and the Purusha can stand back from it and reject it or identify and accept it." (SABCL 24: 1537) (CWSA 31: 512)

7. Reduction of diet does not have a permanent effect

"Reduction of diet has not usually a permanent effect; it may give a greater sense of physical or vital-physical purity, lighten the system and reduce certain kinds of tamas. But the sex-impulse can very well accommodate itself to a reduced diet. It is not by physical means but by a change in the consciousness that these things can be surmounted." (SABCL 24: 1537) (CWSA 31: 512)

IV—F. The method of gaining mastery over the sex-impulse

1. Regard the sex impulse as a mistake and a wrong movement of the lower nature

"As to sexual impulse. Regard it not as something sinful and horrible and attractive at the same time, but as a mistake and wrong movement of the lower nature." (SABCL 24: 1531) (CWSA 31: 508)

2. Recognising a mistake can become a stepping-stone

"Keep faith in your spiritual destiny, draw back from error and open more the psychic being to the direct guidance of the Mother's light and power. If the central will is sincere, each recognition of a mistake can become a stepping-stone to a truer movement and a higher progress." (SABCL 24: 1509)

3. The right attitude is not to worry about the sex-weakness or be obsessed by its importance nor to be too careless

"As for the other point, the right attitude is neither to worry always about the sex-weakness and be obsessed by its importance so as to be in constant struggle and depression

over it, nor to be too careless so as to allow it to grow. It is perhaps the most difficult of all to get rid of entirely; one has to recognise quietly its importance and its difficulty and go quietly and steadily about the control of it. If some reactions of a slight character remain, it is not a thing to get disturbed about – only it must not be permitted to increase so as to disturb the sadhana or get too strong for the restraining will of the mental and higher vital being." (SABCL 24: 1530) (CWSA 31: 510)

4. Suppressing it makes it worse—not to suppress it, but to open more to positive experience

"To think too much of sex, even for suppressing it, makes it worse.

You have to open more to positive experience. To spend all the time struggling with the lower vital is a very slow method." (CWSA 31: 511) (SABCL 24: 1531)

5. Have a fundamental sincerity and a will to go through all difficulties

"It is difficult to say that any particular quality makes one fit or the lack of it unfit. One may have strong sex impulses, doubts, revolts and yet succeed in the end, while another may fail. If one has a fundamental sincerity, a will to go

through in spite of all things and a readiness to be guided, that is the best security in the sadhana." (CWSA 29: 33)

"Evidently there is one difficulty: in your conscious being something does not want the difficulty, wishes sincerely to overcome it, but there are numberless movements in other parts of your consciousness of which you are not conscious. You say, "I want to be cured of that"; unfortunately it is not sufficient to say "I want", there are other parts of the consciousness which hide themselves so that you may not be busy with them, and when your attention is turned away these parts try to assert themselves. That is why I say and shall always repeat, Be perfectly sincere; do not try to deceive yourself, do not say, 'I have done all that I could.' If you do not succeed, it means that you do not do all that you can. For, if you truly do 'all' that you can, you will surely succeed. If you have any defect which you want to get rid of and which still persists, and you say, 'I have done all that I could', you may be sure that you have not done all that you should have.

If you had, you would have triumphed, for the difficulties that come to you are exactly in proportion to your strength—nothing can happen to you which does not belong to your consciousness, and all that belongs to your consciousness you are able to master." (CWM 4: 73–74)

6. To dissociate quietly and to reject steadily

"There is something in that. Too much importance given [*to sex troubles*], too much tension does sometimes make the struggle worse. To dissociate quietly and to reject steadily without being moved by the recurrence is the best way—if one knows how to do the trick." (CWSA 31: 510)

"It is best not to pay too much attention to this [sex-]movement, but to let it drop off quietly by lack of support and assent from the mind and the higher vital." (CWSA 31: 510–511)

"The impulses and desires that come up by the pressure of Yoga should be faced in a spirit of detachment and serenity, as something foreign to yourself or belonging to the outside world. They should be offered to the Divine, so that the Divine may take them up and transmute them." (CWM 3: 5)

"*Sweet Mother,*

One householder reader of our Kannada journal has asked the following two questions which I am unable to answer. Would Mother kindly help?
(1) What is to be done to reduce (if not eliminate) the desire for food? (2) What is to be done to reduce (if not eliminate) the desire for sex?

A: One answer to both: busy yourself with something more interesting—otherwise there are hundreds of ways from the most material to the most spiritual. Blessings." August 1964 (CWM 17: 399)

7. Detachment and rejection

"As for the method of mastery, it cannot be done by physical abstinence alone—it proceeds by a process of combined detachment and rejection. The consciousness stands back from the sex-impulse, feels it as not its own, as something alien thrown on it by Nature-force to which it refuses assent or identification—each time a certain movement of rejection throws it more and more outward. The mind remains unaffected; after a time the vital being which is the chief support withdraws from it in the same way, finally the physical consciousness no longer supports it. This process continues until even the subconscient can no longer rouse it up in dream and no further movement comes from the outer Nature-force to rekindle this lower fire. This is the course when the sex-propensity sticks obstinately; but there are some who can eliminate it decisively by a swift radical dropping away from the nature. That, however, is more rare." (SABCL 24: 1512) (CWSA 31: 503–504)

"The sex-pull is that of a general force which uses the individual for its purpose and it takes advantage of any proximity of the other one.... The security lies in oneself, in immediate detachment (standing apart, not accepting as one's own) and rejecting it." (SABCL 24: 1521)

"Reject it entirely, not by struggling with it, but by drawing back from it, detaching yourself and refusing your consent; look at it as something not your own, but imposed on you by a force of Nature outside you." (SABCL 24: 1531) (CWSA 31: 508)

"The one serious matter is the sex-tendency. That must be overcome. But it will be more easily overcome if instead of being upset by its presence you detach the inner being from it, rise up above it and view it as a weakness of the lower nature.

If you can detach yourself from it with a complete indifference in the inner being, it will seem more and more something alien to yourself, put upon you by the outer forces of Nature. Then it will be easier to remove." (SABCL 24: 1531) (CWSA 31: 510)

"Detachment is the first step. If you can detach yourself from the sex suggestions even when having them as you say, then they do not matter so much as the tamas, inertia

etc. which interfere with your sadhana. They can wait for their final removal hereafter." (CWSA 31: 511)

8. A firm resolve not to indulge physically or mentally

"Naturally, you have to conquer the sex-impulse, but it cannot be done entirely all at once; it needs a patient persistence and a firm resolve not to indulge it either physically or mentally." (SABCL 24: 1516)

"External indulgence on the other hand keeps the activity alive. This is the raison d'être of the external avoidance. If anything can be got rid of without the necessity of avoidance, so much the better." (SABCL 24: 1540) (CWSA 31: 539)

"It is true that the removal of the sex-impulse in all its forms … is a great liberation which opens up to the Divine considerable regions of the being which otherwise tend to remain shut up. … But the complex [sex-impulse] has deep roots in human nature and one must not be disappointed if it takes time to pull them up. A resolute detachment rejecting them as foreign elements, refusing to accept any inner association with them as well as outer indulgence even of the slightest kind is the best way to wear out their hold upon the nature." (CWSA 31: 511)

9. The external inhibition is useful if the mind, the vital, and the body stop indulging

"It [*inhibition of the sex-impulse*] would not be permanently effective in itself, because the seed would always be there unless removed by a transformation of the sex-impulse; but the inhibition can help towards this transformation. It is now recognised in Europe by the doctors—who used formerly to say that sex was to be inhibited at the risk of complications in the body, that on the contrary there is part of the seminal force that is used for health, strength, youth etc. (turned into *ojas*, as yogins say), another that serves for sex-purposes,—if a man is perfectly chaste, the latter turns more and more into the former. Only of course the external inhibition does not help this change, if the mind indulges in sex-thought or the vital or body in the unsatisfied sex desire or sex sensation. But if all these are stopped then the inhibition is useful." (SABCL 24: 1530) (CWSA 31: 506)

"The sex-trouble is serious only so long as it can get the consent of the mind and the vital will. If it is driven from the mind, that is, if the mind refuses its consent, but the vital part responds to it, it comes as a large wave of vital desire and tries to sweep the mind away by force along with it. If it is driven also from the higher vital, from the heart and the dynamic possessive life force, it takes refuge

in the lower vital and comes in the shape of smaller suggestions and urges there. Driven from the lower vital level, it goes down into the obscure inertly repetitive physical and comes as sensations in the sex-centre and a mechanical response to suggestion. Driven from there too, it goes down into the subconscient and comes up as dreams and night-emissions even without dreams. But to wherever it recedes, it tries still for a time from that base or refuge to trouble and recapture the assent of the higher parts, until the victory is complete and it is driven even out of the surrounding or environmental consciousness which is the extension of ourselves into the general or universal Nature." (SABCL 24: 1534) (CWSA 31: 515)

"The sex impulse is the chief difficulty in your way. If it persists, it is because some part of your being still clings to it and your mind and will have remained divided and found some kind of half justification for the continuance. The first thing is for the mind and also the higher vital to withdraw their consent altogether; if that is done, it becomes only a mechanical return from outside on the physical and finally only an active memory which will disappear when it is able to find no welcome in any part of the nature." (SABCL 24: 1535) (CWSA 31: 514–515)

"Is it that the body does not accept the sex-thoughts and desires? If so, you are entitled to reject it as something

external to you or at most existing only in the subconscient. For it is only what something in us accepts, supports, takes pleasure in, or still mechanically responds to, that can still be called ours. If there is nothing of that, it belongs to general Nature but not to us. Of course, it returns and tries to take possession of its lost territory, but that is a foreign invasion. The rule of these things is that they have to be extruded outside the individual consciousness. Rejected by the mind and higher vital, they still try to hold on to the lower vital and physical. Rejected from the lower vital, they still hold the body by a physical desire. Rejected from the body, they retire into the environmental consciousness (sometimes into the subconscient also, rising in dreams)—I mean by the environmental a sort of surrounding atmosphere which we carry about with us and by which we communicate with the universal forces—and try to invade from there. Rejected from there, they become in the end too weak to be more than external suggestions till that too ends—and they are finished and nonexistent." (SABCL 24: 1534–1535) (CWSA 31: 515–516)

10. There must be no mental or vital response

"Persist in concentrating in the heart and remaining unmoved by the obstacles. The suggestions must never be accepted—for acceptance gives them the right to return or continue. If there is no sex-response in the mind or vital

and the sensation in the organic centre is isolated and without any support in the being, then it can be separately overcome. Therefore, there must be no mental assent or vital response—that is the first necessary step." (SABCL 24: 1536)

11. Disconnect sex from the lower vital

"Sex is strongly connected with the physical centre but also with the lower vial—it is the lower vital that gives it most of its intensity and excitement. It can be disconnected from the lower vital and then it becomes a purely physical movement of the mechanical kind which has no great force except for the mechanical natures. If the physical centre also is freed then the sex-impulse ceases." (SABCL 24: 1536) (CWSA 31: 518–519)

"Of course [*the vital is connected with the play of sex*]. It is the vital that gives it its intensity and power to hold the consciousness." (SABCL 24: 1536) (CWSA 31: 516)

12. Avoidance of touch is best

"Avoidance of touch is best so long as there is the sex-response to touch on either side. At a higher stage, it is indifferent to touch or not to touch. What it will be in the supramental culmination, let the supramental decide.

Touch may be neutral or it may imply interchange of forces. When the interchange is that of spiritual or spiritualized forces, then it has its meaning and it is that that will justify it in the supramental realisation. But till then, it is better to be circumspect." (SABCL 24: 1523) (CWSA 31: 541)

"Here [in the Ashram] all sex-indulgence inner or outer is considered undesirable as an obstacle to the sadhana—as it very evidently is. For that reason any excessive familiarity of touch between men and women has to be avoided, anything also in the nature of caressing, as it creates or tends to create sex-tendency or even the strong sex-impulse. Casual touching has to be avoided also if it actually creates the sex-impulse. These are commonsense rules if the premiss is granted that sex has not to have any indulgence." (SABCL 24: 1523) (CWSA 31: 540–541) (CWSA 35: 718–719)

"Q: Sometimes I get the idea that I should talk and laugh and mix with women and touch them and yet remain free. This alone could be called true conquest.

A: The idea you speak of is the Tantric idea and very dangerous. It must be so in the end, but it is difficult to do that until one is strong enough in the settled spiritual consciousness. The avoidance is sometimes the only way

until the higher consciousness is settled in the vital and vital-physical." (CWSA 35: 723)

13. Exclude sex from the waking thought and consciousness

"If you can exclude sex from the waking thought and consciousness, the survival in sleep will not be so important. It will mean that the sex has sunk down from the conscious mind, vital, physical being into the subconscious; from there it comes up in sleep. But if it has no support from the conscious being, it may be active for a time but its activity will afterwards diminish, become more and more rare till it is eliminated. This may take time, shorter or longer, but in the end the elimination is bound to come." (CWSA 31: 521)

"It is of course the physical that is at once responsive in the most material way to sex-suggestion. What you are doing [*rejecting the sex-movement*] is right. As you are controlling it in the waking state, it comes out at night. That too has to be got rid of." (SABCL 24: 1535–1536) (CWSA 31: 519)

"There is no reason for you to be depressed or discouraged. The defects of the nature of which you speak are habits of the lower vital and the external being; if you

recognise them fully and frankly and detect them and reject whenever they act or try to act upon you, they will in time disappear. The sexual desires show that the subconscient still retains the old impressions, movements and impulses; make the conscious parts of the being entirely free and aspire and will for the higher consciousness to come fully into the subconscient so that even in sleep and dream something in you may be aware and on guard and reject these things when they try to take form at that time." (CWSA 31: 520) (SABCL 24: 1541–1542)

"If the waking state is freed from indulgence whether mental or physical in sex-thoughts, sex-impulses, sex-action, then the subconscient can be better dealt with; till then what is indulged by the mind in the waking state or else is suppressed but not yet entirely rejected can always lurk in the subconscient and rise from it in sleep. Turn away the conscious mind and vital from the sex-impulse *entirely*, that is the first step." (CWSA 31: 521)

14. When the sex-movement is thrown out from the vital-physical and the physical, it is conquered

"Naturally, the sex-movement is a force in itself, impersonal and not dependent on any particular object. It fastens on one or another only to give itself body and a

field of enjoyment. When it is checked in the vital interchange, it tends to lose its vital character and attacks through its most physical and elemental movement. It is only when it is thrown out from the vital physical and most physical that it is conquered." (SABCL 24: 1520) (CWSA 31: 487)

"It [sexual desire] is the habitual mechanical response to the sex-force in the physical nature. It gets this intensity in spite of the mind's rejection because something in the vital physical (nervous) being still remembers and responds to the suggestion of the craving and the pleasure. If the nervous being can be got to reject it then it becomes a purely physical wave without mental assent or vital desire—that is the last stage after which it can be thrown out of even the environmental Nature through which the suggestion or denial of the general sex-force comes to the individual being." (CWSA 31: 519)

15. Withdraw the vital consent and call the Divine Force to help you in your withdrawal

"Refuse all consent to the imposition. If anything in your vital consents, insist on that part of you withdrawing its consent. Call in the Divine Force to help you in your withdrawal and refusal. If you can do this quietly and resolutely and patiently, in the end your inner will will

prevail against the habit of the outer Nature." (SABCL 24: 1531) (CWSA 31: 508)

16. You have to persevere

"*At present I am much disturbed by sex difficulty. My rejection is not of much value, and I feel confused.*

You have to persevere until it is valid." 1933 (CWM 14: 127)

17. The peace and purity descending from above, coming into that part, make it disappear

"The sex exists for its own satisfaction and this or that person is only an excuse or occasion for its action or a channel for awakening its activity. It is from within, by the peace and purity from above coming into that part and holding it that it must disappear." (SABCL 24: 1520) (CWSA 31: 487)

"If it [the peace and silence] is established *all through*, then it brings purity and the purity throws off the sexual suggestions." (SABCL 24: 1538) (CWSA 31: 513)

"There is a force of purity, not the purity of the moralist, but an essential purity of spirit, in the very substance of the being. When that comes, then sex-waves either cannot

approach or they pass without imparting any impulse, without touching anywhere." (SABCL 24: 1538) (CWSA 31: 512)

18. Only by a strong discipline, a strong will, or a change of consciousness can one eliminate the sex pull

"Nature in the material world started with the physical sex pull for her purpose of procreation and brought in the love on the basis of sex-pull, so the one has a tendency to wake the other. It is only by a strong discipline or a strong will or a change of consciousness that one can eliminate the pull." (SABCL 24: 1524) (CWSA 31: 490)

19. Separate oneself from these movements, find one's inner self, and live in it

"The one thing to do is to separate oneself from these movements, to find one's inner self and live in it; these movements will not then any longer appear as belonging to oneself but as surface impositions of the outer Prakriti upon the inner self or Purusha. They can then be more easily discarded or brought to nothing." (SABCL 24: 1537) (CWSA 31: 511–512)

"I meant by cutting off [*the sex-impulse*] a determined rejection of the inward as well as the outward movement whenever it comes. Something in the nature accepts and lets itself go helplessly and something in the mind allows it to do so. The mind does not seem to believe in its power to say No definitely to inward movements as it would to an outer contact—and yet the Purusha is there and can put its definite No, maintaining it till the Prakriti has to submit—or else till the confirming touch from above makes its determination perfectly effective." (CWSA 31: 517)

20. The entire inner rejection of the sex-pulls and vital pulls is necessary

"It is the entire inner rejection of the sex-pulls and vital pulls that is necessary, a rejection by the whole lower vital itself—the outer rejection can only be effective if this inner rejection comes to reinforce it. Usually people attempt the outer rejection because otherwise (if these things are indulged) the inner rejection is not likely to come since the vital trend is always being confirmed by the outer action—but if the outer is rejected, then the conflict is confined to the internal desire and fought out there. Naturally an outer renunciation by itself does not liberate." (SABCL 24: 1539) (CWSA 31: 516–517)

21. Conquering must be an inner process

"Of course one must be able to come in contact with women without feeling or thinking about sex; but to seek contact and test is not the way, it can too easily turn the other side when the mastery is not complete. The facing and conquering must be an inner process—the Tantrik outer method is not indicated." (SABCL 24: 1539) (CWSA 31: 538)

22. Those who do a lot of physical culture are much more capable of mastering their impulses

"What is 'sex-education'? What do they teach?

For myself, I don't like people to be preoccupied with these things. In my time we were never preoccupied with these things. Now children talk about them all the time—it is in their minds, in their feelings. It is disgusting. It is difficult, very difficult.

But if they talk about it elsewhere, we have to talk about it here too. They should be told the consequences of these things. Especially the girls ought to be told that the consequences can be disastrous. When I was young, in those days, people never spoke about all that, they never paid attention to these things. In those days, people did not talk about all that. Here, I did not want this subject to be discussed. That is why we do physical culture. In that way the energies are used to develop strength, beauty, skill and all that; and one is more capable of control. You

will see, the ones who do a lot of physical culture, they are much more capable of mastering their impulses." (CWM 12: 377)

23. Refusing to take joy in it in any part of the being

"It [sex force in subconscient] can only be got rid of by a firm and persistent rejection, separation, detachment, not yielding to it by any act, refusing to take joy in it in any part of the being, until it is a dead thing and has no longer any motive or power of existence." (CWSA 31: 498)

24. Keep the power of discernment in order to detect anything false that comes

"It is dangerous to think of giving up 'all barrier of discrimination and defence against what is trying to descend' upon you. Have you thought what this would mean if what is descending is something not in consonance with the divine Truth, perhaps even adverse? An adverse Power could ask no better condition for getting control over the seeker. It is only the Mother's Force and the divine Truth that one should admit without barriers. And even there one must keep the power of discernment in order to detect anything false that comes masquerading as the Mother's Force and the divine Truth, and keep too the

power of rejection that will throw away all mixture." (SABCL 24: 1509) (CWSA 31: 501)

25. Turn away from past sexual weakness and consecrate oneself entirely to the Divine

"Tell X on behalf of myself and the Mother that she must not allow herself to be crushed by the burden of the past. All she has to do is to turn her back on this past of sexual weakness, for which she was not herself primarily responsible, and to consecrate herself entirely to the Divine. If she so consecrates herself, the past will be wiped out and a new life begin for her. This is the true atonement and the only one asked from her." (CWSA 31: 537)

26. For all who drag the sex-idea into their relations with women in the Yoga, external and internal renunciation of the vital or physical sex-relation has been made the rule

"It [*renunciation of contact with women*] has been prescribed not only in your case, but to all who drag the sex-idea into their relations with women in the Yoga. External as well as internal renunciation of the sex-relation vital or physical has been made the rule. The idea of internal detachment and external indulgence has been found always to be a cover under which the vital continues

its operations. For you the continuance would be dangerous both spiritually and for the body." (CWSA 31: 539)

27. The sex-impulse can go by a psychic rejection or a full spiritual opening

"It can only go by a radical psychic rejection or a full spiritual opening with the increasing descent of a consciousness that does not want it and has the truer Ananda." (SABCL 24: 1514)

28. To increase the force of the psychic

"In the pure psychic love there is no trace of the sex-desire, ... To increase always the force of the psychic, to control the sex impulse and turn it into *ojas*, to turn the love towards the Divine are the true remedies for this difficulty. Seminal force not sexually spent can always be turned into *ojas*." (SABCL 24: 1524) (CWSA 31: 490)

"When the psychic puts its influence on the vital, the first thing you must be careful to avoid is any least mixture of a wrong vital movement with the psychic movement. Lust is the perversion or degradation which prevents love from establishing its reign; so when there is the movement of psychic love in the heart, lust or vital desire is the one thing

that must not be allowed to come in—just as when strength comes down from above, personal ambition and pride have to be kept far away from it; for any mixture of the perversion will corrupt the psychic or spiritual action and prevent a true fulfilment." (SABCL 24: 1524) (CWSA 31: 490–491)

"If you want a true mastery and transformation of the vital movements, it can be done only on condition you allow your psychic being, the soul in you, to awake fully, to establish its rule and opening all to the permanent touch of the Divine Shakti, impose its own way of pure devotion, whole-hearted aspiration and complete uncompromising urge to all that is divine on the mind and heart and vital nature." (SABCL 24: 1532–1533) (CWSA 31: 126–127)

"The movement of self-existent psychic or spiritual love general and without a special object can come, but it must be kept free from all taint of sex—otherwise it cannot endure." (CWSA 31: 491)

29. The elimination of the sex-impulse takes time

"Celibacy is one thing and freedom from sex-pushes is another. These have to be conquered and got rid of, but if freedom from them were made a test of fitness to go on, I wonder how many could be declared fit for my yoga. The

will to conquer must be there, but the elimination of the sex-impulse is one of the most difficult things for human nature, and if it takes time, that is only natural." (SABCL 24: 1528) (CWSA 31: 542)

30. Open these parts and make them accept the Mother's Light and Force to purify them

"The trouble of the sex-impulse is bound to dwindle away if you are in earnest about getting rid of it. The difficulty is that part of your nature (especially, the lower vital and the subconscient which is active in sleep) keeps the memory and attachment to these movements, and you do not open these parts and make them accept the Mother's Light and Force to purify them. If you did that and, instead of lamenting and getting troubled and clinging to the idea that you cannot get rid of these things, insisted quietly with a calm faith and patient resolution on their disappearance, separating yourself from them, refusing to accept them or at all regard them as part of yourself, they would after a time lose their force and dwindle." (SABCL 24: 1532) (CWSA 31: 509)

"To get rid of the vital difficulties one very necessary thing is to keep yourself fully open to us. It was because you did that, that it was possible to throw out the sex obsession. If anything rises from the vital, keep yourself detached and

observe it and reject; on no account allow yourself to be caught and swept away by it." (CWSA 35: 721)

31. It can be overcome by a spiritual awakening in all parts of the nature

"It is only if the whole consciousness is awake and aware of its concealed movements that such [sexual] reactions can be avoided. It does not mean that you are worse than others, but that in all men the sexual element is there, active or dormant, indulged or suppressed. It can only be overcome by a spiritual awakening in all parts of the nature." (SABCL 24: 1535) (CWSA 31: 512)

32. By the descent of the higher consciousness

"What seems to be best is that the movement of rising above should be completed and if you can feel there the wideness, peace, calm, silence of the Self and that can come down into the body through all the centres and there can be the working of the Force in that condition of the physical being, then the vital-physical difficulty can be faced. The effort to do it by personal tapasya can carry one to a certain point, it can throw out sex etc., but for most it does not prevent all coming back by attack—unless the force of tapasya is so great and continuous that these

forces get no chance. But the elimination of these things can only come, I think, by the descent of the higher consciousness—bringing it the self-existent calm and wideness, the higher force and the Ananda occupying all down to the cells of the body. It is quite certain that these three together in the body can leave no room for sex—even if sex came, it would at once get so transmuted that it would be sex no longer." (SABCL 24: 1537–1538) (CWSA 31: 513–514)

"It is the physical centre—sex is only one of its movements. Naturally, if the sex is active (instead of giving place to Beauty and Ananda) and if the lower movements are active, it forms an obstacle to the establishment of the higher consciousness. But the higher can descend, if there is at all an opening, even before the lower movements have definitely gone—it has then to complete the work of displacing them." (SABCL 24: 1536) (CWSA 31: 514)

"It is always difficult to get rid of sex when it has had a strong hold on the system. It needs probably more than a mental will,—a stronger Force from above, to get rid of it altogether." (CWSA 31: 513)

"It [*the sex-impulse*] can be got rid of only when a higher consciousness comes down permanently into the vital." (CWSA 31: 514)

"I don't think it [sex] is always feeble in its going, sometimes it gets a singular intensity just before it goes—but it exhausts itself, tires and sinks, pressed out by the pressure from above. It depends of course on the nature. Sometimes it goes out like a snuffed candle, sometimes dwindles away, sometimes expires in a last flame. There is no rule applicable to everybody." (CWSA 31: 514)

"Sex is your main difficulty—it is in fact the only very serious one and it is so because it is always behind and you have sometimes pushed it back, but never cut with it entirely. It is the physical vital that is weak and when the thing comes, becomes pliant to it in spite of the mental will's resistance. But even so; if the mental will made itself real and strong, these crises would be met and overcome, or at least pass without leading to indulgence in one form or another. The other possibility is the settled descent of the higher consciousness into the physical being. It is in these two ways that liberation from sex is possible." (CWSA 31: 517–518) (CWSA 35: 719)

"It is the crude vital-physical that returns upon you in this way [*sexual suggestions*]—and these returns must be the cause of all the feeling of illness, weakness, tamas that you get. A purification of this part by the descent of the higher consciousness into it is a very great necessity for your sadhana." (CWSA 31: 518)

IV—G. The total disappearance of the sex-impulse has been achieved

"It has to be said that the total elimination of the sex-impulse is one of the most difficult things in sadhana and one must be prepared for it to take time. But its total disappearance has been achieved and a practical liberation crossed only by occasional dream-movements from the subconscient is fairly common." (SABCL 24: 1512) (CWSA 31: 504)

"Sex and sexuality and all that springs from sex and testifies to its existence had to be banned and discarded from the spiritual life, and this, though difficult, is not at all impossible and can be made a cardinal condition for the spiritual seeker." (CWSA 13: 543)

"There are people outside the Asram even who have got free from the sex without seclusion—even sleeping in the same bed with the wife. I know one at least who did it without any higher experience. The work of these people is ordinary service or professional work, but that did not prevent their having the sex-struggle nor did it help them to get rid of it. The thing came after a prolonged struggle because they were determined to be rid of it and at a certain stage they got a touch which made the determination absolutely effective. Possibly they were

sattwic, but that did not prevent their having strong sex-impulses and a hard and prolonged struggle." (CWSA 31: 517)

"It is quite true that when you first came, the Mother was not in favour of your staying and taking up the Yoga here, for you had then a very strong obscurity and impurity in your vital nature and this could easily make the Yoga too difficult for you and create serious trouble. When however you persisted in staying, we gave you your opportunity as we had done in similar cases before. For it is always possible for the psychic being to prevail, if it is determined to do so, over the difficulties of the vital nature, even though it may mean severe inner struggles for a time. This concession was justified by certain results; you opened in a remarkable way into the inner being by the poetic aspiration and you had experiences which strengthened the psychic call and created a psychic and mental basis for your sadhana. Even you were able to throw out from the vital the sexual obsession which had been one of the chief difficulties there." (CWSA 27: 713–714)

IV—H. To remove the sex-impulse from the subconscient

1. The sex-impulse is deeply rooted in the subconscient—only the full transformation of the physical consciousness can rid one of it

"The sex-impulse is deeply rooted in the subconscient and it is difficult to get rid of it. Only the full transformation of the physical consciousness can do that—except for a few who are not strongly bound by it." (SABCL 24: 1535) (CWSA 31: 521)

"Your sexual impulse or feeling comes out of this subconscient ..." (CWSA 28: 79)

2. The two places where the suggestion of sex can retire are the subconscient vital below or the environmental consciousness around

"There are two places into which it [*the suggestion of sex*] can retire—the subconscient vital below or the environmental consciousness around. When it returns it surges up from below, if it is the former, or approaches and invades from outside, if it is the latter." (CWSA 31: 516)

3. By mental and other rejections, it has plunged down into the subconscient, is hidden there, and rises suddenly from there

"Moreover, this force as it is now acting in you with regard to X seems to be purely vital physical and physical in its character. It is not supported by your thinking mind or your rational will, these are opposed to its continuance; it has no emotional support, for you are no longer attracted by her or in love with her; the higher vital does not seem to be concerned, for neither beauty nor passion draws or drives you. But at this level of sex none of these things are necessary. The vital physical and physical urge of sex does not ask for beauty or love or emotional gratification or anything else; desire, repetition of vital-physical habit and bodily gratification (most usually, but not necessarily by the sex-act) are its motive forces. To set it in action nothing more is needed. Moreover, by mental and other rejections it has plunged down in the subconscient and is hidden there and rises suddenly from there. It is itself born from the Inconscient as a blind push of its dark force of Nature. It owes no allegiance. It can only be got rid of by a firm and persistent rejection, separation, detachment, not yielding to it by any act, refusing to take joy in it in any part of the being, until it is a dead thing and has no longer any motive or power of existence." (CWSA 31: 498)

"I have already told you not to get upset over these dreams and accidents of sleep. They come from outside yourself and something replies from the subconscient which keeps for a long time all that the conscious being rejects. It is only in the later stages of the Yoga that this subconscient part can be made conscious and liberated. It is the waking consciousness that you must keep free from sexual acts and sexual suggestions. If you do that, the subconscient part can be easily liberated afterwards." (SABCL 24: 1542)

"That is usual—the subconscient acts of itself on its own store of impressions or habitual past movements. When one drives sex from the mind and conscious vital and physical it remains in the subconscient and rises from there in sleep." (CWSA31: 519)

"The sex-sensation came from the subconscient. When it is unable to manifest in the waking consciousness, it comes up from the subconscient in sleep. The mind must not allow itself to be disturbed—it will go out with the rest." (CWSA 31: 520)

4. If one reads about sexual things in novels, they enter the mind and pass into the subconscient

"Naturally, if you read about these [*sexual*] things [*in novels*] they enter the mind and pass into the subconscient

where they leave their impression. If the consciousness is not free from the sexual impulse, this impression can rise up from the subconscient and work in the mind." (SABCL 1542) (CWSA 31: 521)

5. Make the conscious parts of the being entirely free
6. Aspire and will for the higher consciousness to come fully into the subconscient

"There is no reason for you to be depressed or discouraged. The defects of the nature of which you speak are habits of the lower vital and the external being; if you recognise them fully and frankly and detect them and reject whenever they act or try to act upon you, they will in time disappear. The sexual desires show that the subconscient still retains the old impressions, movements and impulses; make the conscious parts of the being entirely free and aspire and will for the higher consciousness to come fully into the subconscient so that even in sleep and dream something in you may be aware and on guard and reject these things when they try to take form at that time." (SABCL 24: 1541–1542) (CWSA 31: 520)

7. Before going to sleep, pray and bring down a strong will against any sexual suggestion in sleep

"Before you go to sleep, do not be satisfied with prayer, but bring down and leave in the body a strong will against any sexual suggestion in sleep or its result. With a little practice the body will learn to take the inhibiting suggestion and these things will cease." (CWSA 36: 326)

8. The return of the sex impulse from the subconscient can be used as a test of the progress made

"I do not suppose the sex-touch came at all from them personally; at most some contact with the outside world and its consciousness might have touched the subconscient. But the real reason for these upsurgings of old movements is the subconscient itself where the old things remain in seed and can sprout up after long cessation or interruption. To be completely secure against all possibility of their return one must have established the higher consciousness in all the being down to the subconscient. But meanwhile these returns can be used as a test of the progress made. If for instance the sex-thought rises into the mind, but cannot remain there, that means the mind is substantially free; if the sex-desire comes into the vital and falls away without taking a hold, it is the same for the vital. The last question is for the body where it can come as a physical urge or sensation. If it can hold none of these there is no refuge left for it except the subconscient from which it can try to rise, especially in

dreams, or the environmental consciousness from which it can try to come as a wave invading the being." (CWSA 31: 520–521)

9. Only when sex has been rid of from the physical and subconscient can one say, "Now that is done"

"It is one of the aims of the Yoga to centralise and harmonise all the parts of the being—not around the ego as is done in ordinary life, but around first the psychic being and then the central being in its station above the head—or else round a nexus of the two. It is the thing that was preparing in you. The consciousness was moving to take its station above the head. But in the meanwhile it has gone down into the physical and the first result has been a relaxation and diffusion which has given an opening to the old movements to recur. When a movement like that happens [*an attraction to women*], there is generally a good reason for it, something that has to be dealt with in the physical consciousness. Instead of getting upset or discouraged, one has to observe from this point of view and see what has to be done. There is no sense in getting discouraged like this because things recur. They always do. In a transformation such as we have undertaken, movements are not got rid of once for all. They go down from one level of the nature to the other and it is only when one has got them out of the physical and subconscient that one can say 'Now that is done.' If these recurrences were

to be taken as a proof of failure, there are few in the Asram who should not be pronounced as failures. I don't think more than 2 or 3 have got over some sex-trouble; it lasts in one form or another even when people are 'advanced'—as they say here. It is because sex is one of the strongest things in man's nature and cannot be overcome till one has got the sex out of the subconscient. Why then consider your case as if it were unique or build on it the idea of personal impossibility or unfitness? It is no use indulging the idea of giving up. You can't give up. So the only thing to do is to recover yourself, look at these things with detachment and push forward to the realisation of the self that was coming." (CWSA 31: 497)

IV—I. The change in the attitude required in Yoga

1. One must be able to look on the woman and feel her as a human being, and think no more of sex

"All that [*mental excitement when a man meets a woman*] happens because the vital is conscious of sex in the approach and immediately assumes the 'man to woman' attitude. To get rid of that, one must be able to look on the woman and feel to her as to a human being only. That is difficult and needs a certain training; for even if the mind is able to take the position, the vital is unreliable and one has to be on guard that it does not suddenly or surreptitiously get in into the relation with its partiality for the sex-interchange." (SABCL 24: 1539) (CWSA 31: 538)

"You can have right relations with women only when you can forget that they are women and meet them as human beings—when you can forget sex in your feeling and action towards them." (CWSA 31: 538)

"You had better get rid of the influence. It won't do—not to be able to look at a woman or a picture of a woman without getting sexual sensations—you must get rid of that." (SABCL 24: 1540)

"If one admires all beautiful things, not women only, without desire—then there would be no harm. But specially applied to women, it is a relic of the 'sex-appeal'." (SABCL 24: 1540) (CWSA 31: 524)

"When you will think no more of sex at all and see no more women as women but only as human beings, then and then only I will know that you are beginning to get cured." (CWM 14: 127–128)

"In Yoga the proper means is to train the mind and vital to meet women without thought of sex, to look on them as sadhaks and human beings only, not as objects of sexual possession and enjoyment." (CWSA 31: 539–540)

"I have already asked of you all not to think that you are girls or boys, but *human beings* equally endeavouring to find, become and manifest the Divine." 16 February 1966 (CWM 12: 157)

2. Treat both sexes on a footing of perfect equality—to give them the same education and training

"In any case, until the manifestation of a new conception and consciousness compels Nature to create a new species which would no longer have to yield to the necessity of animal procreation and thus be under the obligation of

dividing into two complementary sexes, the best that can be done for the progress of the present human race is to treat both sexes on a footing of perfect equality, to give them the same education and training and to teach them to find, through a constant contact with a Divine Reality that is above all sexual differentiation, the source of all possibilities and harmonies." (CWM 12: 105–106)

3. Strength and purity in the lower vital and wideness in the heart are the best conditions for meeting others

"Strength and purity in the lower vital and wideness in the heart are the best condition for meeting others, especially women, and if that could always be there sex could hardly have a look in." (SABCL 24: 1540) (CWSA 31: 540)

"The true relation of the two sexes is an equal footing of mutual help and close collaboration." (CWM 2: 159)

4. In regard to the Supreme Reality, all men and women are equal, and the distinction will be based on the sincerity and ardour of aspiration

"Thus the problem of feminism, as all the problems of the world, comes back to a spiritual problem. For the spiritual reality is at the basis of all others; ... In regard to this

Supreme Reality all are equal, men and women, in rights and in duties; the only distinction which can exist in this domain being based on the sincerity and ardour of aspiration, on the constancy of the will. And it is in the recognition of this fundamental spiritual equality that can be found the only serious and lasting solution for this problem of the relation of the sexes. It is in this light that it must be placed, it is at this height that must be sought the focus of action and new life, around which will be constructed the future temple of Humanity." (CWM 2: 150)

5. Men or women are living souls expressing their identical origin

"In their best moments, both man and woman can forget their difference of sex, but it reappears at the slightest provocation; the woman feels she is a woman, the man knows he is a man and the quarrel is revived indefinitely in one form or another, open or veiled, and perhaps all the more bitter the less it is admitted. And one wonders whether it will not be so until there are no longer any men or women, but living souls expressing their identical origin in sexless bodies." (CWM 12: 104)

IV—J. Transformation of Sex-energy into Spiritual Energy

"The sex-energy utilised by Nature for the purpose of reproduction is in its real nature a fundamental energy of Life. It can be used not for the heightening but for a certain intensification of the vital-emotional life; it can be controlled and diverted from the sex-purpose and used for aesthetic and artistic or other creation and productiveness or preserved for heightening of the intellectual or other energies. Entirely controlled it can be turned into a force of spiritual energy also. This was well known in ancient India and was described as the conversion of *retas* into *ojas* by Brahmacharya." (SABCL 24: 1516) (CWSA 31: 504–505)

"The correspondent wrote: 'Is it not said that the sexual fluid, if prevented from being spent away, becomes transformed into tejas and ojas?'"—Ed.

A: That is correct. The whole theory of Brahmacarya is based upon that by the Yogis. If it were not so, there would be no need of Brahmacarya for producing *tejas* and *ojas*." (SABCL 24: 1517–1518) (CWSA 31: 505)

"Q: How does it matter if I do not have perfect Brahmacharya?

A: It matters a good deal to the Mother, even if it does not matter to you. It is part of what she asks from all so that her work may be done." (CWSA 32: 401)

"It is not a question of vigour and energy per se, but of the physical support—in the physical support the *ojas* produced by brahmacarya counts greatly. The transformation of the *retas* into *ojas* is a transformation of physical substance into a physical (necessarily producing also a vital-physical) energy. The spiritual energy itself can only drive the body, like the vital and mental, but in driving it it would exhaust it if it has not a physical support. (I speak of course of the ordinary spiritual energy, not of the supramental to be, which has not only to transmute *retas* into *ojas* but *ojas* into something more sublimated.)" (SABCL 24: 1518) (CWSA 31: 505)

"The sex-impulse is certainly the greatest force in the vital plane; if it can be sublimated and turned upwards, *ojas* is created which is a great help to the attainment of higher consciousness. But mere restraint is not sufficient." (SABCL 24: 1516) (CWSA 31: 505)

"The most recent discovery about the sex is that the liquid is composed of two elements—one is used for sexual purposes, the other supplies all kinds of higher energies, vital, mental and, I would add, spiritual. It was formerly

supposed by the doctors that the sex-liquid had to be spent in order to relieve its excess from time to time, otherwise there would be bad results. It is now found that that is not necessary—if the sex is controlled both in act and thought, there is an automatic *diminution* of the amount of liquid used for sex and a corresponding increase of the other element available for higher energies. In other words, the old knowledge of the Vedic and Vedantic Yogis and Rishis about becoming *urdhwaretaḥ*, viz. that by control one can turn *retas* into *ojas* and use it for higher energies vital, mental and spiritual is amply justified by this discovery. The use made naturally depends upon a man's occupations and interests. The athlete etc. would use it for physical strength and its work, the poet and artist for creation, others for study or mental work of different kinds, the Yogi for the increase and use of spiritual energy." (CWSA 31: 507–508)

The transformation of sex-energy can also be done by the descent of the Force and its working on the sex-centre

"If it [*turning the seminal energy into* ojas] is to be done by a process, it will have to be by Tapasya (self-control of mind, speech, act) and a drawing upward of the seminal energy through the Will. But it can be better done by the descent of the Force and its working on the sex-centre and consequent transformation, as with all other things in this Yoga." (CWSA 31: 508)

IV—K. The basis of the intellectual superstructure is Brahmacharya

1. The first necessity is to provide a strong foundation

"At the basis of the old Aryan system was the all-important discipline of Brahmacharya. The first necessity for the building up of a great intellectual superstructure is to provide a foundation strong enough to bear it." (SABCL 3: 331) (CWSA 1: 369)

2. Provision of a fund of energy sufficient to bear the demands of memory, judgment, and creative power

"And the foundation of the structure they have to build, can only be the provision of a fund of force and energy sufficient to bear the demands of a continually growing activity of the memory, judgment and creative power. Where is that energy to be found?" (SABCL 3: 332) (CWSA 1: 370)

"There are processes by which man can increase his capacity as an *adhara*." (SABCL 3: 332) (CWSA 1: 370)

3. The chief process to increase the storage of energy was the practice of Brahmacharya

"And this also must be a sound principle, that the more we can increase and enrich the energy, the greater will be the potentially the range, power and activity of the functions of our mind and the consequent vigour of our intellectuality and the greatness of our achievement. This was the first principle on which the ancient Aryans based their education and one of the chief processes which they used for the increased storage of energy, was the practice of Brahmacharya." (SABCL 3: 332–333) (CWSA 1: 371)

4. Celibacy is not equivalent to Brahmacharya

"Celibacy means first 'not marrying'—it can be extended to not having sexual (physical) relations with any woman, though that is not its proper meaning. It is not equivalent to Brahmacharya." (CWSA 31: 542)

5. To raise up the physical to the spiritual is Brahmacharya

"The practice of Brahmacharya is the first and most necessary condition of increasing the force within and turning it to such uses as may benefit the possessor or mankind. All human energy has a physical basis. The mistake made by European materialism is to suppose the basis to be everything and confuse it with the source. The source of life and energy is not material but spiritual, but the basis, the foundation on which the life and energy

stand and work, is physical. … To raise up the physical to the spiritual is Brahmacharya, for by the meeting of the two the energy which starts from one and produces the other is enhanced and fulfils itself." (SABCL 3: 334) (CWSA 1: 372)

6. Brahmacharya is misunderstood as a mental and moral control—such a control suppresses the vital power behind the sexual impulse and does not really purify

"What he meant to say was that by Brahmacharya is generally understood a mental & moral control, a cessation because of a mental rule. Such a control especially if undertaken from an ascetic or puritan attitude, only keeps chained or even suppresses the vital power behind the sexual impulse and does not really purify or change it. The true motive for overcoming the sexual impulse is the inner psychic and when that rises then comes the real will to an inner purity which makes it an inner necessity for the being to drop the animal sexual play and turn the life-force to greater uses. The vital power behind the sexual impulse is an indispensable force for the perfection of the nature and for the Yoga. Often it is those who because of the strong vital force in them are most capable of the supramental transformation of the physical nature that have the strongest sexual impulses. All lust, the sexual act and the

outward dragging impulse have to be thrown away by the sadhaka, but the power itself has to be kept and transformed into the true force and Ananda. You are right in thinking that a certain fundamental purity in this respect is needed in order to approach Mira and have her help. It is not possible for her to have relations with one who is full of coarse animal or perverted sexual impulses or unable because of them to have the true spiritual or psychic regard on women. But an absence of all sexual impulse is not necessary, still less an ascetic or puritanic turn in this matter. On the contrary. Neither the conventional Puritan nor the coarse animal man can receive anything from her." (CWSA 36: 330–331)

7. All passion, lust, and desire waste the energy by pouring it, either in the gross form or in a sublimated, subtler form, out of the body

"This is the metaphysical theory. The application depends on a right understanding of the physical and psychological conformation of the human receptacle [container] of energy.

The fundamental physical unit is the *retas,* in which the *tejas*, the heat and light and electricity in a man, is involved and hidden.

All energy is latent in the *retas.* This energy must be either expended physically or conserved.

All passion, lust, desire wastes the energy by pouring it, either in the gross form or a sublimated subtler form, out of the body. Immorality in act throws it out in the gross form; immorality of thought in the subtler form. In either case there is waste, and unchastity is of the mind and speech as well as of the body." (SABCL 3: 334) (CWSA 1: 372)

8. The more we increase the store of tapas, tejas, vidyut, and ojus by Brahmacharya, the more we shall fill ourselves with utter energy for the works of the body, heart, mind, and spirit

"On the other hand, all self-control conserves the energy in the *retas,* and conservation always brings with it increase. But the needs of the physical body are limited and the excess of energy must create a surplus which has to turn itself to some use other than the physical. According to the ancient theory *retas* is the *jala* or water, full of light and heat and electricity, in one word, of *tejas*. The excess of the *retas* turns first into heat or *tapas* which stimulates the whole system, and it is for this reason that all forms of self-control and austerity are called *tapas* or *tapasya*, because they generate the heat, or stimulus which is a source of powerful action and success; secondly, it [*retas*] turns to *tejas* proper, light, the energy which is at the source of all knowledge; thirdly, it [*retas*] turns to *vidyut*

or electricity, which is at the basis of all forceful action whether intellectual or physical. In the *vidyut* again is involved the *ojas*, or *pranasakti*, the primal energy which proceeds from ether. The *retas* refining from *jala* to *tapas*, *tejas* and *vidyut* and from vidyut to ojas, fills the system with physical strength, energy and brain power and in its last form of *ojas* rises to the brain and informs it with that primal energy which is the most refined form of matter and nearest to spirit. It is *ojas* that creates a spiritual force or *virya*, by which a man attains to spiritual knowledge, spiritual love and faith, spiritual strength. It follows that the more we can by Brahmacharya increase the store of *tapas, tejas, vidyut* and *ojus*, the more we shall fill ourselves with utter energy for the works of the body, heart, mind and spirit." (SABCL 3: 334–335) (CWSA 1: 372–373)

9. The controlled sex-power becomes a force for the life-energies, the powers of the mind, and the spiritual consciousness

"If it is like that [*a natural control of sexual excitement*] then it is the power of self-control, automatic and therefore belonging to the inner being that is coming—the genuine thing. Of course to be complete the sexual passion and the thoughts that encourage it should disappear also. … Self-control means only a diversion to other powers, because the controlled sex-power becomes a force for the life-

energies, the powers of the mind and the more and more potent workings of the spiritual consciousness." (CWSA 31: 542–543)

10. By the training of Brahmacharya, ancient Indians placed all the energy which could be spared from bodily functions at the service of the brain

"We have stated, as succinctly as is consistent with clearness, the main psychological principles on which the ancient Indians based their scheme of education.

By the training of Brahmacharya they placed all the energy of which the system was capable and which could be spared from bodily functions, at the service of the brain. In this way they not only strengthened the *medha* or grasping power, the *dhi* or subtlety and swiftness of thought conception, the memory and the creative intellectual force, making the triple force of memory, invention, judgment comprehensive and analytic, but they greatly enlarged the range, no less than the intensity, of the absorbing, storing and generative mental activities. Hence those astonishing feats of memory, various comprehension and versatility of creative work of which only a few extraordinary intellects have been capable in Occidental history, but which in ancient India were common and usual." (SABCL 3: 338) (CWSA 1: 376)

IV—L. The sexual impulse will naturally and spontaneously disappear in the next step of evolution

One has to decide whether one wants to remain part of the humanity of yesterday or to belong to the superhumanity of tomorrow

"A decisive choice has to be made between lending the body to Nature's ends in obedience to her demand to perpetuate the race as it is, and preparing this same body to become a step towards the creation of the new race. For it is not possible to do both at the same time; at every moment one has to decide whether one wants to remain part of the humanity of yesterday or to belong to the superhumanity of tomorrow." (CWM 12: 54–55)

1. The supramental life will not be a heightened satisfaction of the desires

"Avoid the imagination that the supramental life will be only a heightened satisfaction of the desires of the vital and the body; nothing can be a greater obstacle to the Truth in its descent than this hope of glorification of the animal in the human nature. Mind wants the supramental state to be a confirmation of its own cherished ideas and preconceptions; the vital wants it to be a glorification of its

own desires; the physical wants it to be a rich prolongation of its own comforts and pleasures and habits. If it were to be that, it would be only an exaggerated and highly magnified consummation of the animal and the human nature, not a transition from the human into the Divine." (CWSA 31: 501)

"What are these strange ideas? Do you imagine that after the transformation, copulation between man and woman and the desire to copulate will continue as the normal functionings of the life and the body? If so, why should it be forbidden in the sadhana? The injunction would then be not to stop sex-intercourse, but to copulate freely and sublimely and divinely." (CWSA 31: 498–499)

2. Sexual activity will have absolutely no reason for existence in the next step of evolution

"The supramental body will be unsexed, since the need for animal procreation will no longer exist.

The human form will retain only its symbolic beauty, and one can foresee even now the disappearance of certain ungainly protuberances, such as the genital organs of man and the mammary glands of woman." August 1954 (CWM 15: 281)

"There must be, besides those who work for the transformation and who are ready for it, a superior humanity, intermediary, which has found in itself or in life this harmony with Life—this harmony *human*—and which has the same feeling of adoration, devotion, faithful consecration to 'something' which seems to it so high that it does not even try to realise it, but worships it and feels the need of its influence, its protection, and the need to live under this influence, to have the delight of being under this protection. ...

For example, one of the very concrete things that brings out the problem well: humanity has the sexual impulse in a way altogether natural, spontaneous and, I would say, legitimate. This impulse will naturally and spontaneously disappear with animality. Many other things will disappear, as for example the need to eat and perhaps also the need to sleep in the way we sleep now. But the most conscious impulse in a superior humanity, which has continued as a source of... bliss is a big word, but joy, delight—is certainly the sexual activity, and that will have absolutely no reason for existence in the functions of Nature when the need to create in that way will no longer exist." (CWM 11: 27–28)

3. The supramental being will be an unsexed being

1 July 1970

"I had an experience which was for me interesting, because it was for the first time. … X was there just in front of me, and I saw her psychic being, dominating over her by so much (*gesture indicating about twenty centimetres*), taller. It was the first time. Her physical being was small and her psychic being was so much bigger. And it was an unsexed being, neither man nor woman. Then I said to myself (possibly it is always so, I do not know, but here I noticed it very clearly), I said to myself, 'But it is the psychic being, it is that which will materialise itself and become the supramental being!'

I saw it, it was so. There were particularities, but these were not well-marked, and it was clearly a being that was neither man nor woman, having the combined characteristics of both. … But it interested me very much, because it was as though that being were telling me, 'But you are busy looking to see what kind of being the supramental will be—there it is! There, it is that.' And it was there. It was the psychic being of the person.

So, one understands. One understands: the psychic being materialises itself ... and that gives continuity to evolution. This creation gives altogether the feeling that there is nothing arbitrary, there is a kind of divine logic behind … and that was fully satisfied when I saw this. …

And then I understood why the mind and the vital were sent out of this body, leaving the psychic being—

naturally it was that which had been always governing all the movements, so it was nothing new, but there are no difficulties any more: all the complications that were coming from the vital and the mental, adding their impressions and tendencies, all gone. And I understood: 'Ah! It is that, it is this psychic being which has to become the supramental being'." (CWM 11: 238–239)

4. The Mother's experience of the supramental body was sexless

24 March 1972

For the first time, early in the morning, I saw myself, my body—I do not know whether it is the supramental body or... (how to say it?) a body in transition, but I had a body altogether new, in the sense that it was sexless—it was not a woman nor was it a man.

It was very white. But it is because my skin is white, I believe, I do not know.

It was very slim (gesture indicating slenderness)—it was pretty. Truly a harmonious form.

So it was the first time. I did not know at all, I had no idea of what it would be like, none at all, and I saw—I was like that, I had become like that." (CWM 11: 301)

25 March 1972

"Q: *The other day you spoke of the vision of your body, this body in transition*...

A: Yes, but I *was* like that. It was myself. I did not see myself in a mirror: I saw myself like that (*Mother bends her head to look at her body*). I was... I was like that.

It was for the first time. It was at four o'clock in the morning, I believe. It was quite natural—I did not look in a mirror, I was quite natural. I remember only what I saw (*gesture from the chest to the waist*). I had only a veil on me, so I saw only... it was the trunk that was quite different from the chest down to the waist: neither man nor woman.

And it was pretty. I had a form very very slim, very slender—very slender but not thin. And the skin was very white; the skin was like my skin. A very pretty form. But no sex, you could not say—neither man nor woman; sex had disappeared." (CWM 11: 302)

V— Eliminate Other Perversions of Sex

V—A. Sex-impulse and imagination

1. If imagination can be overcome, then the whole thing is overcome

"It usually happens that when actual indulgence of the vital [in sex] is given up (external exchange, touch or contact), imagination still goes on. But if this can be overcome, then the whole thing is overcome." (SABCL 24: 1540) (CWSA 31: 539)

"But this is an Asram and people are supposed to be doing a sadhana in which sex has to be surmounted. In the Asram there are many who mix freely with all the sadhikas—they are certainly not free from sex. Avoiding also is not a panacea; one can avoid and have sex imaginations and desires. But it is absurd to say that avoiding is the cause of sex imaginations and impulses or that mixing is a panacea for it." (CWSA 35: 721)

2. Imagination means the consent of the physical or the vital mind

"That [*support of the sex-sensation by the imagination*] is the difficulty. The imagination means a consent of the

physical or else the vital mind. Otherwise the [*sex*] sensation is often only due to physical causes and, if not supported by this automatic assent of a part of the mind, would before long diminish in its habit of recurrence." (SABCL 24: 1541) (CWSA 31: 523)

3. If the imaginations precipitate into a material act, then nothing is gained

"Both methods [*giving up contact with women and keeping it*] have their disadvantage. If one allows the opportunities, the sex movement continues—if one suppresses only, then the movement goes back into imaginations. If it is only imaginations then there is less harm, for in the end the imaginations can be got rid of, but if the imaginations precipitate into some material act, then nothing is gained." (CWSA 31: 539)

4. Discourage these imaginations and memories when they come

"To let the memory or imagination dwell on things that excite the sex-desire is unhealthy for the sadhana and an obstacle to the development of the Yogic consciousness. Discourage these imaginations and memories when they come." (CWSA 31: 523)

5. Imaginations can only be got rid of by not allowing them to run their course, but breaking them off as soon as they begin

"By giving up contact [*with women*] it [*sexual desire*] can be reduced to two forms—dream and imagination. Dream is not of much importance unless it affects the waking mind which it need not at all do; it can besides be discouraged and not fed, fades out in the end. Imaginations can only be got rid of by a tapasya of the will not allowing them to run their course, but breaking them off as soon as they begin." (SABCL 24: 1540–1541) (CWSA 31: 523)

6. To be able to stop the imagination by turning the mind elsewhere

"They come most easily when lying in bed after waking from sleep in a tamasic condition. One has to break them off either by shaking off the tamas or by emptying the mind and going to sleep again. At other times one ought to be able to stop it by turning the mind elsewhere." (SABCL 24: 1540–1541) (CWSA 31: 523)

7. It is dangerous for the sex-imagination to come when lying in bed, half-awake

"That is a right change. There is no condition more dangerous for the sex-imagination to come than this lying in bed in a half-awake or else a relaxed inert condition unoccupied by any activity or any experience." (SABCL 24: 1541) (CWSA 31: 522)

"It is the most dangerous movement for sex-things when just after waking one remains lying in bed; one should either go to sleep again, if there is time, or else fix the mind on wholesome things." (SABCL 24: 1541) (CWSA 31: 522)

"Inactivity is an atmosphere in which sex easily rises." (SABCL 24: 1541) (CWSA 31: 522)

8. Erotic imagination should not take hold of the consciousness by representing itself as spiritual truth

"Care must be taken that the sexual or erotic imagination does not take hold of the consciousness representing itself as spiritual truth." (SABCL 24: 1540) (CWSA 31: 523–524)

9. Aspire for entire purification

"The aspiration must be for entire purification, especially (1) purification from sex, so that no sex imaginations may enter and the sex impulse may cease, (2) purification from desires and demands, (3) purification from depression

which is the result of disappointed desires. It is the most important for you. Particularly what you must aspire for is peace in all the being, complete equanimity, samata. The feeling that peace is not enough must go. Peace and purity and equanimity once established, all the rest must be the Mother's free gift, not a result of the demand from the being." (CWSA 29: 46)

V—B. How to get rid of sexual thoughts?

1. Indulgence in sex-thoughts is unwarranted, increasing the difficulty

"That [*indulgence in sex-thoughts*] is just the thing that ought not to be done. It would be merely a gratuitous [unwarranted] increasing of the difficulties. For the spiritual endeavour is part of your nature and, if it is difficult to get rid of the sex-impulse, you would find it still more difficult to do without the spiritual life in you. Sex is the one difficulty in its way that is hardest to get rid of, because it sticks and returns, but one has to be more persistent than the difficulty—there is no other way." (CWSA 31: 522–523)

2. Thoughts are tools of execution and can do their work of destruction

"This makes us understand the necessity of not admitting into ourselves any thought which destroys aspiration or the creation of the truth of our being. It reveals the considerable importance of not allowing what one doesn't want to be or doesn't want to do to formulate itself into thought within the being. Because to think these things is already a beginning of their realisation. From every point of view it is bad to concentrate on what one doesn't want,

on what one has to reject, what one refuses to be, for the very fact that the thought is there gives to things one wants to reject a sort of right of existence within oneself. … Sri Aurobindo says that thought is not the cause of existence but an intermediary, the instrument which gives form to life, to creation, and the control of this instrument is of foremost importance if one wants disorder and all that is anti-divine to disappear from creation.

One must not admit bad thoughts into oneself under the pretext that they are merely thoughts. They are tools of execution. And one should not allow them to exist in oneself if one doesn't want them to do their work of destruction." (CWM 8: 396–397)

3. If one is obsessed by one's own thoughts, then they return again and again due to their own formation

"Thoughts are real entities which usually last until they are realised. Some people are obsessed by their own thoughts. They think of something and the thought returns and goes round and round in their heads as if it were something from outside. But it is their own formations returning again and again and striking the mind that has formed them. That is one aspect of the matter." (CWM 15: 309)

4. Stop taking pleasure in them and refuse to receive and express them

"But for instance, when undesirable thoughts come, if you look at them, observe them, if you take pleasure in following them in their movements, they will never stop coming. It is the same thing when you have undesirable feelings or sensations: if you pay attention to them, concentrate on them or even look at them with a certain indulgence, they will never stop. But if you absolutely refuse to receive and express them, after some time they stop. You must be patient and very persistent." (CWM 6: 330)

5. Do not give voice to them in your speech

"When bad thoughts come, you must reject them, not assent to them in your mind, not give voice to them in your speech, not believe in them or their suggestions. These things cannot vanish in a day, but if you do like that, they will diminish and lose their power to lay strong hold of you and disturb you, and in the end they will disappear." 21 April 1932 (CWSA 32: 227)

6. One can offer them and ask to be rid of them

"Q: *Mother, when we come to you, we try to be at our best possible, that is, to have very good thoughts; but often, on the contrary, all the bad impulses, bad thoughts we had during the day come forward.*

A: That is perhaps so that you can get rid of them.

If they come, one can offer them and ask to be rid of them.

That perhaps is the reason, it is because the Consciousness acts for purification. It is no use at all hiding things and pushing them behind, like this, and imagining they are not there because one has put a veil in front. It is much better to see oneself as one is—provided one is ready to give up this way of being. If you come allowing all the bad movements to rise to the surface, to show themselves; if you offer them, if you say, "Well, this is how I am", and if at the same time you have the aspiration to be different, then this second of presence is extremely useful; you can, yes, in a few seconds receive the help you need to get rid of them; while if you come like a little saint and go away content, without having received anything, it is not very useful.

Automatically the Consciousness acts like that, it is like the ray that brings light where there wasn't any. Only, what is needed is to be in a state where one *wants* to give up the thing, to get rid of it—not to cling to it and keep it.

If one sincerely wants to pull it out of oneself, make it disappear, then it is very useful.

…

To give the best one has is very fine and is much appreciated; but to give the worst one has is much more useful; and perhaps this offering is even more appreciated—on condition that it is given in order to get rid of it, not to take it back afterwards!" (CWM 8: 307–309)

7. Think of something else
8. If you chase it off effectively, constantly, and repeatedly, finally it does not come anymore
9. To bring down a great light from above

"Q: *Mother, at times unpleasant thoughts come and disturb us. How can we get rid of them?*

A: There are several methods. Generally—but it depends on people—generally, the easiest way is to think of something else. That is, to concentrate one's attention upon something that has nothing to do with that thought, has no connection with that thought, like reading or some work—generally something creative, some creative work. … Naturally, those who have begun to control their thought can make a movement of rejection, push aside the thought as one would a physical object. But that is more difficult and asks for a much greater mastery. If one can manage

it, it is more active, in the sense that if you reject that movement, that thought, if you chase it off effectively and constantly or almost repeatedly, finally it does not come any more. But in the other case, it can always return. That makes two methods.

The third means is to be able to bring down a sufficiently great light from above which will be the 'denial' in the deeper sense; that is, if the thought which comes is something dark (and especially if it comes from the subconscient or inconscient and is sustained by instinct), if one can bring down from above the light of a true knowledge, a higher power, and put that light upon the thought, one can manage to dissolve it or enlighten or transform it—this is the supreme method. This is still a little more difficult. But it can be done, and if one does it, one is cured—not only does the thought not come back but the very cause is removed.

The first step is to think of something else (but in this way, you know, it will be indefinitely repeated); the second is to fight; and the third is to transform. When one has reached the third step, not only is one cured but one has made a permanent progress." (CWM 6: 22–23)

"In a great aspiration, if you can put yourself into contact with something higher, some influence of your psychic being or some light from above, and if you can manage to put this in touch with these lower movements, naturally

they stop more quickly. But before even being able to draw these things by aspiration, you can already stop those movements from finding expression in you by a very persistent and patient refusal. When thoughts which you do not like come, if you just brush them away and do not pay them any attention at all, after some time they won't come any longer. But you must do this very persistently and regularly." (CWM 6: 330)

10. By remaining quiet and aspiring for a positive experience
11. Think more of the Mother and less of your vital impulses

"Q: *How to get rid of sexual thoughts?*

A: To think too much of sex even for suppressing it, makes it worse. You have to open more to positive experience."

"Q: *But how does one open to positive experience?*

A: By remaining quiet and aspiring for it—knowing that it is waiting above. Also think more of the Mother and less of your vital impulses." (Correspondence with Sri Aurobindo, Nirodbaran, 1983: 21)

12. Rejection of sexual suggestions aided by the influence of the Divine Mother
13. It takes a steady tapasya to get rid of a lifelong habit

"X seems in his letter to want only a liberation from sexual thoughts and desires by an intervention of another's will; but this is not how it should be done. Those who practise this Yoga can escape from it by a rejection of sexual suggestions aided by the influence of the Divine Power which acts through the Mother, but it is not instantaneous, except in the case of those who have a complete receptivity and an absolute faith. Usually it takes a steady tapasya to get rid of a lifelong habit." (CWSA 31: 513)

14. A bad thought that annoys and disturbs you, write it down very attentively, putting consciousness and will into it; then tear it up with the will that the thought will be torn up in the same way

"Thoughts are real entities which usually last until they are realised. Some people are obsessed by their own thoughts. They think of something and the thought returns and goes round and round in their heads as if it were something from outside. But it is their own formations returning again and

again and striking the mind that has formed them. That is one aspect of the matter.

Did you ever have the experience of a thought taking the form of words or a sentence in your mind and returning over and over again? But if you are clever enough to take a piece of paper and a pencil and write it down—that is the end of it, it won't return any more, you have thrown it out of yourself.

The thing has had its little satisfaction, it has manifested itself sufficiently and it won't return.

And there is something more interesting still: if you have a bad thought that annoys and disturbs you, write it down very attentively, very carefully, putting as much consciousness and will as you can. Then take the piece of paper and, with concentration, tear it up with the will that the thought will be torn up in the same way. That is how you will get rid of it." (CWM 15: 309–310)

V—C. How to get rid of the perverse habit of masturbation

1. With Yoga, masturbation is extremely dangerous

"It is of course true that the nerves get upset by the habit of masturbation (frequently done daily or continued for a long time) apart from other untoward results. In Hathayoga and Rajayoga to carry on sex along with the Yoga is extremely dangerous. But it is not safe (physically) with any Yoga, unless the practice of Yoga is only nominal or unless the mind and nerves are made of iron. The spiritual unsafeness is of course always there." (CWSA 31: 533)

"On the other hand, if you are unable to control these movements and dismiss them in spite of your mind refusing them, that means a weak condition of the nerves in which the remedy I proposed is the only one. I meant by change of air not only a change of climate, but of place, surroundings and atmosphere—to remain for a time where there will not be any pressure. You speak of the danger of not being able to come back or of losing the sadhana, but to allow these things to go farther is much more dangerous to the sadhana and, if they increase or continue, you will not be able to remain here." (CWSA 31: 532)

2. It comes from a hostile source

"Any intervention, however imperative, cannot be effective without the cooperation and assent of the being. If you continue to entertain and justify with your mind such [sexual] movements as you described and gave expression to, if you go on doing physical violence to yourself and adopting it as a means of sadhana or admitting as a part of sadhana the method of revolt or other Asuric errors, how do you expect to have the will and needed discrimination? You have first to throw out these things which have been shown to you to be false and from a hostile source.

It is because the mind justified or excused them, that the will became weak to dismiss them. You have to dismiss these errors altogether, if you want to do this Yoga in which they have no place at all." (CWSA 31: 533)

3. It is perfectly possible to check the habit—there are any number of people who have had it for years and yet have been able to stop it

"The theory of masturbation as a physiological necessity is a most extraordinary idea. It weakens the nervous force and nervous balance,—as is natural since it is an artificial and wholly uncompensated waste of the energy—and it disorganises the sex-centre. Those who indulge in it inordinately may even upset their nervous balance

altogether and bring about neurasthenia or worse. It is not by disorganisation of the sex-centre and sex-functioning that one should avoid the consequences of the sex-action, but by control of the sex itself so that it may be turned into higher forms of Energy.

It is perfectly possible to check the habit. There are any number of people who have had it for years and yet been able to stop it." (CWSA 31: 531)

4. If you cannot stop masturbation, you are right in going from the Ashram

"If you cannot stop the masturbation, I think you are right in going [from the Ashram], as to continue might have serious consequences for the nervous system. It is better in that case to live the ordinary life and let the sex-instinct have its natural outlet so long as it is so irresistible. It is not necessary to wait for training somebody to do the work. Mother appreciates very much all the work you have done and we had hoped the earnest spiritual effort you have made would prevail over this tendency.

But it would not be wise to insist too much against the obstinately strong indication that the vital nature needs a relief. Wherever you are, the Mother's blessings and mine will be with you and you will receive from us all the inner help we can give you." (CWSA 31: 534)

5. Establish strong mental control

"There is one way by which it is possible for you to get rid of the perverse habit: to establish a strong mental control and so get rid of the wrong movement. It is not true that it is unconquerable; on the contrary, the fact that you were able to interrupt it for some time shows that you can conquer it. It returned because these things are a movement of certain universal life-forces that, once allowed a habitual wrong response in the individual system, tend to continue in that form and, even if evicted, try always to recur. Your mind has rejected them, but something in your vital nature—the part that responds directly to the universal life-forces—still takes pleasure and has preserved the capacity and desire of the wrong response. A resolute and persistent effort of will can enforce in the end the rejection of the desire and finally even of any mechanical habit of the movement upon this part of the nature also. Only you must not be discouraged by relapses; your will must be more persevering than the habit and persist till there is a complete conquest." (CWSA 31: 532–533)

6. A simple notion of medical knowledge will take away this silly, old, harmful feeling of shame which brings perversion

Q: *A complete lack of knowledge about sex can produce serious trouble. I want to give some information to children whom I know.*

A: A simple notion of medical knowledge may be useful in taking away this silly old harmful feeling of shame which brings perversion." (CWM 12: 158)

7. Secretiveness must be renounced altogether

"As for the secretiveness you spoke of, it is one main reason of your going astray—for it has made you shut yourself up in your own wrong movement. If you have got yourself into an imprisoning circle, the first thing you have to do is to get out of it—secretiveness must be renounced altogether." (CWSA 31: 533–534)

8. If you had made the resolution to give it up, it would have disappeared long ago

"Necessarily, you must give up the perverse habit which is one of the main causes of your despondency, vital weakness, etc. There is nothing that has more power to derange and weaken the system. If not only in your mind but in your vital also you had made the resolution to give it up, it would have disappeared long ago." (SABCL 24: 1538) (CWSA 31: 532)

9. To break off the habit entirely and uncompromisingly

"The habit you speak of is exceedingly harmful and dangerous; it wastes the energy that should be preserved for the sadhana; it tends to weaken the mind, dislocate the consciousness, exhaust the nervous power, diminish the life-force, create inertia and impotence in the body. The excitations etc. that accompany it build up nothing; their tendency is to disintegrate. Often the result of this habit is to destroy the health and bring in undermining illnesses—it always does so when there is unrestrained indulgence.

There is only one thing to do for those on whom it comes—to break off the habit entirely, uncompromisingly and for ever and *never to touch the sex-centre*." (CWSA 31: 532)

V—D. How to eliminate sex-dreams and emissions

1. There are two kinds of these sex-dreams—one kind comes through the forces in the vital plane, and another comes from the subconscient

"There are two kinds of these [*sex*] dreams, one kind which are things happening on the vital plane, another kind which is made up of impressions and impulses coming up from the subconscient, not actual happenings. Dreams in which emission takes place are usually of the second kind—but not always; for sometimes they come through the touch of vital beings or forces in the vital plane or through a meeting of one's own sexual thought-forms with those of another there." (CWSA 31: 524)

2. This is not at all a sign that you are unfit for Yoga

"There is no reason to be depressed to this extent or to have these imaginations about failure in the Yoga. It is not at all a sign that you are unfit for the Yoga. It simply means that the sexual impulse rejected by the conscious parts has taken refuge in the subconscient, somewhere probably in the lower vital-physical and the most physical consciousness where there are some regions not yet open to the aspiration and the light. The persistence in sleep of things rejected in the waking consciousness is a quite

common occurrence in the course of the sadhana." (SABCL 24: 1543) (CWSA 31: 530)

3. Be perfectly calm and refuse to be upset by sex dreams and discharges

"The first thing necessary in such matters [*sex-dreams and emissions*] is to be perfectly calm and refuse to be upset by these difficulties. If they rise one must take it that they do so in order to be worked out.

If there is nothing in the waking consciousness to encourage the sex-difficulty, then these dreams or discharges without dream can only be a rising up of old dormant impressions in the subconscient. Such risings often take place when the Force is working in the subconscient to clear it." (SABCL 24: 1546) (CWSA 31: 528–529)

"People get too much worried about these [sex] dreams which are only mechanical movements of the subconscient physical. If the conscious vital is cleared, they will after some time, with a little concentration, dwindle away." (CWSA 31: 529)

"It is a mistake to make so much of emissions—everybody has them. The subconscient has its own movement and the want of control there is a thing one can get rid of only

when there is the full light down there. At most one can deal with this special factor by putting a will into the subconscient (in the sex-centre or the organ itself) for prohibition, so that even in the subconscient during sleep there may be something that reacts. Many have been able to diminish and almost get rid of the recurrence by this means. … Press on with the positive side of the sadhana towards realisation—these things will fade and disappear when the higher consciousness is down in the sex-centre. Meanwhile it has first to be controlled and got rid of as much as possible." (SABCL 24: 1543) (CWSA 31: 530)

"It is all nervous. If you did not get depressed and despondent and create a weakness by the depression, the discharges would do no harm. All get them except those who indulge and so get out the sex-fluid or those who have a strong Yogic or other control over their sleep. That control has to be got, but the first thing is to get rid of this reaction of despondency and weakness which is quite unnecessary." (CWSA 31: 531)

"There is no inevitable necessity for a dream emission making the body weak—it is probably the past sanskar that makes it have such strong results." (CWSA 31: 531)

4. Complete expulsion of sex-thoughts, sex-speech, and physical craving

"The main thing is to get the increasing force of brahmacarya in the waking consciousness, complete expulsion of sex-thoughts, speech, physical craving or impulse—the subconscient remnants will either die out or be cleared out afterwards when one is able to bring the higher consciousness down here." (SABCL 24: 1544) (CWSA 31: 526)

5. Make the waking consciousness entirely pure, then put a will or force on the subconscient

"In order that the dream emissions may diminish or cease, it is necessary first to have complete Brahmacharya, *kāyamanovākyena*—not only to banish sexuality from the bodily action, but also sexual impulses from the vital and body consciousness and sexual thoughts and imaginations from the mind and speech and not talk about sexual things.

The dreams arise from the subconscient where all impressions and instincts are stored up and any of these things stimulates the subconscient and increases its store which can well up in dreams. If one makes the waking consciousness entirely pure, then by putting a will or force on the subconscient (especially before going to sleep) one can after a time eliminate the sex-dreams and emissions." (SABCL 24: 1545) (CWSA 31: 526–527)

"Even when this [no indulgence] has been done and there is no thought or desire, the mechanical emission can continue in sleep, but if the mind is kept free that will eventually disappear." (SABCL 24: 1517)

6. The seed state in the subconscient which comes up in dreams, can be removed

"But the sex-impressions in the heart can be got rid of long before the end of life, and even the seed state in the subconscient which comes up in dreams, though sticky enough, is not quite so irremovable as all that." (SABCL 24: 1545) (CWSA 31: 525)

7. Putting of a force as concrete as possible on the sex-centre and organ, prohibiting this urge

"Apart from the total rejection of sex-thoughts and imaginations and actions, which ends by acting in the subconscient also, I don't know any remedy for sex-dreams except the putting of a force as concrete as possible on the sex-centre and organ prohibiting this urge and its result, put when about to sleep and renewed each time one wakes and goes to sleep again. But this all cannot manage to use, for they employ a mental will instead of a concrete force (the mental will can be effective, but is not always so). This method, besides, only acts for the time, it inhibits but

except in rare cases does not permanently cure; it does not get rid of the sex-impressions in the subconscient, and of course it means thinking of the sex-affair though only negatively." (CWSA 31: 525)

"Night-dreams are involuntary upsurgings of the sex-impressions from the subconscient; most, men even when they are not indulging in the sex-act, have it from time to time though it varies in period from a week, a fortnight, a month to three or four months or even less. To have it more frequently indicates either indulgence in sex-imaginations which stimulate the sex-centre or else a nervous weakness in that part due to past indulgence. Some have benefited by putting a will on the body before going to sleep at night that these dreams should not happen." (SABCL 24: 1542) (CWSA 31: 525–526)

8. To put a will or force upon the body consciousness before going to sleep

"It is also often found very effective to put a will or force upon the body consciousness before going to sleep that it should not happen—especially when you feel the predisposing condition of heaviness or inertia, it should be done. This will is not always immediately successful, but after a time the subconscient gets the habit of responding to the will or force thus laid upon it and the trouble

dwindles and finally disappears altogether." (SABCL 24: 1548) (CWSA 31: 527)

"This [*problem of emission*] is a quite usual phenomenon when one stops sexual activity and rejects it in the conscious mind and vital. It takes refuge in the subconscient where the mind has no direct control and comes up in the form of dreams causing emission. That lasts so long as the subconscient itself is not cleared. This can sometimes be done by putting a strong will or, if possible, a concrete current of Force on the sex-centre before sleeping against this thing happening. The success is not always immediate, but if effectively done it tends first to reduce frequency and finally stop it." (CWSA 31: 528)

9. Discourage sexual imaginations in the waking state
10. Have a strong will before sleeping that it should not happen

"As for the discharges, that is less dangerous; most who live unmarried have them from time to time. Only, if they occur too often, they are depressing to the vital force. Certainly, they must be stopped; but do not have exaggerated ideas on the matter. To stop them, the first necessity is to discourage sexual imaginations in the waking state. Even if that is totally done, the discharge may still continue at night, because the subconscient keeps the

memory and the habit. To stop it, you have to have a strong will before sleeping that it should not happen; also, if you can learn how to do it, direct a strong force on the sexual centre before going to sleep to inhibit this kind of accident. After a time this method usually succeeds." (CWSA 31: 527–528)

"This kind of sexual attack through sleep does not depend very much on food or anything else that is outward. It is a mechanical habit in the subconscient; when the sexual impulse is rejected or barred out in the waking thoughts and feelings, it comes in this form in sleep, for then there is only the subconscient at work and there is no conscious control, It is a sign of sexual desire suppressed in the waking mind and vital, but not eliminated in the stuff of the physical nature.

To eliminate it one must first be careful to harbour no sexual imagination or feeling in the waking state: next, to put a strong will on the body and especially on the sexual centre that there should be nothing of the kind in sleep. This may not succeed at once, but if persevered in for a long time, it usually has a result; the subconscient begins to obey." (SABCL 24: 1548)

"When the waking consciousness has renounced the indulgence of the sexual desires and impulses, these take refuge in the subconscient as impressions, memories,

suppressed desires and come up in sleep as dreams and involuntary sleep emissions.

If the waking consciousness is not itself clear, if, that is to say, though there is no physical indulgence, yet there are imaginations in the mind or desires in the vital or the body, then these dreams and emissions can be frequent.

Even if the waking consciousness is clear, the subconscient emergences can still come for a time, but in time they diminish.

Some are able to get rid of this by putting a strong prohibiting will or force on the subconscient or on the sex-centre before going to sleep, but this does not succeed with everyone." (SABCL 24: 1544) (CWSA 31: 526)

11. The waking state must be rigorously cleared out; then there is an automatic extension of the habit of rejection to the subconscient

"Anyway, the dream-kind is not so much to trouble about, unless it is frequent—it is the waking state that must be rigorously cleared out. Sometimes, if that is done, there is automatic extension of the habit of rejection to the subconscient, so that when the dream is coming there is an automatic prohibition that stops it. Under a regime like that I think the sex-pressure would become, if not non-existent, yet permanently quiescent in its seed state and

so practically *non est.*" (SABCL 24: 1545–1546) (CWSA 31: 525)

12. Become more conscious in sleep by waking in time, stopping the dream, or prohibiting the discharge

"It is obviously an attack which falls upon your nervous system through the subconscient. It comes in sleep because in the waking consciousness you are more on your guard and able to react against attacks. Usually this kind of dream and discharge come when the physical consciousness is in a tamasic condition through fatigue or strain or any other cause, in a heavy sleep or under a stress of inertia.

The first thing to do is to reject the after consequences as you have done this time—for you say you do not feel any weakness, but rather as if nothing had happened. It is not at all inevitable that one should feel weakness after a dream of this kind and a discharge; it is only by a habitual association in the physical mind that these forces can bring these reactions of nervous weakness.

As for preventing the discharge, it can be done by becoming more conscious in sleep. You were conscious of all that happened, but you must besides develop the power of a conscious will which sees what is going to happen and

interferes to prevent it, either by waking in time or by stopping the dream or prohibiting the discharge.

All this is perfectly possible, it is a matter of habit and a little persistence." (SABCL 24: 1547) (CWSA 31: 527)

13. To get the higher consciousness down
14. Become progressively conscious in sleep
15. To bring the waking will and aspiration into the body in sleep

"The remedy [for sex dreams and emission] is:

(1) to get the higher consciousness, its light and the workings of its power down into the obscurer parts of the nature,

(2) to become progressively more conscious in sleep, with an inner consciousness which is aware of the working of the sadhana in sleep as in waking,

(3) to bring to bear the waking will and aspiration on the body in sleep.

One way to do the last is to make a strong and conscious suggestion to the body, before sleeping, that the thing should not happen; the more concrete and physical the suggestion can be made and the more directly on the sexual centre, the better. The effect may not be quite immediate at first or invariable; but usually this kind of suggestion, if you know how to make it, prevails in the end: even when it does not prevent the dream, it very often

awakes the consciousness within in time to prevent untoward consequences." (SABCL 24: 1543–1544) (CWSA 31: 530–531)

16. Sex dreams and emissions can also be due to physical causes

"It is also just possible that the discharges may be due, especially where there are no dreams, to purely material causes, e.g. the pressure of undischarged urine or faecal matter on the bladder. But in any case, the thing is not to be disturbed and to put a force or will on the sex-centre or sex-organ for these things to cease. This can be done just before sleeping. Usually after a time, if done regularly, it has an effect.

A calm general pressure of Will or Force on the physical subconscient is to be put. The subconscient may be often obstinate in its continual persistence, but it can and does accommodate itself quickly or slowly to the will of the conscious being." (SABCL 24: 1546) (CWSA 31: 529)

"Your dreams were mostly on the vital physical plane. There if there is any physical contact of a sexual or other kind that acts strongly on the sexual centre or on a sensory contact, it may even without raising any lust produce an emission by a mechanical blind and inconscient action of a purely physical (not even vital physical) kind. It is only

when the sex-centre has become very strong that this becomes impossible." (SABCL 24: 1546) (CWSA 31: 529)

"These things (accumulation of urine, hot stimulating food etc.) are all predisposing or auxiliary causes or can be so. There is often as described a rhythm in this subconscient urge—it happens at a particular time in the month or else after a fixed period of time (week, fortnight, month, six months)." (CWSA 31: 528)

"The pressure from the kidneys or the intestines causing dream of sex-tendency or imagination is the last and most physical form—it often remains when the others have gone. The body dull and the mind half awake is indeed what gives it its opportunity. But if it is only for a few minutes and leaves no after effect, then the tendency ought to disappear after a time." (CWSA 31: 529)

V—E. Skin diseases and sexual desires

"Yes, of course, skin diseases have much to do with sexual desires—not of course always, but often." (SABCL 24: 1549) (CWSA 31: 545)

"I suppose it [*pimples on the face*] is often the result of suppressed sexuality—suppressed in act but still internally active. These things do not act in the same way with all, with some it may act on the blood, with some it may not or else not in the same form. Moreover I do not suppose that sex is the only cause of pimples on the face—there are other things also that can give that." (SABCL 24: 1549) (CWSA 31: 545)

VI— Rejection of Vital Ill-Will

VI—A. Ill-will is truly the will to do evil for the sake of doing evil

"What I call ill-will is truly the will to do evil for the sake of doing evil, destroying for the sake of destroying, harming for harming's sake and taking pleasure in the fact of doing evil. That really is ill-will.

… I believe it is with this kind of mental functioning and under the direct influence of the vital that man has become an ill-willed being. The Titans are ill-willed beings but the Titans are beings of the vital world manifested in the forces of Nature: they want to do evil for the pleasure of doing it, to destroy for the pleasure of destroying." (CWM 5: 148)

"The ill-will of men is usually only a kind of reflection—an imitation or a reflection—of the will of the beings of the vital, a will clearly hostile to creation, a will to make things as painful, as ugly, as sorrowful, as monstrous as possible." (CWM 5: 147–148)

Q: *Some boys in the neighbourhood have become a systematic nuisance—jeering and throwing things—and something decisive needs to be done. I know you do not*

like violence, but how else can one deal with this sort of thing?

A: It is in the nature of things that the ignorance and smallness of these low minds should push them to these petty manifestations of malevolence and ill-will. The best thing is to remain unmoved. As for violence that is out of the question. No doubt you do not mind about yourself—but you represent the Asram and we must not give a handle to those in power—many of whom are not now favourable to us—to get a handle to do anything against the Asram. That is the primary consideration at the present moment and under the present conditions—which will not always remain as they are now." 21 December 1933 (CWSA 35: 811)

Ill-will is human invention

Q: *Why is there ill-will?*

A: ….There are people who have written volumes on the subject. And each one explains it in his own way and that changes nothing, in fact. You may ask me: Why is there ill-will? Why is there ignorance? Why is there stupidity? Why is there wickedness? Why is there all the evil? Why is the world not a very charming place?...

… Some say that ill-will comes from ignorance (that was exactly what the Buddha claimed) and that if ignorance disappeared there would no longer be any ill-will. There are others who say that ill-will comes from division, separation, that if the universe were not cut off from its Origin there would be no ill-will. Others still say that it is ill-will which is the cause of everything, of separation and ignorance; and so there arises the problem: Whence does it come, this ill-will? If it were at the origin of everything, it was then *in* the origin of everything. And there we are altogether at a loss, my children! We could speculate upon this for years, we shall never get out of it. And so those who push it so far finish by telling you: Ill-will doesn't exist, it is an illusion. And that's simply because they stop midway in their reasoning, for if they went a little farther they might say: Perhaps it is a human invention, this ill-will.... That is possible!" (CWM 5: 145–146)

Ill-will or goodwill is on the same plane, whereas the Divine belongs to another world

Q: Why doesn't one receive the Divine as easily as, say, one receives a neighbour's ill-will? Is that it?

A: Because it is not on the same plane. The neighbour's ill-will or goodwill are on the same plane, whereas the Divine belongs to another world. That's the reason why. If you

want an image: all that is on a horizontal plane in relation to you is very easily received, but all that comes from a vertical direction is much more difficult. First one must look up above, within oneself, and then open oneself so that it descends; while in the other way... one moves like that all the time. Don't understand?

And unfortunately, it is much easier to slide down, to fall than to climb up. It is much easier to respond to an influence which drags you down than to a force that pulls you up. Is it not more easy to go down than to climb up? If you are at a certain place and have to climb a rock, it is much more difficult than if you let yourself slide in order to go down below. Isn't that so?" (CWM 6: 168–169)

VI—B. In Yoga, reject ill-will

"All your nature must be plastic to her touch,—not questioning as the self-sufficient ignorant mind questions and doubts and disputes and is the enemy of its enlightenment and change; not insisting on its own movements as the vital in man insists and persistently opposes its refractory desires and ill-will to every divine influence; not obstructing and entrenched in incapacity, inertia and tamas as man's physical consciousness obstructs and clinging to its pleasure in smallness and darkness cries out against each touch that disturbs its soulless routine or its dull sloth or its torpid slumber." (CWSA 32: 24)

"Q: *Though he may recite only a tiny portion of the sacred texts, if he puts into practice their teaching, having rejected all passion, all ill-will and all delusion, he possesses the true wisdom; his mind completely freed, no longer attached to anything, belonging neither to this world nor to any other, he shares in the life of the disciples of the Blessed One.*

A: … Therefore to conform to the wisdom of this teaching, we shall consider the best means of rejecting all passion and ill-will and delusion.

The delusion consists in taking the appearance for the reality and transient things for the only thing worthy of pursuit, the everlasting Truth.

It is rather interesting to note that the Dhammapada clearly underlines that it is not enough to be free from the bonds of this world only, but of all the worlds.

… It is in the pure Truth that you will find your satisfaction and the reward of all your efforts." 10 January 1958 (CWM 3: 200–201) Mother's commentaries on the Dhammapada

"Thou wilt dispel the darkness of ignorance and the black smoke of egoistic ill-will; Thou wilt dissolve all wrong suggestions and strengthen in us a pure and clear vision and the perspicacity which does not let itself be deceived by disruptive thoughts and conflicting wills for disorder.

… O my sweet Master, Thy infinite love is the reality of our being; who can struggle against its all-powerful action? It penetrates everything, it passes through every obstacle, whether it be the inertia of a heavy ignorance or the resistance of an uncomprehending ill-will. O my sweet Master, through and by this love, Thou shinest resplendent in all things, and this splendour of Thine, ever-increasing in its force, shall radiate its action over all the earth and become perceptible to every consciousness." (CWM 1: 166) Prayers and Meditations, June 4, 1914

"For yourself what you must have with other sadhaks (including your sisters) is a harmonious relation free from any vital attachment (indifference is not asked from you) and free from any indulgence in wrong vital movements of the opposite kind (such as dislike, jealousy or ill-will). It is through the psychic consciousness that you have found it possible to be in a true constant relation with the Mother and your aim is to make that the basis of all your life, action and feelings; all in you, all you feel, say and do should be consistent with that basis. If all proceeds from that psychic union of your consciousness with the Mother's, dedicating everything to her, then you will develop the right relations with others." 10 February 1932 (CWSA 32: 323)

"One must discern these influences, [which stand in the way of spiritual progress] suggestions, impulses, and systematically refuse them without ever getting discouraged by their persistence and ever yielding to their will. One must, at the same time, observe clearly in one's being all its different elements, obscure, egoistic, unconscious, or even ill-willed, which consciously or otherwise, answer these bad influences, and allow them not only to penetrate into the consciousness, but sometimes to get settled there." (CWM 8: 22)

VI—C. How does ill-will act on the person for whom it is intended?

Q: *When somebody has an ill-will against a person, how does this will act upon that person?*

A: It is the same thing. Through a formation, a mental formation. When somebody is very ill-willed and wants to harm you, his will is expressed more or less; at times he does not dare to acknowledge this to himself for he would feel ashamed, but that may come spontaneously. Or else, it may be as with malicious people, something shut up very deep in the consciousness, all the time there, like that, stirring up their spite; and then there are violent people who wish that a calamity may befall those who have caused them some so-called harm or have displeased them for some reason or other.... Anyway, that is it, it belongs to the field of formation; and it is so strong that if you just pass by someone who has a manifest ill-will, you may suddenly feel very uneasy.

Now, if you have a little knowledge and consciousness, you can become aware of the reason, and then, when one realizes the reason, there is only one thing to do, just this (*gesture*), as one brushes off a fly. Flies are very troublesome and come back again and again; and evil formations—take care!—have the same habit as flies. You brush flies away, they return, you brush them away again,

again they return. They think it is a game. Have you never noticed, flies take this as a game? truly, even as they are sent away, they return. Only, if at a particular moment you become angry, you get into a temper and do this (*gesture*), even if you do not touch it, the fly will not come back. It feels it. Try, you will see.

But a bad thought is a bad deed. There are people who do not know it, but truly a bad thought is a bad deed and if one thinks and wishes harm to someone, well, one is responsible for the misfortunes that come upon him just as much as though one had acted.

But the unfortunate thing is that this is not recognized and that never does one intervene in the bad thoughts of people.... There are even people who take great pleasure in inciting the bad thoughts of others. I have known such people (unfortunately far too many), when they have something unpleasant to say to somebody, they never miss the opportunity of telling him: 'You know, somebody said that about you', and also: 'You know, that other person said this about you.' And thus they create as much harm as they think of. And this they do at times simply through stupidity, most often through vanity, in order to show off that they know something. But at bottom, in the consciousness, there is what is called mischief-making—something that enjoys creating disorder, misunderstandings, disputes among people, unpleasant situations, and feels at ease amidst these. There are many

people with a very sharp tongue. It is called in French 'une langue de vipere', a viperish tongue. This is their great amusement. And they do much, much, much harm. But even without speaking, if one has a strong thought and thinks ill of people, one does a bad deed." (CWM 5: 143–145)

VI—D. How to safeguard yourself from ill-will

1. Manage to keep within yourself, in your head, a complete immobility that refuses to receive these vibrations, and the other person cannot disturb you

"Someone comes and insults you or says unpleasant things to you; and if you begin to vibrate in unison with this anger or this ill-will, you feel quite weak and powerless and usually you make a fool of yourself. But if you manage to keep within yourself, especially in your head, a complete immobility which refuses to receive these vibrations, then at the same time you feel a great strength, and the other person cannot disturb you. If you remain very quiet, even physically, and when violence is directed at you, you are able to remain very quiet, very silent, very still, well, that has a power not only over you but over the other person also. If you don't have all these vibrations of inner response, if you can remain absolutely immobile within yourself, everywhere, this has an almost immediate effect upon the other person." (CWM 8: 67)

2. Be above all ill-will and reply with a benevolent smile to the bitterest words

"Q: *What is to be done if a person comes to quarrel because one has accepted in one case and refused in*

another? What is to be done to avoid such bitterness around one, provoked by repeated refusals?

A: As for ill-will, jealousy, quarrels and reproaches, one must *sincerely* be above all that and reply with a benevolent smile to the bitterest words; and unless one is absolutely sure of himself and his reactions, it would be better, as a general rule, to keep silent." 6 October 1960 (CWM 14: 264)

3. Open yourself to receive Divine Grace

"You speak of your possible unfitness, but it is not a question of fitness or unfitness. There is nobody who can go on in his own strength or by right of his fitness to the goal of the sadhana. It is only by the Divine Grace and reliance on the Divine Grace that it can be done. It is in a strength greater than your own that you must put your first and last reliance. If your faith falters you have to call on that to sustain you; if your force is insufficient against the ill-will and opposition that surround you, open yourself to receive that force [Divine Grace] in its place." (CWSA 29: 33–34)

4. When there is a mass of ill will, if there is only one good will somewhere, it makes the Grace act, and everything goes well

"Q: *How is it possible that something almost perfectly done by a mass of goodwills can be spoilt by one single little ill-will?*

A: That the little ill-will disturbs all the work of goodwill? Who said that?

Q: *It happens very often.*
(*Mother did not hear the disciple well.*)

A: It always happens?

Q: *In the* Letters *Sri Aurobindo says it: The Supermind could have descended but because of the ill-will of the people in the Ashram it was obliged to withdraw.*

A: But surely I have never seen this. I admit that I don't understand. I rather find it just the other way, that even when there is a mass of bad wills, if there is only one good will somewhere (*laughter*), it makes the Grace act and everything goes well." (CWM 7: 389–390)

5. Offer all your acts

"Q: *But if the power of ill-will is greater than the other person's goodwill?*

A: Yes, that's true, that may happen. Fundamentally, this is why we always come back to the same thing: one must do all one can, as well as possible, and do it as an offering to the Divine, and then, once all this is settled and organised, well, if there is really an aspiration in the being, and a being that is a being of light, it can counteract all bad influences. But once one puts one's foot into this world, one can't hope very much to be quite pure and free from bad influences. Every time one eats, one absorbs them; every time one breathes, one absorbs them. Then, essentially, what is necessary is to do the work of cleansing, progressively, as much as possible." (CWM 5: 413)

6. Totally sincere surrender

"There are all kinds of absolutely undesirable things in the atmosphere. And so, if one must always be on the watch, looking around on all sides, one would think only of one thing, how to protect oneself. First of all, it is tiresome, and then, you see, it makes you waste much time. If you are well enveloped in this way, with this light, the light of a perfectly glad, totally sincere surrender, when you are enveloped with that, it serves you as a marvellous filter. Nothing that is altogether undesirable, nothing that has ill-will can pass through. So, automatically, these things return where they came from. If there is a conscious ill-will

against you, it comes, but cannot pass; the door is closed, for it is open only to divine things, it is not open to anything else. So it returns very quietly to the source from where it came." (CWM 6: 214–215)

7. Once a man unites with the Divine, he is able to avoid the ill-will of others

"Once a man becomes conscious of the Divine and unites with Him, he certainly becomes abnormal to ordinary eyes, for he no longer has the weaknesses that make up ordinary human nature. But fortunately for him, by the very fact of his inner realisation, he loses man's habit of boasting and is thus able to avoid the ill will of others." 5 December 1969 (CWM 10: 278)

8. If you are able to see the Divine in all things, well, then the ill-will can do nothing to you

"There are countless legends or stories of this kind, like that of Prahlad [in Indian mythology Prahlad is the son of King Hiranyakashipu, an ardent enemy of the god Vishnu. The king had banned the worship of Vishnu in his kingdom, and when he learnt that his son Prahlad was worshipping this god in his own palace, he delivered him to serpents, but they did not bite him. Then he had him thrown down from the top of a hill into the sea, but the child was

miraculously carried by the waters. When the enraged king asked his son, 'Who has saved you?', the child replied, 'Vishnu is everywhere, in the serpents and in the sea.' It is interesting to note that the king himself had been a soul temporarily driven out from the heaven of Vishnu due to the curse of some rishis who had given him the choice between three lives on earth as the enemy of Vishnu and ten lives on earth as the worshipper of Vishnu—the king had chosen the shorter way back] for instance, which we saw recently in a film, stories which illustrate that state of consciousness. And I am not only convinced, but I myself have the quite tangible experience that if in the presence of some danger or an enemy or some ill-will, you are able to remain in this condition and see the Divine in all things, well, the danger will have no effect, the ill-will can do nothing to you, and the enemy will either be transformed or runaway. That is quite certain." (CWM 8: 223)

VI—E. Problems of ill-will

1. An attitude of ill-will disturbs the functioning of the digestion

"Always be kind and you will be free from suffering, always be contented and happy, and you will radiate your quiet happiness.

It is particularly noticeable that all the digestive functions are extremely sensitive to an attitude that is critical, bitter, full of ill-will, to a sour judgment. Nothing disturbs the functioning of the digestion more than that. And it is a vicious circle: the more the digestive function is disturbed, the more unkind you become, critical, dissatisfied with life and things and people. So you can't find any way out. And there is only one cure: to deliberately drop this attitude, to absolutely forbid yourself to have it and to impose upon yourself, by constant self-control, a deliberate attitude of all-comprehending kindness. Just try and you will see that you feel much better." 22 August 1958 (CWM 3: 291)

2. A thought of ill-will can make you go out of the Divine's protection

"If you do something contrary, for example, if you are under the protection of the Divine and for a moment you

have a thought of doubt or ill-will or revolt, immediately you go out of the protection. So the protection acts around you to prevent adverse forces from coming upon you or an accident from happening, that is to say, even if you lose consciousness, because of the protection even your lack of consciousness will not produce a bad result immediately. But if you go out of the protection and are not all the time vigilant, then either you will be attacked by the adverse forces or an accident will happen." (CWM 5: 165–166)

3. The evil you have wilfully done will always come back to you

Addressed to people of ill-will

"The evil you have wilfully done always comes back to you under one form or another." 24 April 1969 (CWM 14: 214)

"Each one is free to do whatever he likes, but he cannot prevent this acts from bearing their natural consequences. It is only what is done with the Divine and for the Divine that is free from the slavery of consequences." (CWM 14: 214)

"There is a Supreme Divinity witness of all our actions and the day of consequence will come soon." 1 March 1971 (CWM 14: 214)

"Each one brings upon himself the consequences of his acts." 3 March 1971 (CWM 14: 214–215)

"Things are not altogether what you think them to be. For some years already, I have had much to say on the subject. But what is the use? There are certain waters which are best left unstirred. In any case, I would like you never to forget this: What each one meets in life is always exactly in accordance with what he is. Not in the way ignorant human justice understands it, but according to a law that is much more subtle, more deep, more true. Let us never forget that the supreme Lord is behind everything and that it is He who is the master of our destinies." (CWM 14: 214–215)

4. Ill-will is smitten by Mahakali's scourge

"Terrible is her face to the Asura, dangerous and ruthless her mood against the haters of the Divine; for she is the Warrior of the Worlds who never shrinks from the battle. Intolerant of imperfection, she deals roughly with all in man that is unwilling and she is severe to all that is obstinately ignorant and obscure; her wrath is immediate and dire against treachery and falsehood and malignity, ill-will is smitten at once by her scourge." (CWSA 32: 19) (Description of Mahakali)

5. If scientific knowledge is put into the hands of people with ill-will, then the results will be catastrophic

"If you put scientific knowledge in the hands of ignorant and stupid people, it can produce catastrophes. And if to this is added the fact that they are people with ill-will or those who have personal motives, then the results are as bad as can be." (CWM 7: 264)

VI—F. In Yoga, your own ill-will is your extreme laziness, a refusal to make any effort to progress

"Well, when one doesn't want to make an effort to correct oneself, one says, 'Oh, it is impossible, I can't do it, I don't have the strength, I am not made of that stuff, I don't have the necessary qualities, I could never do it.' It is absolute laziness, it is in order to avoid the required effort. When you are asked to make progress: 'Oh, it is beyond my capacity, I am a poor creature, I can do nothing!' That's all. It is almost ill-will. It is extreme laziness, a refusal to make any effort. One accepts all one's defects and incapacities in order not to have to make the necessary effort to overcome them. One says, 'I am like that, I can't be otherwise!' It is a refusal to let the divine Grace work in you. It is a justification of your own ill-will." (CWM 6: 267)

Q: *Is it [physical tamas] the same thing as laziness?*

A: Not quite. Of course, laziness is a kind of tamas, but in laziness there is an ill-will, a refusal to make an effort—while tamas is inertia: one wants to do something, but one can't.

I remember, a long time ago, having been among some young people, and they remarked that when I decided to get up I used to get up with a jump, without any difficulty. They asked me, 'How do you do it? We, when

we want to get up, have to make an effort of will to be able to do it.' They were so surprised! And *I* was surprised by the opposite. I used to tell myself, 'How does it happen? When one has decided to get up, one gets up.' No, the body was there, like that, and it was necessary to put a will into it, to push this body for it to get up and act. It is like that, this is tamas. Tamas is a purely material thing; it is very rare to have a vital or mental tamas (it may occur but through contagion), I believe it is more a tamas of the nerves or the brain than vital or mental tamas. But laziness is everywhere, in the physical, the vital, the mind. Generally lazy people are not always lazy, not in all things. If you propose something that pleases them, amuses them, they are quite ready to make an effort. There is much ill-will in laziness." (CWM 4: 365–366)

The lower vital denies the presence of the Divine to avoid making an effort

Q: *Isn't the lower vital conscious of the work going on in it?*

A: Then, if it is logical and well-meaning, it ought to admit the presence of the Divine. You understand, it is a vicious circle; it does not want the Divine to be there and it denies Him because it is much troubled that there is this discipline which will oblige it to change, to master itself, check its

desires, bow its head instead of always protesting, so it says violently, 'There is no Divine.' But it may very well know, at the same time, that the work has begun and, consequently, have the proof that the Divine is there. But it will deny Him all the same, it is ill-willed, it uses this argument wilfully to avoid making an effort." (CWM 4: 344)

"Then if you look at yourself very carefully, you find out: 'There! I am still like that; in that little corner, there is still something of that kind, not clear: a little selfishness, a little ill-will, something refusing to change.' So you see it, you take it by the tip of its nose or by the ear and hold it up in full light: 'So, you were hiding! you are hiding? But I don't want you any longer.' And then it has to go away." (CWM 5: 102)

VII— Rejection of Hatred

VII—A. The self-asserting life brings hatred and dislike towards all that stands in the way of its expansion or hurts its ego

"It is not only in the realm of interests, but in the realm of ideas and the realm of religion that the vital being of man has introduced this spirit and attitude of self-affirmation and struggle and the use of violence, oppression and suppression, intolerance, aggression; it has imposed the principle of life-egoism on the domain of intellectual truth and the domain of the spirit. Into its self-affirmation the self-asserting life brings in hatred and dislike towards all that stands in the way of its expansion or hurts its ego; it develops as a means or as a passion or reaction of the life-nature cruelty, treachery and all kinds of evil: its satisfaction of desire and impulse takes no account of right and wrong, but only of the fulfilment of desire and impulse." (CWSA 21: 645)

"It can be often observed that when a self-assertive vital egoism goes on trampling on its way without restraint or scruple all that opposes its will or desire, it raises a mass of reactions against itself, reactions of hatred, antagonism, unease in men which may have their result now or

hereafter, and still more formidable adverse reactions in universal Nature." (CWSA 22: 845)

"All hatred & repulsion arises from the one cause, Avidya, which begot [brought about] Will, called Desire, which begot Ahankar, which begot desire called Hunger. From Desire-Hunger are born liking & dislike, liking for whatever satisfies or helps us to our desire, dislike for whatever obstructs or diminishes the satisfaction of desire." (CWSA 17: 138)

"It is said in the Upanishad, 'One does not love the wife for the sake of the wife' or the child or friend etc. as the case may be 'but for one's self's sake one loves the wife'. There is usually a hope of return, of benefit or advantage of some kind, or of certain pleasures and satisfactions, mental, vital or physical, that the person loved can give. Remove these things and the love very soon sinks, diminishes or disappears or turns into anger, reproach, indifference or even hatred. But there is also an element of habit, something that makes the presence of the person loved a sort of necessity because it has always been there—and this is sometimes so strong that even in spite of entire incompatibility of temper, fierce antagonism, something like hatred, it lasts and even these gulfs of discord are not enough to make the persons part; in other cases this feeling is more tepid and after a time one gets accustomed

to separation or accepts a substitute." (CWSA 29: 339–340)

VII—B. The habit of hatred opens itself to the general power of evil

"The habit of love confirms and enhances my power of love; it purifies my being and opens it to the universal good. The habit of hatred on the contrary corrupts my being, fills it with poison, with bad and morbid toxic matter, and opens it to the general power of evil. My love ought also by a prolongation or a return to produce love in others and my hatred to give rise to hatred; that happens to a certain, a great extent, but it need not be and is not an invariable or rigorous consequence; still we may well see and believe that love does throw out widening ripples and helps to elevate the world while hatred has the opposite consequence.

… for love is a joy in itself, but also love suffers; hatred is a troubled and self-afflicting thing, but has too its own perverse delight of itself and its gratifications; but in the end we may say that love, because it is born of the universal Delight, triumphs in its own nature and hatred because it is its denial or perversion, leads to a greater sum of misery to myself as to others." (CWSA 13: 371–372)

"By his narrowness and hatred of others he is bringing an element of falsehood into the work that is being done here." (CWSA 35: 699)

"Hatred is the sign of a secret attraction that is eager to flee from itself and furious to deny its own existence. That too is God's play in His creature.

Selfishness is the only sin, meanness the only vice, hatred the only criminality. All else can easily be turned into good, but these are obstinate resisters of deity." Thoughts and Aphorisms (CWSA 12: 436)

"*Do you believe that people here are more sensitive than people outside? Some people think that the Asram is a 'rotten' place with jealousy and hatred rampant among the sadhaks.*

"Outside there are just the same things. The Asram is an epitome of the human nature that has to be changed—but outside people put as much as possible a mask of social manners and other pretences over the rottenness—what Christ called in the case of the Pharisees the 'whited sepulchre'. Moreover there one can pick and choose the people one will associate with while in the narrow limits of the Asram it is not so possible—contacts are inevitable. Wherever humans are obliged to associate closely, what I saw described the other day as 'the astonishing meannesses and caddishnesses inherent in human nature' come quickly out. I have seen that in Asrams, in political work, in social attempts at united living, everywhere in fact where it gets a chance. But when one tries to do Yoga, one

cannot fail to see that in oneself and not only, as most people do, see it in others, and once seen, then? Is it to be got rid of or to be kept? Most people here seem to want to keep it. Or they say it is too strong for them, they can't help it!" 3 April 1938 (CWSA 35: 740–741)

"Each time one sincerely has an experience and is entirely absorbed in the experience, all that one sees becomes identical with one, because in fact it is everywhere and when one becomes conscious of it in oneself, one becomes conscious of it in everything. It is true.

But it is not solely true, all the rest is also there. And the opposite is also true: when you enter a state of hatred and have the experience of hatred, the whole world for you is full of hatred; at that time almost nothing else exists but hatred." (CWM 6: 363)

VII—C. By putting forth hatred, we get a return of hatred

"In the terms of a moral return or rather repayment to moral energies this would mean that by putting forth love we get a return of love and by putting forth hatred a return of hatred, that if we are merciful or just to others, others also will be to us just or merciful and that generally good done by us to our fellow-men will return in a recompense of good done by them in kind and posted back to our address duly registered in the moral post office of the administrative government of the universe. Do unto others as you would be done by, because then they will indeed so do to you, seems to be the formula of this moral device. … The rule is true to a certain extent in tendency and works sometimes well enough and the prudential intelligence of man takes some account of it in action but it is not true all the way and all the time." (CWSA 13: 410)

"Hatred is a sword of power, but its edge is always double. It is like the Kritya of the ancient magicians which, if baulked of its prey, returned in fury to devour its sender." Thoughts and Aphorisms (CWSA 12:454)

VII—D. In Yoga there can be no hatred

"In the God-nature to which we have to rise there can be an adamantine, even a destructive severity but not hatred, a divine irony but not scorn, a calm, clear-seeing and forceful rejection but not repulsion and dislike. Even what we have to destroy, we must not abhor or fail to recognise as a disguised and temporary movement of the Eternal." (CWSA 23–24: 223)

"If she [Mahalakshmi] finds herself in men's hearts surrounded with selfishness and hatred and jealousy and malignance and envy and strife, if treachery and greed and ingratitude are mixed in the sacred chalice, if grossness of passion and unrefined desire degrade devotion, in such hearts the gracious and beautiful Goddess will not linger." (CWSA 32: 21)

"But the purified heart is rid of anger, rid of fear, rid of hatred, rid of every shrinking and repulsion: it has a universal love, it can receive with an untroubled sweetness and clarity the various delight which God gives it in the world. But it is not the lax slave of love and delight; it does not desire, does not attempt to impose itself as the master of the actions." (CWSA 23–24: 661)

"A free heart is similarly a heart delivered from the gusts and storms of the affections and the passions; the assailing touch of grief, wrath, hatred, fear, inequality of love, trouble of joy, pain of sorrow fall away from the equal heart, and leave it a thing large, calm, equal, luminous, divine. These things are not incumbent on the essential nature of our being, but the creations of the present make of our outward active mental and vital nature and its transactions with its surroundings." (CWSA 24: 703–704)

"To the free spirit wrath and hatred are impossible, but not the strong Rudra energy of the Divine which can battle without hatred and destroy without wrath because all the time aware of the things it destroys as parts of itself, its own manifestations and unaltered therefore in its sympathy and understanding of those in whom are embodied these manifestations. All our emotional nature will undergo this high liberating transformation; but in order that it may do so, a perfect equality is the effective condition." (CWSA 23: 705)

"Each has to get rid of his wrong reactions—they are here [in the Ashram] for that. What other remedy is there? If they are not prepared to do that, then we remain on the ground of the ordinary life where one has to do as in a big family, intervening in quarrels, reconciling, soothing, rebuking, punishing, lecturing, somehow getting things

going until the next clash. There is no end to that and we gave it up long ago. Each must mend himself—there is no other way out of it." 17 June 1935 (CWSA 32: 117)

"O divine Master, eternal Teacher, Thou livest in all things, in all beings, and Thy love bursts upon the sight of even the most ignorant. Grant that all may become aware of it in the depths of their being and that hatred may disappear for ever from their hearts." (CWM 1: 98) From Prayers and Meditations, March 13, 1914

"Oh, may all hatred be appeased, all rancor effaced, all fears dispelled, all suspicions destroyed, all malevolence overcome, and in this city, in this country, upon this earth, may all hearts feel vibrating within them that sublime love, source of all transfiguration." (CWM 1: 121) From Prayers and Meditations, April 8, 1914

"From the sum of resistances, one can gauge the scope Thou wouldst give to the action of that among Thy pure forces which is coming to manifest upon earth. What opposes is just that upon which it is the mission of these forces to act; it is the darkest hatred which must be touched and transformed into luminous peace." (CWM 1: 273) From Prayers and Meditations, November 15, 1914

"No doubt hatred and cursing are not the proper attitude. It is true also that to look upon all things and all people with a calm and clear vision, to be uninvolved and impartial in one's judgments is a quite proper Yogic attitude. A condition of perfect samata can be established in which one sees all as equal, friends and enemies included, and is not disturbed by what men do or by what happens. The question is whether this is all that is demanded from us. If so, then the general attitude will be one of a neutral indifference to everything. But the Gita, which strongly insists on a perfect and absolute samata, goes on to say, 'Fight, destroy the adversary, conquer.' If there is no kind of general action wanted, no loyalty to Truth as against Falsehood except for one's personal sadhana, no will for the Truth to conquer, then the samata of indifference will suffice. But here there is a work to be done, a Truth to be established against which immense forces are arranged, invisible forces which use visible things and persons and actions for their instruments. If one is among the disciples, the seekers of this Truth, one has to take sides for the Truth, to stand against the Forces that attack it and seek to stifle it." (CWSA 29: 131–132)

"Violence is never a good way to make a cause triumph. How can anyone hope to obtain justice by injustice, harmony by hatred?" *9 October 1951* (CWM 15: 45)

VII—E. So long as the difference between "I" and "you" exists, hatred cannot cease

"The sense that this is I and that is you, and that I must take this or that, or else you will take it, that is the basis of all selfishness; the sense that this I must eat that you, in order to live & avoid being eaten, that is the principle of material existence from which arises strife and hatred. And so long as the difference between I and you exists, hatred cannot cease, covetousness cannot cease, war cannot cease, evil & sin cannot cease, and because sin cannot cease, sorrow & misery cannot cease." (CWSA 17: 140)

VII—F. Adverse forces and hatred

Adverse forces hate things that are beautiful, pure, good, and true

"Well, it is the presence of the adverse forces. And these are forces which come directly from the vital world and incarnate on earth in human consciousness, and at times also in animal consciousness. It is the hatred for things beautiful, for what is pure, what is good, what is true. It is the hatred of the divine Presence. And naturally, with this hatred, the will to destroy and damage, to spoil, mar, deform, disfigure. One step more and it is the will to inflict suffering. And all this is the influence of the adverse forces, which acts quite spontaneously in the inconscient, in the subconscient, in half-consciousness. It is only the pure and luminous consciousness which can oppose this and prevent it from acting." (CWM 5: 232–233)

"You may have opened the door through spiritual error, through a movement of vanity, of anger, of hatred or of violence; even if it is merely a movement that comes and goes, that can open the door [to adverse forces]. There are always germs watching and only waiting for an occasion. That is why one should be very careful." (CWM 5: 185)

"Everyone generally has a tiny little corner in him—at times quite small, at times bigger… which likes destroying, likes spoiling. And the state of the world is such that when one gives way to that, one is helped by an onrush of forces which lie waiting for the opportunity, waiting for the moment to be able to manifest, which need human collaboration to be able to manifest and seek it. As soon as the opportunity comes, they rush forth, throwing out a formidable amount of energy. And so one feels stronger as soon as one begins to do evil. That is why it is easier, whilst if one wants to react, refuses to become the instrument of these forces, one must fight hard, be very strong, very straight, very pure, very sincere, and above all, not egoistic.

One must not turn round upon oneself, and must never be afraid. And this is not easy. That is, the world is in such a state that in order never to be moved by the adverse forces—the forces of darkness, destruction, wickedness, hatred—one must be a hero, a true hero, who is not afraid of blows and fears nothing, who never turns round upon himself and doesn't have that kind of self-pity which is so despicable a thing." (CWM 5: 233)

Beings of the vital will disappear when hatred disappears

"Goodwill, sincerity, purity and beauty are things which make them [beings of the vital] disappear. So they hate

these things. … That is, some of these beings will not disappear until hatred disappears from the earth.... One might put it the other way round. One might say that hatred will disappear from the earth when those beings disappear; but, for the reason I have just given, the power to make light spring forth in the place of darkness, beauty in the place of ugliness, goodness instead of evil, that power man possesses, the Asura does not. Therefore it is man who will do that work, it is he who will change, it is he who will transform his earth and it is he who will compel the Asura to flee into other worlds or to dissolve." (CWM 5: 99)

"There are cases in which it is precisely the opening to a suggestion, an adverse influence, an opening which is the result of a wrong movement—a movement of revolt or of hatred or of violent desire. One can, in a wrong movement, open oneself in a rage, for example—one can open to an adverse force and bring in an influence which could end up by a possession. At the beginning these things are relatively easy to cure if there is a conscious part of the being and a very strong will to get rid of this bad movement and this influence. One succeeds easily enough, relatively speaking, if the aspiration is sincere; but if one looks on the thing with complacency and tells oneself, 'Ah, it is like that, it can't be otherwise', then this becomes dangerous. One must not tolerate the enemy in the place. As soon as

one notices his presence, one must throw him out very far, as far as one can, pitilessly.” (CWM 6: 438)

VII—G. Mankind cannot hate when it has realised that all existence is oneself

"We may never have a Paradise on earth, but if it is ever to come, it will come not when all mankind are as brothers, for brothers jar and hate as much & often more than mere friends or strangers, but when all mankind has realised that it is one Self. Nor can that be until mankind has realised that all existence is oneself, for if an united humanity tyrannise over bird & beast & insect, the atmosphere of pain, hatred & fear breathing up from the lower creation will infect & soil the purity of the upper." (CWSA 17: 142–143)

"But the man who sees himself in all creatures, cannot hate; he shrinks from none, he has neither repulsion nor fear." (CWSA 17: 143)

"We shall not have any contempt, hatred or disgust for any person, nor shall we fear anyone, however powerful or inimical; for in all we shall see Narayan, we shall know the Lord, we shall recognise ourself. One equal regard will fall from us on the tiger & the lamb, the saint & the sinner, the tyrant who threatens us and the slave who is subject to our lightest caprice." (CWSA 17: 411)

In universal love, hatred will not exist

"Every thing therefore which removes even partially the sense of difference and helps towards the final unity, brings with it a touch of bliss by a partial oblivion of pain. But that which brings you bliss, you cannot help but delight in ecstatically, you cannot help but love. If therefore you see yourself in another, you spontaneously love that other; for in yourself you must delight. If you see yourself in all creatures, you cannot but love all creatures. Universal love is the inevitable consequence of the realisation of the One in Many, and with Universal Love how shall any shred of hate, disgust, dislike, loathing coexist? They dissolve in it like the night mists in the blaze of the risen sun." (CWSA 17: 137–138)

We have to accomplish love instead of hatred

"What is there new that we have yet to accomplish? Love, for as yet we have only accomplished hatred and self-pleasing; Knowledge, for as yet we have only accomplished error and perception and conceiving; Bliss, for as yet we have only accomplished pleasure and pain and indifference; Power, for as yet we have only accomplished weakness and effort and a defeated victory; Life, for as yet we have only accomplished birth and growth and dying; Unity, for as yet we have only accomplished war and association." Aphorisms on THE GOAL (CWSA 13: 200–201)

The human heart should respond to the love which the Divine Grace pours with the spontaneous gratitude of love

"… if love must be returned for hatred in order that the world may change, would it not be even more natural that love should be returned for Love?

If one considers the life and action and heart of men as they are, one would have every right to be surprised at all the hatred, contempt, or at best, the indifference which are returned for this immensity of Love which the divine Grace pours upon the world, for this immensity of Love which acts upon the world at every second to lead it towards the divine delight and which finds so poor a response in the human heart. But people have compassion only for the wicked, the deficient, the misshapen, for the unsuccessful ones and the failures—truly it is an encouragement to wickedness and failure.

If one thought a little more of this aspect of the problem, perhaps one would have less need to insist on the necessity of returning love for hatred, because if the human heart responded in all sincerity to the Love that is being poured into it with the spontaneous gratitude of a love which understands and appreciates, then things would change quickly in the world." 27 September 1957 (CWM 3: 187)

"When the earth no longer needs to suffer in order to progress, there will be no more suffering. And when the earth no longer needs to hate in order to love, there will be no more hatred." (CWM 10: 166)

VIII— Reject Suggestions of Self-Distrust and Incapacity in Oneself to Do Yoga

VIII—A. What problems are caused by self-distrust and the feeling of incapacity to do Yoga?

1. These ideas and feelings become, in the end, things that weaken

"Not to be disturbed, to remain quiet and confident is the right attitude, but it is necessary also to receive the help of the Mother and not to shrink back for any reason from her solicitude. One ought not to indulge ideas of incapacity, inability to respond, dwelling too much on defects and failures and allowing the mind to be in pain and shame on their account; for these ideas and feelings become in the end weakening things. If there are difficulties, stumblings or failures, one has to look at them quietly and call in tranquilly and persistently the divine help for their removal, but not to allow oneself to be upset or pained or discouraged. Yoga is not an easy path and the total change of the nature cannot be done in a day." (CWSA 32: 294)

2. The fixed idea of one's own incapacity and allowing it to become an obsession have no true justification and unnecessarily render the way harder

"To each his own difficulties seem enormous and radical and even incurable by their continuity and persistence and induce long periods of despondency and crises of despair. To have faith enough or enough psychic sight to react at once or almost at once and prevent these attacks is given hardly to two or three in a hundred. But one ought not to settle down into a fixed idea of one's own incapacity or allow it to become an obsession; for such an attitude has no true justification and unnecessarily renders the way harder. " (CWSA 29: 40)

3. Cessation of experience due to depression and self-distrust

"There is no unfitness, no bad thing inside that comes across, no lack of aspiration causing the cessation of experience. It is the depression, the self-distrust, the readiness to despair which are the only cause; there is no other." (CWSA 29: 34)

4. The adverse attacks began when you were on the threshold of the inner experience because, in the physical mind, there was the idea of difficulty, unsuccess, and incapacity

"What you really have not yet a fixed faith in is the guidance of the Divine, his will to manifest to you or your

capacity to receive him. It is this that the adverse attacks which began when you were on the threshold of the inner experience—as so often happens in the Yoga—try constantly to fix in your brain. They want to have a fixed mental formation there, so that whenever you make the attempt there will be in the physical mind an expectation of difficulty, a dwelling on the idea of difficulty and unsuccess and incapacity, if not always in the front of the mind, yet at the back and by that they hope to prevent the experience from coming. It is these mental formations that you must reject, for they are a much greater obstacle than the vital failings to which you give such an exaggerated importance. It is not a fact that you have not had experiences—you had them but you did not give them their full value, because you were expecting something else. Otherwise the sense of the Divine Guidance and the faith in attainment would have formed in spite of difficulties and relapses such as everyone has in the Yoga." (CWSA 29: 93–94)

5. You truly become old when there is an incapacity to grow and progress

"There is an old age much more dangerous and much more real than the amassing of years: the incapacity to grow and progress. As soon as you stop advancing, as soon as you stop progressing, as soon as you cease to better yourself,

cease to gain and grow, cease to transform yourself, you truly become old, that is to say, you go downhill towards disintegration." (CWM 03: 238)

6. Old age does not come from a great number of years but from the incapacity or the refusal to continue to grow and progress

"YOUTH does not depend on the small number of years one has lived, but on the capacity to grow and progress. To grow is to increase one's potentialities, one's capacities; to progress is to make constantly more perfect the capacities that one already possesses. Old age does not come from a great number of years but from the incapacity or the refusal to continue to grow and progress. I have known old people of twenty and young people of seventy. As soon as one wants to settle down in life and reap the benefits of one's past efforts, as soon as one thinks that one has done what one had to do and accomplished what one had to accomplish, in short, as soon as one ceases to progress, to advance along the road of perfection, one is sure to fall back and become old." (CWM 12: 257)

7. Ideas of incapacity are absurd; they are the negation of the truth of progress

"It is all right to see the imperfections and deficiencies but only on condition it brings a greater courage for a new progress, an increase of energy in the determination and a stronger certitude of victory and future perfection.

These ideas of incapacity are absurd, they are the negation of the truth of progress—what cannot be done today, will be done another day, if the aspiration is there." (CWM 14: 236)

8. Even physical and mechanical work cannot be done properly if one accepts incapacity

"Even the most purely physical and mechanical work cannot be properly done if one accepts incapacity, inertia and passivity. The remedy is not to confine yourself to mechanical work, but to reject and throw off incapacity, passivity and inertia and open yourself to the Mother's force." (CWSA 32: 24–25)

9. Self-distrust is always one-sided and exaggerated

"It is no use giving way to depression or self-distrust, they are only obstacles to the change you want and which the Mother is working at in you. The suggestions which raise these things are always one-sided and exaggerated and one ought not to listen to them." (CWSA 32: 219)

10. Sorrow confuses, weakens, and distracts the mind, depresses the vital force, and darkens the spirit

"For sorrow is not, as Spinoza pointed out, a passage to a greater perfection, a way to Siddhi; it cannot be, for it confuses and weakens and distracts the mind, depresses the vital force, darkens the spirit. A relapse from joy and vital elasticity and Ananda to sorrow, self-distrust, despondency and weakness is a recoil from a greater to a lesser consciousness,—the habit of these moods shows a clinging of something in the vital to the smaller, obscurer, dark and distressed movement out of which it is the very aim of Yoga to rise." (CWSA 32: 219)

11. Incapacity to receive the descending Force acts like a grain of sand in a machine

"But if somewhere in your being—either in your body or even in your vital or mind, either in several parts or even in a single one—there is an incapacity to receive the descending Force, this acts like a grain of sand in a machine. You know, a fine machine working quite well with everything going all right, and you put into it just a little sand (nothing much, only a grain of sand), suddenly everything is damaged and the machine stops." (CWM 05: 176)

VIII—B. What causes the feeling of incapacity?

1. We suffer incapacity because of our incompleteness of being and our imperfect possession of ourselves

"What we are striving towards is completeness and harmony; an imperfection and incapacity or a discord of our nature is that from which inwardly we most suffer. But this is because of our incompleteness of being, our imperfect self-knowledge, our imperfect possession of our self and our nature." (CWSA 22: 1008)

2. Tamas brings in incapacity

"Tamas brings in all the ignorance, inertia, weakness, incapacity which afflicts our nature, a clouded reason, nescience, unintelligence, a clinging to habitual notions and mechanical ideas, the refusal to think and know, the small mind, the closed avenues, the trotting round of mental habit, the dark and the twilit places." (CWSA 24: 686)

"All have their tamasic states and constant obscure parts, their moments or points of unconsciousness, their long habit or their temporary velleities of weak resignation or dull acceptance, their constitutional feeblenesses or movements of fatigue, negligence and indolence and their

lapses into ignorance and incapacity, depression and fear and cowardly recoil or submission to the environment and to the pressure of men and events and forces. Each one of us is sattwic in some directions of his energy of Nature or in some parts of his mind or character, in others rajasic, tamasic in others. According as one or other of the modes usually dominates his general temperament and type of mind and turn of action, it is said of him that he is the sattwic, the rajasic or the tamasic man; but few are always of one kind and none is entire in his kind." (CWSA 23: 235)

3. Ideas of incapacity, frustration, and going away are the stuff of tamas

"As the bhakti and aspiration in the nature grow, the right psychic consciousness will also increase and lead to the full surrender. But keep steady and don't indulge these ideas of incapacity and frustration and going away; they are stuff of tamas and good only to be flung aside." (CWSA 35: 629).

4. A sense of the uselessness of life and incapacity can appear when the sadhana is in the subconscient

"Q: It seems to me that my sadhana has come to a standstill. Is it because of the physical tamas?

A: It is probable that you have come in contact with a new layer of the physical consciousness which is more material than the rest, perhaps with the subconscient itself (it is with the subconscient that the sadhana is now concerned in the Asram itself). The first result is the purely negative or stand-still condition you describe. You have to call down the Force and the Light here, so that this too may become a part of the Divine Consciousness. If it is the subconscient, then you must be on your guard against all negative feelings such as the sense that all is gone, or the uselessness of life or the frustration or uselessness of sadhana, helplessness, incapacity etc. These things come naturally to one who does not understand. But they are false appearances. Remaining quiet and keeping the faith that there is the Divine Guidance behind, one has to do what is needed till the phase is over." (CWSA 35: 342)

VIII—C. Why does incapacity have to be rejected?

1. Incapacity cannot be an element of true perfection

"Tamas evidently has to be overcome, inertia and ignorance and incapacity cannot be elements of a true perfection; but it can only be overcome in Nature by the force of rajas aided by an increasing force of sattwa. …" (CWSA 24: 687)

2. Personal capacity belongs to the temporary surface personality which is mutable

"Personal capacity belongs to the temporary surface personality which you have put forward in this life and which is mutable, is already changing and can change much farther—e.g. the poems you are writing are certainly beyond what was your original capacity—they belong to a range of experience to the Word of which you have opened by a development beyond your old mental self—a farther development beyond not only your old mental self but also your old vital self is needed to get the concrete realisation of that range of experience." (CWSA 27: 719)

3. Get rid of the idea and feeling of your incapacity, and a great obstacle disappears

"My reason for wanting you to get rid of the mental concepts is that they are rigid and keep you tied to the idea and feeling of your incapacity and the impossibility of the sadhana. Get rid of that and a great obstacle disappears. You would then see that there is no reason for the constant sense of grief and despair that reacts upon your effort and makes it sterile. I simply want you to put yourself, if it is possible, in that state of quietude and openness which is favourable to the higher consciousness and its action" (CWSA 28: 322)

4. You must not believe the suggestions of incapacity and failure; they come from an adverse source

"*My sweet mother,*

For three days I have been feeling sad in the evening. This morning I felt sad too. I don't know exactly why it comes. For two days I felt a great joy, but now the joy has gone. When will all these things go away?

"My dear child, You must not worry about these alternations. When the psychic being comes to the surface, it brings its own joy with it; but when the mind or the vital comes, then the joy seems to withdraw, though it is always there, behind, ready to manifest again. But above all you must not believe the suggestions of incapacity and failure; they come from an adverse source and ought not to be

given any credence. Certainly there are difficulties on the path, but with perseverance the victory is sure." (CWM 16: 133)

5. If at any time you try to cover up your imperfections and failings, you will never make any progress

"Some parents try to control children through fear, and that is the worst possible method of education, for it is an incentive to lying, deceit, hypocrisy and all the rest. But if you repeatedly explain to children something of this kind: If you are not absolutely sincere, not only with others but also with yourself, if at any time you try to cover up your imperfections and failings, you will never make any progress, you will always remain what you are throughout all your life, without ever making any progress. So, even if you only want to grow out of this primitive unconscious state into a progressive consciousness, the most important thing, the one absolutely important thing is sincerity." (CWM 15: 297)

6. The development of a perfection is latent in the being

"A present incapacity, however heavy may seem its pressure, is only a trial of faith and a temporary difficulty and to yield to the sense of inability is for the seeker of the integral Yoga a non-sense, for his object is a development

of a perfection that is there already, latent in the being, because man carries the seed of the divine life in himself, in his own spirit, the possibility of success is involved and implied in the effort and victory is assured because behind is the call and guidance of an omnipotent power." (CWSA 24: 780)

7. Everything should be made into an occasion to cure ourselves of incapacity

"One must learn always not only intellectually but also psychologically, one must progress in regard to character, one must cultivate the qualities and correct the defects; everything should be made an occasion to cure ourselves of ignorance and incapacity; life becomes then tremendously interesting and worth the trouble of living it." (CWM 12: 124)

VIII—D. In Yoga, it is not a question of personal capacity or incapacity but of the development of receptivity

1. The development of receptivity requires a dominant will to open and receive the Divine Force

"Q: *Why is my mind so wretchedly limited, my soul such a feeble flame?*

A: It is not the question, for this is not a question of personal capacity but of the development of the receptivity and for that the sole thing necessary is an entire or at least a dominant will to receive. What you call your mind and your soul are only a small surface part of you, not your whole being. Personal capacity belongs to the temporary surface personality which you have put forward in this life and which is mutable, is already changing and can change much farther—e.g. the poems you are writing are certainly beyond what was your original capacity—they belong to a range of experience to the Word of which you have opened by a development beyond your old mental self—a farther development beyond not only your old mental self but also your old vital self is needed to get the concrete realisation of that range of experience.

What is standing in the way is something that is still attached to the limitations of the old personality and

hesitates to take the plunge because by doing so it may lose these cherished limitations. It stands back in apprehension from the plunge because it is afraid of being taken out of its depths—but unless one is taken out of the very shallow depth of this small part of the self, how can one get into the Infinite at all? Furthermore, there is no real danger in finding oneself in the Infinite, it is a place of greater safety and greater riches, not less; but this something in you does not like the prospect because it has to merge itself into a larger self-existence. You asked the Mother to press on you the lighting of the fire within and she has been doing so, but this is standing back with the feeling 'Oh Lord! what will become of me if this flame gets lit.' You must get rid of this clinging to the past self and life, then you can have a fire which will not be feeble. …

… This is not a proof of incapacity but of the will to greater things. Only that will must not be in the mind only but take full hold of the vital also and must be a will that what you write of shall be a part not only of thought but of life. Which comes back to what I have written above—get free from the obscure hesitation to open and let the force do its work." (CWSA 27: 719–720)

2. Anyone who can open his consciousness and have inner experiences is capable of Yoga

"It is not a fact that you are incapable of doing Yoga. Anyone who can open his consciousness and have inner experiences is capable of Yoga and that did happen in you. The closing of this openness by a descent into the physical consciousness is something that has happened to most in this Asram and it usually takes a long time to come out of the closing. There is therefore no reason for concluding that this shows incapacity for Yoga and therefore there is no use in staying here. The only reasonable thing for you to do is to get rid of this wrong idea and remain quietly here where alone the true consciousness and the true life can come to you." (CWSA 35: 628).

3. It is not by one's own strength or good qualities that anyone can attain to the divine change
4. The solution is the Mother's force at work and the sadhak's will to open to it and trust in her working

"It is not by his own strength or good qualities that anyone can attain to the divine change; there are only two things that matter, the Mother's force at work and the sadhak's will to open to it and trust in her working. Keep your will and your trust and care nothing for the rest—they are only difficulties that all meet in their sadhana." (CWSA 32: 219)

5. Suggestions of self-distrust and incapacity have no meaning, since it is by the Grace of the Divine and

the aid of a Force greater than your own, that you can attain the goal of the sadhana

"You must realise that these moods are attacks which should be rejected at once—for they repose on nothing but suggestions of self-distrust and incapacity which have no meaning, since it is by the Grace of the Divine and the aid of a Force greater than your own, not by personal capacity and worth that you can attain the goal of the sadhana. You have to remember that and dissociate yourself from these suggestions when they come, never accept or yield to them." (CWSA 29: 32)

6. There is no question of personal incapacity if you want to consecrate yourself to the Divine and take your place in the divine life in the making

"For on the one hand you want to consecrate yourself to the Divine and take your place in the divine life in the making. On the other hand you want the satisfactions of ordinary life and the pleasures of the vital—without considering, however, that these pleasures can only be obtained through much struggle and effort and that always they go hand in hand with worry and suffering.

On the first path, there is no question of personal incapacity, since our help and protection are always there. Indeed, you must open yourself to this help and protection

and learn to use them to conquer the adversary who is trying to draw you towards the lower animal consciousness." (CWM 16: 136)

7. If the Divine has called you to the Path, then there must be a Divine Guidance behind

"It is this faith that you need to develop,—a faith which is in accordance with reason and common sense—that if the Divine exists and has called you to the Path, as is evident, then there must be a Divine Guidance behind and that through and in spite of all difficulties you will arrive. Not to listen to the hostile voices that suggest failure or to the voices of impatient vital haste that echo them, not to believe that because great difficulties are there, there can be no success or that because the Divine has not yet shown himself he will never show himself, but to take the position that everyone takes when he fixes his mind on a great and difficult goal, 'I will go on till I succeed and I will succeed—all difficulties notwithstanding.' To which the believer in the Divine adds, 'The Divine exists, he is there, and since he exists, my following after the Divine cannot fail. I will go on through everything till I find him.' (CWSA 29: 93–94)

8. Where there is a soul that has awakened, there is surely a capacity within

"Where there is a soul that has once become awake, there is surely a capacity within that can outweigh all surface defects and can in the end conquer." (CWSA 29: 40)

9. The unreserved surrender can bring perfection

"All your nature must be plastic to her touch,… not obstructing and entrenched in incapacity, ... The unreserved surrender of your inner and outer being will bring this plasticity into all the parts of your nature; consciousness will awaken everywhere in you by constant openness to the Wisdom and Light, the Force, the Harmony and Beauty, the Perfection that come flowing down from above." (CWSA 32: 24–25)

10. Open yourself to the Mother's force—As one opens, the strength and capacity necessary for the work will be given and will grow in the adhar

"Even the most purely physical and mechanical work cannot be properly done if one accepts incapacity, inertia and passivity. The remedy is not to confine yourself to mechanical work, but to reject and throw off incapacity, passivity and inertia and open yourself to the Mother's force. If vanity, ambition and self-conceit stand in your way, cast them from you. You will not get rid of these things by merely waiting for them to disappear. If you

merely wait for things to happen, there is no reason why they should happen at all. If it is incapacity and weakness that oppose, still, as one opens oneself truly and more and more to the Mother's force, the strength and capacity necessary for the work will be given and will grow in the adhar." (CWSA 32: 24–25)

11. Look at incapacity quietly and call in tranquilly and persistently, the Divine Help for its removal

"Not to be disturbed, to remain quiet and confident is the right attitude, but it is necessary also to receive the help of the Mother and not to shrink back for any reason from her solicitude. One ought not to indulge ideas of incapacity, inability to respond, dwelling too much on defects and failures and allowing the mind to be in pain and shame on their account; for these ideas and feelings become in the end weakening things. If there are difficulties, stumblings or failures, one has to look at them quietly and call in tranquilly and persistently the divine help for their removal, but not to allow oneself to be upset or pained or discouraged. Yoga is not an easy path and the total change of the nature cannot be done in a day." (CWSA 32: 294)

12. The power of the divine universal Shakti can remove incapacity

"The faith in the Shakti, as long as we are not aware of and filled with her presence, must necessarily be preceded or at least accompanied by a firm and virile faith in our own spiritual will and energy and our power to move successfully towards unity and freedom and perfection. Man is given faith in himself, his ideas and his powers that he may work and create and rise to greater things and in the end bring his strength as a worthy offering to the altar of the Spirit. This spirit, says the Scripture, is not to be won by the weak, *nāyam ātmā balahīnena labhyaḥ*. All paralysing self-distrust has to be discouraged, all doubt of our strength to accomplish, for that is a false assent to impotence, an imagination of weakness and a denial of the omnipotence of the spirit. The power of the divine universal Shakti which is behind our aspiration is illimitable, and when it is rightly called upon it cannot fail to pour itself into us and to remove whatever incapacity and obstacle, now or later; for the times and durations of our struggle while they depend at first, instrumentally and in part, on the strength of our faith and our endeavour, are yet eventually in the hands of the wisely determining secret Spirit, alone the Master of the Yoga, the Ishwara." (CWSA 24: 779–780).

13. Have aspirations—what today is unreal or impossible will become true

"And if you do this when you are very small, you have much less difficulty than if later on you have to undo, undo all the bad effects of a bad education, undo that kind of dull and vulgar common sense which means that you expect nothing good from life, which makes it insipid, boring, and contradicts all the hopes, all the so-called illusions of beauty. On the contrary, you must tell a child—or yourself if you are no longer quite a baby—'Everything in me that seems unreal, impossible, illusory, that is what is true, that is what I must cultivate.' When you have these aspirations: 'Oh, not to be always limited by some incapacity, all the time held back by some bad will!', you must cultivate within you this certitude that that is what is essentially true and that is what must be realised." (CWM 09: 163)

14. When you come out of the mental consciousness and enter a higher perception or spiritual consciousness, you suddenly find yourself in a state of perfect freedom where everything is possible

"Q: *What is meant by 'what was intended or possible'? The two things are different. So far you have said that if humanity changes, if it wants to participate in the new birth...*

A: It is the same thing. But when you look at an object on a certain plane, you see it horizontally, and when you look at the same object from another plane, you see it vertically. (Mother shows the cover and the back of her book.) So, if one looks from above, one says 'intended'; if one looks from below, one says 'possible' ... But it is absolutely the same thing, only the point of view is different.

Q: *But in that case, it is not our incapacity or lack of will to change that makes any difference.*

A: We have already said this many a time. If you remain in a consciousness which functions mentally, even if it is the highest mind, you have the notion of an absolute determinism of cause and effect and feel that things are what they are because they are what they are and cannot be otherwise. It is only when you come out of the mental consciousness completely and enter a higher perception of things—which you may call spiritual or divine—that you suddenly find yourself in a state of *perfect freedom* where *everything* is possible." (CWM 09: 176–177)

15. When the reversal of the being has taken place, one no longer seeks, one sees. One no longer gropes, one walks straight to the goal

"And as soon as one is turned towards the spiritual life and reality, one touches the Infinite, the Eternal, and there can no longer be any question of a greater or smaller number of capacities or possibilities. It is the mental conception of spiritual life which may say that one has more or less capacity to live spiritually, but this is not at all an adequate statement. What may be said is that one is more or less ready for the decisive and total reversal. …

But so long as one is in the mental field, in this state, as it were, on this plane of consciousness, one can't do much for others, either for life in general or for particular individuals, because one doesn't have the certitude oneself, one doesn't have the definitive experience, the consciousness has not been established in the spiritual world; and all that can be said is that they are mental activities which have their good and bad sides, but not much power and, in any case, not this power of spiritual contagion which is the only truly effective power.

The only thing that is truly effective is the possibility of transferring to others the state of consciousness in which one lives oneself. But this power cannot be invented. One cannot imitate it, cannot seem to have it; it only comes spontaneously when one is established in that state oneself, when one lives within it and not when one is trying to live within it—when one is there. And that is why all those who truly have a spiritual life cannot be deceived. …

When the reversal of the being has taken place, all that is finished. One no longer seeks, one sees. One no longer deduces, one knows. One no longer gropes, one walks straight to the goal. And when one has gone farther—only a little farther—one knows, feels, lives the supreme truth that the Supreme Truth alone acts, the Supreme Lord alone wills, knows and does through human beings. How could there be any possibility of error there? What He does, He does because He wills to do it." (CWM 09: 414–415)

16. When the spiritual force has an influence

"When the spiritual force is able to act, when it begins to have an influence, it jolts the mind's self-satisfaction and, by continuous pressure, begins to make it feel that beyond it there is something higher and truer; then a little of its characteristic vanity gives way under this influence and as soon as it realizes that it is limited, ignorant, incapable of reaching the true truth, liberation begins with the possibility of opening to something beyond. But it must feel the power, the beauty, the force of this beyond to be able to surrender. It must be able to perceive its incapacity and its limitations in the presence of something higher than itself, otherwise how could it ever feel its own weakness!

Sometimes one single contact is enough, something that makes a little rent in that self-satisfaction; then the

yearning to go beyond, the need for a purer light awaken, and with this awakening comes the aspiration to win them, and with the aspiration liberation begins, and one day, breaking all limits, one blossoms in the infinite Light." (CWM 09: 419)

17. To overcome deficiencies is the meaning of sadhana

"I trust you fully and know you are capable of fulfilling quite well your responsibilities. As for the difficulties and deficiencies, everybody has some and one is here to overcome them. This is the meaning of the sadhana of works. Go on courageously with your duties, keeping all faith in the Divine and relying only on the Divine's help and grace." (CWM 14: 316)

18. To cultivate qualities and correct defects makes life interesting and worth living

"To learn constantly, not just intellectually but psychologically, to progress in regard to character, to cultivate our qualities and correct our defects, so that everything may be an opportunity to cure ourselves of ignorance and incapacity—then life becomes tremendously interesting and worth living." (CWM 16: 432)

19. Imperfections have to be cured, however long it may take, and we have only to work at it patiently and courageously

"Do not worry about the reactions of people, however unpleasant they may be—the vital is everywhere and in everybody full of impurities and the physical full of inconsciousness. These two imperfections have to be cured, however long it may take, and we have only to work at it patiently and courageously." (CWM 14: 280)

"Q: *Sweet Mother, Too often the feeling of incapacity and of being far from You comes to discourage the will. I am tired of my way of living, of feeling—and it seems to have no end.*

A: To realise anything one must be patient. And the vaster and more important the realisation, the greater the patience must be. Blessings." (CWM 14: 167)

20. Whoever becomes conscious of the Divine can avoid error

"*Do astrology and other studies always predict things correctly, or are men still unable to do that?*

Human incapacity is necessarily behind all that men do. Only he who has become conscious of the Divine and become His faithful instrument can avoid error, if he is careful to act only at the divine command and to add nothing personal to it.

It must be said that this is not easy. Only he who no longer has any ego can do it correctly." (CWM 16: 404)

21. You are weakest precisely in that element which is destined to be your greatest asset

"What is the meaning of this self-contradiction, this division in man? To understand that, we must know and remember that each person represents a certain quality or capacity, a particular achievement to be embodied. How best can it be done? What is the way by which one can acquire a quality at its purest, highest and most perfect? It is by setting an opposition to it. That is how a power is increased and strengthened—by fighting against and overcoming all that weakens and contradicts it. The deficiencies with respect to a particular quality show you where you have to mend and reinforce it and in what way to improve it in order to make it perfectly perfect. It is the hammer that beats the weak and soft iron to transform it into hard steel. The preliminary discord is useful and needs to be utilised for a higher harmony. This is the secret of self-conflict in

man. You are weakest precisely in that element which is destined to be your greatest asset." (CWM 15: 335)

22. All incapacity is unable to change the new state once one has realised one's soul

"In fact, so long as there is any doubt or hesitation, so long as one asks oneself the question of whether one has or hasn't realized this eternal soul in oneself, it proves that the true contact has not taken place. For, when the phenomenon occurs, it brings with it an inexpressible something, so new and so definitive, that doubt and questioning are no longer possible. It is truly, in the absolute sense of the phrase, a new birth.

You become a new person, and whatever may be the path or the difficulties of the path afterwards, that feeling never leaves you. It is not even something—like many other experiences—which withdraws, passes into the background, leaving you externally with a kind of vague memory to which it is difficult to cling, whose remembrance grows faint, blurred—it is not that. You are a new person and definitively that, whatever happens. And even all the incapacity of the mind, all the difficulties of the vital, all the inertia of the physical are unable to change this new state—a new state which makes a decisive break in the life of the consciousness. The being one was before and the being one is after, are no longer the same." (CWM 09: 337)

23. When the physical body is divinised, it will drive out all that inertia and incapacity

"When the physical body is thoroughly divinised, it will feel as if it were always walking on air, there will be no heaviness or tamas or unconsciousness in it. There will also be no end to its power of adaptability: in whatever conditions it is placed it will immediately be equal to the demands made upon it because its full consciousness will drive out all that inertia and incapacity which usually make Matter a drag on the Spirit." (CWM 03: 176)

VIII—E. What is not incapacity?

1. If one cannot grow out of the ego at once, it does not prove incapacity for Yoga

"It is perfectly true that all human greatness and fame and achievement are nothing before the greatness of the Infinite and Eternal. There are two possible deductions from that, first, that all human action has to be renounced and one should go into a cave; the other is that one should grow out of ego so that the activities of the nature may become one day consciously an action of the Infinite and Eternal. But it does not follow that one must or can grow out of ego and the vital absorption at once and, if one does not, that proves incapacity for Yoga." (CWSA 27: 715)

2. The power of silence is a capacity and not an incapacity

"But for the knowledge of the Self it is necessary to have the power of a complete intellectual passivity, the power of dismissing all thought, the power of the mind to think not at all which the Gita in one passage enjoins. This is a hard saying for the occidental mind to which thought is the highest thing and which will be apt to mistake the power of the mind not to think, its complete silence for the incapacity of thought. But this power of silence is a capacity

and not an incapacity, a power and not a weakness." (CWSA 23: 316)

3. The unwillingness of the forces of the universal vital ignorance does not mean a fundamental incapacity

"The surrender of the vital is always difficult, because of the unwillingness of the forces of the universal vital Ignorance. But that does not mean a fundamental incapacity." (CWSA 29: 74)

4. Length of time is no proof of an ultimate incapacity

"If I deprecate insistence, it is because I have always found it creates difficulties and delays—owing to a strain and restlessness which is created—in the nature and despondencies and revolts of the vital when the insistence is not satisfied. The Divine knows best and one has to have trust in His wisdom and attune oneself with His will. Length of time is no proof of an ultimate incapacity to arrive—it is only a sign that there is something in oneself which has to be overcome and, if there is the will to reach the Divine, it can be overcome." (CWSA 35: 619–620)

5. A divine calm, which is not an inertia or an incapacity for action

"The strife of the gunas is only a representation in the imperfection of the lower nature; what the three gunas stand for are three essential powers of the Divine which are not merely existent in a perfect equilibrium of quietude, but unified in a perfect consensus of divine action. Tamas in the spiritual being becomes a divine calm, which is not an inertia and incapacity of action, but a perfect power, sakti, holding in itself all its capacity and capable of controlling and subjecting to the law of calm even the most stupendous and enormous activity:" (CWSA 23, 24: 689)

6. The pressure of the universal forces, sex, anger, etc., does not justify individual unfitness

"Q: *The 'failure' I speak of is a failure to respond in the right way when there is a particular pressure. This is a clear sign of unfitness. The very first thing you wrote about me was that I was not prepared or ready for the sadhana.*

A: I do not at all agree about the unfitness. When you came here first you were too raw still, but since then you have developed much and, whatever difficulties may remain, it cannot be said that the ground is not there! I do not quite understand what you mean by the pressure, but if you mean the pressure of the universal forces, sex, anger etc., it is always under that pressure that the recurrences occur. There is nothing new or peculiar in that which would justify

a conclusion of individual unfitness. These things have also often a periodicity in them which helps them to recur and the up and down movement is characteristic of the course followed by the nature in the sadhana which I myself felt for many years together. It is only after one reaches a certain height that one gets rid of it or rather it changes into an oscillation the reason and utility of which one can understand. Until that happens one has to go on and the one thing one must avoid is this feeling of despondency and self-distrust. If one perseveres, the final success is sure." (CWSA 35: 371–372).

7. A tendency to silence, solitude, physical calm and bodily inaction is good
8. The power to do nothing is a great power
9. The power to rest absolutely from action is as necessary for the Jnanayogin as the power to cease absolutely from thought

"… when the mental Purusha takes up the attitude of mere witness and observer, a tendency to silence, solitude, physical calm and bodily inaction grows upon the being. So long as this is not associated with inertia, incapacity or unwillingness to act, in a word, with the growth of the tamasic quality, all this is to the good. The power to do nothing, which is quite different from indolence, incapacity or aversion to action and attachment to inaction, is a great

power and a great mastery; the power to rest absolutely from action is as necessary for the Jnanayogin as the power to cease absolutely from thought, as the power to remain indefinitely in sheer solitude and silence and as the power of immovable calm. Whoever is not willing to embrace these states is not yet fit for the path that leads towards the highest knowledge; whoever is unable to draw towards them, is as yet unfit for its acquisition." (CWSA 23: 347).

10. The first words of Yoga are surrender and union with the Divine and the transcendence of ego

"*Sweet Mother.*

Somebody asked me this question: 'Is it not a great loss for human society if persons endowed with an exceptional capacity to serve mankind, such as a gifted doctor or barrister, come to stay here in the Ashram for their own salvation? They could perhaps serve the Divine better by serving men and the world!'

"Nobody comes here for his own salvation because Sri Aurobindo does not believe in salvation; for us salvation is a meaningless word. We are here to prepare the transformation of the earth and men so that the new creation may take place, and if we make individual efforts to progress, it is because this progress is indispensable for

the accomplishment of the work. I am surprised that after having lived in the Ashram for so long, you can still think in this way and be open to this Sunday-school drivel.

I am sending you a quotation from Sri Aurobindo which will perhaps help to enlighten your thought.

'It is equally ignorant and one thousand miles away from my teaching to find it in your relations with human beings or in the nobility of the human character or an idea that we are here to establish mental and moral and social Truth and justice on human and egoistic lines. I have never promised to do anything of the kind. Human nature is made up of imperfections, even its righteousness and virtue are pretensions, imperfections and prancings of self-approbatory egoism.... What is aimed at by us is a spiritual truth as the basis of life, the first words of which are surrender and union with the Divine and the transcendence of ego. So long as that basis is not established, a sadhak is only an ignorant and imperfect human being struggling with the evils of the lower nature.... What is created by spiritual progress is an inner closeness and intimacy in the inner being, the sense of the Mother's love and presence etc'." (CWM 16: 312–313)

VIII—F. Other important quotations on capacity and incapacity

The incapacity of the modern intellect is its readiness to mistake mental, moral and aesthetic idealisms for spirituality and their inferior degrees as spiritual values

"Art, poetry, music are not Yoga, not in themselves things spiritual any more than philosophy either is a thing spiritual or science. There lurks here another curious incapacity of the modern intellect—its inability to distinguish between mind and spirit, its readiness to mistake mental, moral and aesthetic idealisms for spirituality and their inferior degrees for spiritual values." (CWSA 28: 333)

"There is no happiness in smallness of the being, says the Scripture, it is with the large being that happiness comes. The ego is by its nature a smallness of being; it brings contraction of the consciousness and with the contraction limitation of knowledge, disabling ignorance,—confinement and a diminution of power and by that diminution incapacity and weakness,—scission of oneness and by that scission disharmony and failure of sympathy and love and understanding,—inhibition or fragmentation of delight of being and by that fragmentation pain and sorrow." (CWSA 23: 357–358)

Artistic capacity opened while meditating

"Don't be desperate about your incapacity as a connoisseur of painting. I was worse in this respect, knew something about sculpture, but blind to painting. Suddenly one day in the Alipur jail, while meditating saw some 'pictures' on the wall of the cell and lo and behold, the artistic eye in me opened and I knew all about painting except of course the more material side of the technique." (CWSA 35: 246).

"If a fault is shown to you it is as if a treasure were shown to you; that is to say, each time that you discover in yourself a fault, incapacity, lack of understanding, weakness, insincerity, all that prevents you from making a progress, it is as if you discovered a wonderful treasure." (CWM 03: 220–221).

"I am sure that most of you have felt this as, for example, when one does an exercise which is not done often or does it for the first time; these are tiny little vibrations which seize you in all the cells. And then naturally, you lose your full control over the movement. The body does not answer to the Force any more. When you want to put your will to do something that brings about a kind of resistance and incapacity in the body. Only, you are not aware of it usually because your attention is drawn more to the mental apprehension or to the kind of vital recoil which is very

apparent in the consciousness, whereas you are not so very conscious of the resistance produced in the body." (CWM 05: 168)

"Sri Aurobindo has written in his last article which appeared in the Bulletin. He says that if you want to prepare for the descent of the supermind, first of all your mind of ignorance and incapacity must be replaced by a mind of light which sees and knows. And this is the first step! Before this step is crossed, one cannot go forward." (CWM 06: 451).

"If it is from the point of view of yoga and of the person who wants to do the work, it is preferable to let him choose, because he can be, for example, under the illusion that he is capable of doing something and he is not; or he has an ambition, he wants to do something to satisfy his self-love, his vanity. And so, if he is allowed to do so, as the work that's done here is under the influence of the Truth-Consciousness, his incapacity for the work will appear immediately, and he will be able to make progress; whereas if I see that a particular person is capable of doing a particular work—another work, you understand—and I tell him, 'No, that work does not suit you, it is better that you do this one,' he will never be convinced (he or she, it doesn't matter), he will always think that it's an arbitrary decision, that it's simply because one preferred his doing

this thing or that. So from his personal point of view it is better to let him do what he asks for, so that he may make the progress he ought to make. If it happens that he is very conscious of the work he can do and asks precisely for the work he ought to do, then it is good, there's no more discussion, it is very good." (CWM 07: 281).

"The fact is that everything is in a state of perpetual progressive development, that is, the whole creation, the whole universe is advancing towards a perfection which seems to recede as one goes forward towards it, for what seemed a perfection at a certain moment is no longer perfect after a time. The most subtle states of being in the consciousness follow this progression even as it is going on, and the higher up the scale one goes, the more closely does the rhythm of the advance resemble the rhythm of the universal development, and approach the rhythm of the divine development; but the material world is rigid by nature, transformation is slow, very slow, there, almost imperceptible for the measurement of time as human consciousness perceives it... and so there is a constant disequilibrium between the inner and outer movement, and this lack of balance, this incapacity of the outer forms to follow the movement of the inner progress brings about the necessity of decomposition and the change of forms. But if, into this matter, one could infuse enough consciousness to obtain the same rhythm, if matter could

become plastic enough to follow the inner progression, this rupture of balance would not occur, and death would no longer be necessary." (CWM 09: 34).

"It should take long for self-cure to replace medicine, because of the fear, self-distrust and unnatural physical reliance on drugs which Medical Science has taught to our minds and bodies and made our second nature." (CWM 10: 325)

"Contradictions always come from the inadequacy of vision and the incapacity to see a thing from all points of view at the same time." (CWM 11: 77)

"When people speak of individuality, there is always as though... at least in the background, some separation, that is to say, something existing independently and having its own destiny. But now, as the consciousness in this body knows it, it is almost like a pulsation of 'something' which for the moment has a separate action, but is at bottom, in essence always one; as something which is projected like this (gesture of expansion) for the moment with a form, and then which can (gesture of contraction), can at will annul this form. It is very difficult to explain, but in any case the feeling of the permanence of the separation has disappeared altogether. The universe is an exteriorization (same gesture of pulsation) of the Supreme

Consciousness; it is our incapacity for a total vision which gives us the sense of fixity; it is not there, it is something like pulsations or... in fact, it is a play of forms—there is only one Being." (CWM 11: 165).

The value of a man is in proportion to his capacity for concentrated attention

"It is well known that the value of a man is in proportion to his capacity of concentrated attention, the greater the concentration the more exceptional is the result, to the extent that a perfect and unfailing concentrated attention sets the stamp of genius on what is produced. There can be genius in sports as in any other human activity.

Shall we then advise a limit to one action in order to achieve perfection in concentration?

The advantages of limitation are well known, but it has also its inconvenience, bringing narrowness and incapacity for any other line than the one chosen. This is contrary to the ideal of a perfectly developed and harmonised human being. How to conciliate these two contrary tendencies?

There seems to be only one solution to the problem. In the same way as an athlete develops methodically his muscles by a scientific and gradual training, the faculty of concentrated attention can be developed scientifically by a methodical training—developed in such a way that

concentration is obtained at will and on whatever subject or activity is chosen. Thus the work of preparation instead of being done in the subconscient by a slow and steady repetition of the same movements, is done consciously by a concentration of will and a gathered attention centred on one point or another according to plan and decision. The chief difficulty seems to be to obtain this power of concentration independent from all inner and outer circumstances" (CWM 12: 258,259)

"Nobility: the incapacity for any pettiness either of sentiments or of action." (CWM 14: 176)

"You preferred human friendship to divine friendship, but human friendship is unsteady and now you feel cut off from both. Not that the Divine has withdrawn his friendship from you—never does he withdraw it—but you have got into a state of vital incapacity for enjoying it." (CWM 14: 287)

"*Sweet Mother,*

The descent of the Supermind, which You announced on the 29th of February 1956, is still only 'something one hears about' for most people here. When shall we feel and see this supreme and radical change of the whole nature which You have predicted?

The descent of the forerunners of the supramental forces is a fact (not a prediction). The incapacity of the vast majority of human beings to become conscious of it is a fact which can in no way affect the fact of the advent of these forces and powers in the physical world.

The 'supreme and radical' change of the whole nature can only come about after a long and slow preparation, and men will perceive it only when their consciousness has become enlightened." (CWM 16: 320)

IX— In Yoga, the Enemy of Faith Is Doubt

"The enemy of faith is doubt..." (CWSA 23: 772)

IX—A. The faith that is demanded by the integral Yoga as an indispensable thing

1. Faith in God and the Shakti
2. Faith in the presence and power of the Divine in us and the world
3. A faith that all in the world is the working of one divine Shakti
4. All the steps of the Yoga, are utilities and necessities of her workings
5. By a total self-surrender to the Divine and to his Shakti, we can attain to oneness, freedom, victory, and perfection

"It is so central and essential a thing that the Gita can justly say of it that whatever is a man's *śraddhā*, that he is, *yo yacchraddhaḥ sa eva saḥ*, and, it may be added, whatever he has the faith to see as possible in himself and strive for, that he can create and become. There is one kind of faith demanded as indispensable by the integral Yoga and that may be described as

faith in God and the Shakti,

faith in the presence and power of the Divine in us and the world,
a faith that all in the world is the working of one divine Shakti, that all the steps of the Yoga,
its strivings and sufferings and failures as well as its successes and satisfactions and victories are utilities and necessities of her workings and
that by a firm and strong dependence on and a total self-surrender to the Divine and to his Shakti in us we can attain to oneness and freedom and victory and perfection." (CWSA 24: 771)

[*segregation done by the compiler]

"The faith in the divine Shakti must be always at the back of our strength and when she becomes manifest, it must be or grow implicit and complete. There is nothing that is impossible to her who is the conscious Power and universal Goddess all creative from eternity and armed with the Spirit's omnipotence. All knowledge, all strengths, all triumph and victory, all skill and works are in her hands and they are full of the treasures of the Spirit and of all perfections and siddhis." (CWSA 24: 780)

"The intimate feeling of her presence and her powers and the satisfied assent of all our being to her workings in and around it is the last perfection of faith in the Shakti." (CWSA 24: 781)

6. The fundamental faith in Yoga is this, inherent in the soul, that the Divine exists and that the Divine is the one thing to be followed after

"Who is there that practises the Yoga and has not his periods, long periods of disappointment and failure and disbelief and darkness—but there is something that sustains him and even goes on in spite of himself, because it feels that what it followed after was yet true and it more than feels, it knows. The fundamental faith in Yoga is this, inherent in the soul, that the Divine exists and the Divine is the one thing to be followed after—nothing else in life is worth having in comparison with that." (CWSA 29: 93)

7. All things are the workings, under the universal conditions, of a supreme self-knowledge and wisdom

"And behind her is the Ishwara and faith in him is the most central thing in the *sraddha* of the integral Yoga. This faith we must have and develop to perfection that all things are the workings under the universal conditions of a supreme self-knowledge and wisdom, that nothing done in us or around us is in vain or without its appointed place and just significance, that all things are possible when the Ishwara as our supreme Self and Spirit takes up the action and that all that has been done before and all that he will do hereafter was and will be part of his infallible and

foreseeing guidance and intended towards the fruition of our Yoga and our perfection and our life work." (CWSA 24: 781)

8. Whatever is a man's faith, that he becomes

"It is this self-certainty of the Idea which is meant by the Gita when it says, *yo yac-chraddhaḥ sa eva saḥ*, 'whatever is a man's faith or the sure Idea in him, that he becomes." (CWSA 24: 44)

"Finally we shall realise the truth that this being we are is or can become whatever it has the faith and will to be,—for faith is only a will aiming at greater truth,—and cease to set limits to our possibility or deny the potential omnipotence of the Self in us, the divine Power working through the human instrument. That however, at least as a practical force, comes in at a later stage of high perfection." (CWSA 24: 733)

9. To trust ourselves in the hands of the Lord

"It is not possible to enter utterly into the spiritual truth of the Eternal and Infinite if we have not the faith and courage to trust ourselves into the hands of the Lord of all things and the Friend of all creatures and leave utterly

behind us our mental limits and measures." (CWSA 24: 208)

"To divinise the perfected nature we have to call in the divine Power or Shakti to replace our limited human energy so that this may be shaped into the image of and filled with the force of a greater infinite energy, *daivī ṗrakṛti, bhāgavatī śakti*. This perfection will grow in the measure in which we can surrender ourselves, first, to the guidance and then to the direct action of that Power and of the Master of our being and our works to whom it belongs, and for this purpose faith is the essential, faith is the great motor-power of our being in our aspirations to perfection,—here, a faith in God and the Shakti which shall begin in the heart and understanding, but shall take possession of all our nature, all its consciousness, all its dynamic motive-force." (CWSA 693)

"A great and wide spiritual and intelligent faith, intelligent with the intelligence of that larger reason which assents to high possibilities, is the character of the *sraddha* needed for the integral Yoga." (CWSA 24: 774)

"This *sraddha*—the English word faith is inadequate to express it—is in reality an influence from the supreme Spirit and its light a message from our supramental being which is calling the lower nature to rise out of its petty present to

a great self-becoming and self-exceeding. And that which receives the influence and answers to the call is not so much the intellect, the heart or the life mind, but the inner soul which better knows the truth of its own destiny and mission." (CWSA 24: 774)

"That which will support him through these changes, struggles, transformations which might otherwise dishearten and baffle, ... is a firm faith in the Shakti that is at work and reliance on the guidance of the Master of the Yoga whose wisdom is not in haste and whose steps through all the perplexities of the mind are assured and just and sound, because they are founded on a perfectly comprehending transaction with the necessities of our nature." (CWSA: 24: 776)

"Here too the faith in us must be unattached, a faith that waits upon Truth and is prepared to change and enlarge its understanding of spiritual experiences, to correct mistaken or half-true ideas about them and receive more enlightening interpretations, to replace insufficient by more sufficient intuitions, and to merge experiences that seemed at the time to be final and satisfying in more satisfying combinations with new experience and greater largenesses and transcendences." (CWSA 24: 778)

"The faith in the Shakti, as long as we are not aware of and filled with her presence, must necessarily be preceded or at least accompanied by a firm and virile faith in our own spiritual will and energy and our power to move successfully towards unity and freedom and perfection. Man is given faith in himself, his ideas and his powers that he may work and create and rise to greater things and in the end bring his strength as a worthy offering to the altar of the Spirit." (CWSA 24: 779)

"Faith is indispensable to man, for without it he could not proceed forward in his journey through the Unknown; but it ought not to be imposed, it should come as a free perception or an imperative direction from the inner spirit." (CWSA 22: 896)

IX—B. It is the physical mind of man which doubts

"This is the limitation of the physical mind of man, and it creates in him a habit of believing entirely only in the physical and of doubting or challenging all that does not come into accord with his own experience or his own scope of understanding or square with his own standard or sum of established knowledge." (CWSA 21: 752)

"The physical mind doubts all that it has not itself experienced and even it doubts what it has itself experienced if that experience is no longer there or immediately palpable to it—the vital brings in the suggestions of despondency and despair to reinforce the doubt and prevent clear seeing. It is therefore a difficulty that cannot be effectively combated by the logical reason alone, but best by the clear perception that it is a self-created difficulty—a self-formed sanskara or mental formation which has become habitual and has to be broken up so that you may have a free mind and vital, free for experience.

As for the help, you expect a divine intervention to destroy the doubt, and the divine intervention is possible, but it comes usually only when the being is ready. You have indulged to a great extreme this habit of the recurrence of doubt, this mental formation or sanskara, and so the adverse force finds it easy to throw it upon you,

to bring back the suggestion. You must have a steady working will to repel it whenever it comes and to refuse the tyranny of the sanskara of doubt—to annul the force of its recurrence." (CWSA 32: 122)

"Q: *One knows that something is true but still doubts. Why does one doubt the truth?*

The usual answer, it is because one is foolish! (*Laughter*)

But the truth is that the physical mind is truly completely stupid! You can prove it very easily. It is constructed probably as a kind of control, and in order to make sure that things are done as they ought to be. I think that this is its normal work.... But it has made it a habit to doubt everything.

I think I have already told you about the small experiment I made one day. I removed my control and left the control to the physical mind—it is the physical mind which doubts. So I made the following experiment: I went into a room, then came out of the room and closed the door. I had decided to close the door; and when I came to another room, this mind, the material mind, the physical mind, you see, said, 'Are you sure you have locked the door?' Now, I did not control, you know... I said, 'Very well, I obey it!' I went back to see. I observed that the door was closed. I came back. As soon as I couldn't see the door any longer, it told me, 'Have you verified properly?' So I went

back again.... And this went on till I decided: 'Come now, that's enough, isn't it? Closed or not, I am not going back any more to see!' This could have gone on the whole day. It is made like that. It stops being like that only when a higher mind, the rational mind tells it, 'Keep quiet!' Otherwise it goes on indefinitely.... So, if by ill-luck you are centred there, in this mind, even the things you know higher up as quite true, even things of which you have a physical proof—like that of the closed door, it doubts, it will doubt, because it is built of doubt. It will always say, 'Are you quite sure this is true?... Isn't it an idea of yours?... You don't suppose it is like that?' And it will go on until one teaches it to keep quiet and be silent." (CWM 6: 224–225)

"One of the chief functions of the physical mind is to doubt. If you listen to it, it will always find a thousand reasons for doubting. But you must know that the physical mind is working in ignorance and full of falsehoods." (CWM 14: 343)

"Our physical part has to give up its instincts, needs, blind conservative attachments, settled grooves of nature, its doubt and disbelief in all that is beyond itself, its faith in the inevitability of the fixed functionings of the physical mind, the physical life and the body, that they may be replaced by a new power which establishes its own greater law and functioning in form and force of Matter. Even the

inconscient and subconscient have to become conscient in us, susceptible to the higher light, no longer obstructive to the fulfilling action of the Consciousness-Force, but more and more a mould and lower basis of the Spirit." (CWSA 22: 964–965)

"You speak of the Divine's stern demands and hard Conditions—but what severe demands and iron conditions you are laying on the Divine! You practically say to Him, 'I will doubt and deny you at every step, but you must fill me with your unmistakable Presence; I will be full of gloom and despair whenever I think of you or the Yoga, but you must flood my gloom with your rapturous irresistible Ananda; I will meet you only with my outer physical mind and consciousness, but you must give me in that the Power that will transform rapidly my whole nature.' Well, I don't say that the Divine won't or can't do it, but if such a miracle is to be worked, you must give Him some time and just a millionth part of a chance." (CWSA 30: 19–20)

There will always be doubts of the physical mind and the vital so long as the vital approaches the Mother from the wrong standpoint

"There will always be doubts, upsettings and confusion of the physical mind and vital, so long as the vital approaches the Mother from the wrong standpoint,—e.g. if it insists on

judging her by her response to its demands and ideas of what she ought to give it. Not to impose one's mind or vital will on the Divine but to receive the Divine's Will and follow it, is the true attitude of sadhana. Not to say 'This is my right, want, claim, need, requirement, why do I not get it?', but to give oneself, to surrender and to receive with joy whatever the Divine gives, not grieving or revolting, is the right way. Then what one receives will be the right thing for one. All this you know very well; why do you constantly allow your outer vital to forget it and drag you back towards the old wrong attitude?" (CWSA 32: 45–46)

"The rising of some doubts would in itself have been of little importance; doubt is the very nature of the ignorant physical mind. But yours have very evidently risen because you have taken a turn away from the path to the supramental realisation along which the Mother was helping you and admitted another occult influence. This is shown by the nature of your doubts where you question her knowledge of certain common experiences of Yoga and by your conclusion that she can no longer help you… But when the doubt and questioning go so far, it is because something in the vital nature begins to be unwilling to accept any longer the guidance; for the guidance is likely to interfere with its going on its own way." (CWSA 36: 391–392)

"Our physical part has to give up its instincts, needs, blind conservative attachments, settled grooves of nature, its doubt and disbelief in all that is beyond itself, its faith in the inevitability of the fixed functionings of the physical mind, the physical life and the body, that they may be replaced by a new power which establishes its own greater law and functioning in form and force of Matter." (CWSA 22: 966)

"At a certain point of this constant unrest and travail even the physical mind loses its conviction of objective certitude and enters into an agnosticism which questions all its own standards of life and knowledge, doubts whether all this is real or else whether all, even if real, is not futile; the vital mind, baffled by life and frustrated or else dissatisfied with all its satisfactions, overtaken by a deep disgust and disappointment, finds that all is vanity and vexation of spirit and is ready to reject life and existence as an unreality, all that it hunted after as an illusion, Maya; the thinking mind, unbuilding all its affirmations, discovers that all are mere mental constructions and there is no reality in them or else that the only reality is something beyond this existence, something that has not been made or constructed, something Absolute and Eternal,—all that is relative, all that is of time is a dream, a hallucination of the mind or a vast delirium, an immense cosmic Illusion, a delusive figure of apparent existence." (CWSA 21: 432)

"The doubt about the possibility of help is hardly a rational one, since all the evidence of life and of spiritual experience in the past and of the special experience of those, numerous enough, who have received help from the Mother and myself, is against the idea that no internal or spiritual help from one to another or from a Guru to his disciples or from myself to my disciples is possible. It is therefore not really a doubt arising from the reason but one that comes from the vital and physical mind that is troubling you." (CWSA 32: 122)

IX—C. Why does the mind doubt?

1. Mind is incapable of absolute knowledge; it has to doubt to test everything

"It might be suggested also that until something clearly recognizable like supermind manifests itself with some definiteness and fullness or until it descends and takes possession of our earth-consciousness, we cannot be certain that it exists; till then mind holds the place as a general arbiter or field of reference for all knowledge and mind is incapable of any certain or absolute knowledge; it has to doubt all, to test all and yet to achieve all, but cannot be secure in its knowledge or its achievement." (CWSA 13: 580)

2. The truth gained by the intellect always has a certain shadow of doubt

"Therefore the truth gained by the intellect is an acquisition over which there hangs always a certain shadow of doubt, an incompleteness, a surrounding penumbra of night and ignorance or half-knowledge, a possibility of alteration or annullation by farther knowledge. The truth of the gnosis is free from doubt, self-evident, self-existent, irrefragable, absolute." (CWSA 23: 482)

3. Man realises himself as a body and so is sceptical of the existence of the soul

"In the physical condition, which is the ultimate term of the downward evolution, man realises himself as a body moving among and affected by other bodies and he readily understands, masters and employs physical organs, physical processes and physical forces, but he finds it difficult to understand, master or employ psychical organs, psychical processes and psychical forces,—so difficult that he has come to be sceptical of the existence of the psychical and doubt whether he is a soul at all, whether he is not merely an animal body with an exceptional brain-evolution. In his present state any evolution of the psychical force within is attended with extraordinary disturbances of the physical instruments; such as the development of delusions, hallucinations, eccentricities, mania and disease side by side with the development of genius or exceptional mental & spiritual powers in family or individual. Man has not yet discovered his soul; his main energies have been directed towards realizing and mastering the physical world in which he moves." (CWSA 17: 231)

"But the human race is still weighted by a certain gravitation towards the physical, it obeys still the pull of our yet unconquered earth-matter; it is dominated by the

brain-mind, the physical intelligence: thus held back by many ties, it hesitates before the indication or falls back before the too tense demand of the spiritual effort. It has, too, still a great capacity for sceptical folly, an immense indolence, an enormous intellectual and spiritual timidity and conservatism when called out of the grooves of habit: even the constant evidence of life itself that where it chooses to conquer it can conquer,—witness the miracles of that quite inferior power, physical Science,—does not prevent it from doubting; it repels the new call and leaves the response to a few individuals. But that is not enough if the step forward is to be for humanity; for it is only if the race advances that, for it, the victories of the Spirit can be secure." (CWSA 22: 676)

4. Our knowledge of the world we live in is narrow and imperfect; our interpretations of its significances are doubtful

"Even so our knowledge of the world we live in is narrow and imperfect, our interpretations of its significances doubtful: imagination, speculation, reflection, impartial weighing and reasoning, inference, measurement, testing, a further correction and amplification of sense evidence by Science,—all this apparatus had to be called in to complete the incompleteness. After all that the result still remains a half-certain, half-dubious accumulation of acquired indirect knowledge, a mass of significant images and ideative

representations, abstract thought counters, hypotheses, theories, generalisations, but also with all that a mass of doubts and a never-ending debate and inquiry." (CWSA 21: 548)

5. The rational or literary mind prefers to follow preferences and interests that are in conformity with its education and its nature

"One part of the mind may be spiritually influenced and like to think of the Divine and obey the spiritual impulse, another part may be rational or scientific or literary and prefer to follow the formations, beliefs or doubts, mental preferences and interests which are in conformity with its education and its nature." (CWSA 28: 174–175)

6. The spirit of doubt doubts for its own sake

"If the spirit of doubt could be overcome by meeting it with arguments, there might be something in the demand for its removal by satisfaction through logic. But the spirit of doubt doubts for its own sake, for the sake of doubt; it simply uses the mind as its instrument for its particular dharma and this not the least when that mind thinks it is seeking sincerely for a solution of its honest and irrepressible doubts." (CWSA 28: 337)

7. In the normal human consciousness, spiritual experience comes as something abnormal and is in fact supernormal

"But to doubt it on that account would be irrational in the extreme. One does not doubt the existence of air because a strong wind is not always blowing or of sunlight because night intervenes between dawn and dusk. The difficulty lies in the normal human consciousness to which spiritual experience comes as something abnormal and is in fact supernormal. This weak limited normality finds it difficult at first even to get any touch of that greater and intenser supernormal or it gets it diluted into its own duller stuff of mental or vital experience, and, when the spiritual does come in its own overwhelming power, very often it cannot bear or, if it bears, cannot hold and keep it." (CWSA 28: 339)

8. Mind by itself is incapable of ultimate certitude

"Mind by itself is incapable of ultimate certitude; whatever it believes, it can doubt; whatever it can affirm, it can deny; whatever it gets hold of, it can and does let go. That, if you like, is its freedom, noble right, privilege; it may be all you can say in its praise, but by these methods of mind you cannot hope (outside the realm of physical phenomena and

hardly even there) to arrive at anything you can call an ultimate certitude." (CWSA 28: 340)

9. Doubts come from a leaping, restless mind

"The monkey is a symbol of the leaping restless mind; these monkeys are the doubts and suggestions that have been assailing you." (CWSA 30: 169)

10. Doubt is due to a mental or vital formation which takes hold of the vital mind

"Mostly however the *constant* recurrence of depression and despair or of doubt and revolt is due to a mental or vital formation which takes hold of the vital mind and makes it run round always in the same circle at the slightest provoking cause or even without cause. It is like an illness to which the body consents from habit and from belief in the illness even though it suffers from it, and once started the illness runs its habitual course unless it is cut short by some strong counteracting force. If once the body can withdraw its consent, the illness immediately or quickly ceases—that was the secret of the Coue system. So too if the vital mind withdraws its consent, refuses to be dominated by the habitual suggestions and the habitual movements, these recurrences of depression and despair can be made soon to cease." (CWSA 30: 365)

11. Many doubt the effectiveness of the protection of the path because others go astray

"So many people doubt the effectiveness of the Protection, the safety of the Path, because others go astray…

No protection, no Grace can save those who refuse the indispensable purification." (CWM 8: 260)

12. The obscure movements of the mind and the doubts are passing waves, and they catch anyone who is ready to be caught

"These desires, these passions have no personality, there is nothing in them or their action that is peculiar to you; they manifest in the same way in everyone. The obscure movements of the mind too, the doubts and errors and difficulties that cloud the personality and diminish its expansion and fulfilment, come from the same source. They are passing waves and they catch anyone who is ready to be caught and utilised as their blind instrument. And yet each goes on believing that these movements are part of himself and a precious product of his own free personality. Even we find people clinging to them and their disabilities as the very sign or essence of what they call their freedom." (CWM 3: 117)

"In any case, when an attack comes the wisest attitude is to consider that it comes from outside and to say, 'This is not myself and I will have nothing to do with it.' You have to deal in the same way with all lower impulses and desires and all doubts and questionings in the mind. If you identify yourself with them, the difficulty in fighting them becomes all the greater; for then you have the feeling that you are facing the never easy task of overcoming your own nature. But once you are able to say, 'No, this is not myself, I will have nothing to do with it', it becomes much easier to disperse them." (CWM 3: 35)

13. Because the outer nature is ignorant, obscure and foolish

"Q: *Sweet Mother, why do we doubt you? Is there anything better or anyone wiser than you? Why don't we believe in you?*

A: Because the outer nature is ignorant, obscure and foolish, so naturally its behaviour and its action are also ignorant, obscure and foolish." 16 May 1934 (CWM 17: 37)

IX—D. The problems doubt creates in Yoga

1. Doubt is the first barrier against the openness which is necessary to receive fully from the Guru

"You should never doubt about the reality and sincerity of our feeling towards you, mine and the Mother's—for it creates a veil and separates, where there should be no separation, and it is a first barrier against that openness which is necessary if one is to receive fully or even at all from the Guru." (CWSA 32: 101)

2. We can be driven off the track in Yoga by doubt

"If one yields to ambition, sexual passion or self-sufficiency, a fall is always possible. There is also the possibility of being driven off the track by doubt or attraction to the old life—family, friends etc. The only one of these things that can act in your case is this doubt of your own capacity." (CWSA 35: 626)

3. You go out of the divine protection

"If you do something contrary, for example, if you are under the protection of the Divine and for a moment you have a thought of doubt or ill-will or revolt, immediately you go out of the protection. So the protection acts around

you to prevent adverse forces from coming upon you or an accident from happening, that is to say, even if you lose consciousness, because of the protection even your lack of consciousness will not produce a bad result immediately. But if you go out of the protection and are not all the time vigilant, then either you will be attacked by the adverse forces or an accident will happen." (CWM 5: 165–166)

4. The sceptical doubt turns its back on our spiritual possibilities

"And even a blind and ignorant faith is a better possession than the sceptical doubt which turns its back on our spiritual possibilities or the constant carping of the narrow pettily critical uncreative intellect, *asuya*, which pursues our endeavour with a paralysing incertitude." (CWSA 24: 773)

5. When the certitude that the great Work will be accomplished is replaced by a doubt, then one becomes unhappy

"That joy you had within you, that confidence, the assurance that all will be well and the great Work will be accomplished, that certitude—all this, you see, has become veiled, has been replaced by a kind of doubt and, yes, by a discontent: 'Things are not beautiful, the world is nasty,

people are not pleasant.' It goes sometimes to this length: 'The food is not good, yesterday it was excellent.' It is the same but today it is not good! This is the barometer! You may immediately tell yourself that an insincerity has crept in somewhere. It is very easy to know, you don't need to be very learned, for, as Sri Aurobindo has said in *Elements of Yoga*: One knows whether one is happy or unhappy, one knows whether one is content or discontented, one doesn't need to ask oneself, put complicated questions for this, one knows it!—Well, it is very simple.

The moment you feel unhappy, you may write beneath it: 'I am not sincere!' These two sentences go together:

'I FEEL UNHAPPY.'

'I AM NOT SINCERE.'" (CWM 6: 215)

6. Doubt builds a wall between oneself and the force one wants to receive

"Well, when one aspires for the Force, when one asks the Divine for help, if one asks with the unshakable certitude that it will come, that it is impossible that it won't, then it is sure to come. It is this kind... yes, this is truly an inner opening, this trustfulness. And some people are constantly in this state. When there is something to be received, they are always there to receive it. There are others, when there is something to have, a force descends, they are always

absent, they are always closed at that moment; while those who have this childlike trust are always there at the right time.

… If the trust is there, spontaneous, candid, unquestioning, it works better than anything else, and the results are marvellous. It is with the contradictions and doubts of the mind that one spoils everything, with this kind of notion which comes when one is in difficulties: 'Oh, it is impossible! I shall never manage it. And if it is going to be aggravated, if this condition I am in, which I don't want, is going to grow still worse, if I continue to slide down farther and farther, if, if, if, if...' like that, and one builds a wall between oneself and the force one wants to receive. The psychic being has this trust, has it wonderfully, without a shadow, without an argument, without a contradiction. And when it is like that, there is not a prayer which does not get an answer, no aspiration which is not realised." (CWM 6: 404)

7. Cultivating doubt is dangerous—it can eat up complete faith

"There are others who cultivate doubt because it is a kind of dilettantism [a person who has a superficial interest in a subject but lacks real knowledge]—that, there's nothing more dangerous than that. It is as though one were letting the worm into the fruit: it eventually eats it up completely.

This means that when a movement of this sort comes—it usually comes first into the mind—the first thing to do is to be very determined and refuse it. Surely one must not enjoy looking on just to see what is going to happen; that kind of curiosity is terribly dangerous.

It is perhaps more difficult for intellectuals to have faith than for those who are simple, sincere, who are straightforward, without intellectual complications. But I think that if an intellectual person has faith, then that becomes very powerful, a very powerful thing which can truly work miracles." (CWM 6: 121)

8. Doubt is a poison which, drop by drop, corrodes the soul

"My dear child, here is the programme for this year: Unify your whole being around your highest consciousness and do not let your mind work at random. Doubt is not a sport to indulge in with impunity: it is a poison which drop by drop corrodes the soul. With my love and blessings." 9 September 1943 (CWM 16: 216–217)

9. Doubt veils the consciousness and the subconscious sincerity

"Unfortunately I am surrounded by people who, though they are here to practice yoga, are still convinced that …

one can rely only on one's physical eyes for seeing and observing, on one's physical-mental knowledge for judging and deciding, and that the laws of Nature are laws—in other words, any exception to them is a miracle. This is false.

This is what is at the root of all the misunderstandings and reservations. You already know, and I mention it only to remind you, that an experiment made in a spirit of reserve and doubt is not an experiment, and that outer circumstances will always conspire to justify these doubts, and this for a reason which is very easy to understand: doubt veils the consciousness and the subconscious sincerity, and into the action some small factors creep in which may seem unimportant, but which are just sufficient to alter all the factors of the problem and to bring about the result that one had anticipated by doubting." (CWM 16: 40–41)

10. Doubts are the worst enemies of our progress

"We must decide to get rid of all doubts, they are among the worst enemies of our progress." 29 July 1954 (CWM 14: 244)

11. Doubt and scepticism are not only enemies; they are terrible pitfalls

"In the human mind there is a morbid and deplorable habit of doubt, argument, scepticism. *This* is where human effort must be put in: the refusal to admit them, the refusal to listen to them and still more the refusal to follow them. No game is more dangerous than playing mentally with doubt and scepticism. They are not only enemies, they are terrible pitfalls, and once one falls into them, it becomes tremendously difficult to pull oneself out." (CWM 9: 351)

12. Doubt is used by the ego to protect itself from extinction

"Intellectually, the Truth is the point where all the opposites meet and join to make a unity.

Practically, the Truth is the surrender of the ego, to make possible the birth and manifestation of the Divine.

Doubt is the best arm used by the ego to protect itself from extinction.

These are remarks on the way which may lead you a little further.

They are sent with blessings." 6 October 1965 (CWM 14: 199)

13. Doubt is really a sign of inferiority

"One of the things which would make humanity progress most would be for it to respect what it does not know, to

acknowledge willingly that it does not know and is therefore unable to judge. We constantly do just the opposite. We pass final judgments on things of which we have no knowledge whatsoever, and say in a peremptory manner, 'This is possible. That is impossible', when we do not even know what it is we are speaking of. And we put on superior airs because we doubt things of which we have never had any knowledge.

Men believe that doubt is a sign of superiority, whereas it is really a sign of inferiority.

Scepticism and doubt are two of the greatest obstacles to progress; they add presumptuousness to ignorance." 21 November 1958 (CWM 10: 27)

14. Doubt comes straight from the falsehood

"However, to help at the beginning, one can take as a guiding rule that all that brings with it or creates peace, faith, joy, harmony, wideness, unity and ascending growth comes from the Truth; while all that carries with it restlessness, doubt, scepticism, sorrow, discord, selfish narrowness, inertia, discouragement and despair comes straight from the falsehood." (CWM 12: 302)

15. The most pernicious suggestion of adverse forces is doubt

"All division in the being is an insincerity.

The greatest insincerity is to dig an abyss between your body and the truth of your being.

When an abyss separates the true being from the physical being, Nature fills it up immediately with all kinds of adverse suggestions, the most formidable of which is fear, and the most pernicious, doubt.

Allow nothing anywhere to deny the truth of your being—this is sincerity." 7 July 1957
(CWM 14: 69)

16. The human mind knows nothing because it is accustomed to doubt everything

"Now, the way things are arranged on earth, it is quite certainly a consciousness of a higher order which penetrates a form and helps to transform it, so that this form may become—either immediately or through successive generations—capable of manifesting that consciousness. For those who have the inner vision and knowledge, this is absolutely beyond doubt. It is impossible for it to be otherwise. But those who start from the other end, from below, will not admit it—but all the same it is not for ignorance to dictate knowledge to wisdom! And yet, this is what it does at present. As it is easier to doubt than to know, the human mind is accustomed to doubt

everything; that is its first movement, and of course that is why it knows nothing." (CWM 9: 237)

17. If there is a doubt, then it prevents one from receiving the real thing

"Q: *How can one have 'rest in action'?*

A: That comes from a kind of certitude of inner choice. When one aspires for something, if at the same time one knows that the aspiration will be heard and answered in the best way possible, that establishes a quietude in the being, a quietude in its vibrations; whilst if there is a doubt, an uncertainty, if one does not know what will lead one to the goal or if ever one will reach it or whether there is a way of doing so, and so on, then one gets disturbed and that usually creates a sort of little whirlwind around the being, which prevents it from receiving the real thing." (CWM 5: 395–396)

18. The vital is not very happy about what is going to be done, so it suggests doubt

"A sort of uneasiness: 'I am not well, how tedious life is, how wearisome everything. How am I going to do all that? Will I ever reach the goal? Is it worth while beginning? Is it at all possible? Isn't it impossible?' It is the vital which is

not very happy about what is going to be done for it, which does want anyone to meddle in its affairs, which does not like all that very much. So it suggests depression, discouragement, a lack of faith, doubt—is it really worth the trouble?" (CWM 4: 248)

19. The soul of doubt goes to perdition

"… we must have a faith which no intellectual doubt can be allowed to disturb, *śraddhāvān labhate jnañām*. 'The ignorant who has not faith, the soul of doubt goeth to perdition [complete ruin]; neither this world, nor the supreme world, nor any happiness is for the soul full of doubts.' In fact, it is true that without faith nothing decisive can be achieved either in this world or for possession of the world above, and that it is only by laying hold of some sure basis and positive support that man can attain any measure of terrestrial or celestial success and satisfaction and happiness; the merely sceptical mind loses itself in the void." (CWSA 19: 204)

20. Doubt and denial have become instruments in the hands of the obstructive forces and clog your steps

"If I insist so much on faith—but even less on positive faith than on the throwing away of *a priori* doubt and denial—it

is because I find that this doubt and denial have become an instrument in the hands of the obstructive forces and clog your steps whenever I try to push you to an advance. If you can't or won't get rid of it, ('won't' out of respect for the reason and fear of being led into believing things that are not true, 'can't' because of contrary experience) then I shall have to manage for you without it, only it makes a difficult instead of a straight and comparatively easy process." (CWSA 28: 347)

21. Doubt cannot be convinced because, by its very nature, it does not want to be convinced

"I do not ask 'undiscriminating faith' from anyone, all I ask is fundamental faith, safeguarded by a patient and quiet discrimination—because it is these that are proper to the consciousness of a spiritual seeker and it is these that I have myself used and found that they removed all necessity for the quite gratuitous dilemma of 'either you must doubt everything supraphysical or be entirely credulous', which is the stock-in-trade of the materialist argument. Your doubt, I see, constantly returns to the charge with a repetition of this formula in spite of my denial—which supports my assertion that Doubt cannot be convinced, because by its very nature it does not want to be convinced; it keeps repeating the old ground always." (CWSA 28: 347)

22. If I begin with doubt and go on with more doubt, I cannot go far on the journey

"The faith in spiritual things that is asked of the sadhak is not an ignorant but a luminous faith, a faith in light and not in darkness. It is called blind by the sceptical intellect because it refuses to be guided by outer appearances or seeming facts,—for it looks to the truth behind,—and does not walk on the crutches of proof and evidence. It is an intuition,—an intuition not only waiting for experience to justify it, but leading towards experience. If I believe in self-healing, I shall after a time find out the way to heal myself—if I have faith in transformation, I can end by laying my hand on and unravelling the whole process of transformation. But if I begin with doubt and go on with more doubt, how far am I likely to go on the journey?" (CWSA 28: 349)

23. The spiritual experience can be weakened by doubt

"A great wave (or sea) of calm and the constant consciousness of a vast and luminous Reality—this is precisely the character of the fundamental realisation of the Supreme Truth in its first touch on the mind and the soul. One could not ask for a better beginning or foundation—it is like a rock on which the rest can be built.

It means certainly not only a Presence, but *the* Presence—and it would be a great mistake to weaken the experience by any non-acceptance or doubt of its character." (CWSA 30: 392)

"What about the 'scepticism' which makes you unwilling to believe everything people tell you—why not make a useful use of it in refusing to believe these things? That would be better than to make a useless use of it in doubting the experiences of your own inner being which are a thousand times more reliable than this imaginative chit-chat built upon nothing. If the Mother makes you a communication when you are in your inner consciousness, why not put your faith in that and not in all this external noise and blather?" (CWSA 32: 41–42)

"Q: …*I am getting many experiences, but the consciousness gets diverted by suggestions and by activity.*

A: …It is because you become doubtful and begin to follow after other ways and other (lower) experiences that you get again confused and full of incertitudes." (CWSA 32: 99)

"If there is so serious an obstacle to your going forward, it consists only of two things, your vital depressions and your mental doubts which make you challenge even the experiences you have and belittle any progress you make.

Never have we told you to be stiff and gloomy and speechless—on the contrary we have pressed upon the other side. Other obstacles or difficulties there are, but they could be overcome if these two things were out of the way or rejected and inoperative." (CWSA 32: 145)

"*I feel the descent of the Mother's peace and power and the action of her Force down to the physical. Why then does this trouble still persist? Is the nervous part of my being not receiving the Force or is it receiving it but refusing to change?*

The Peace and Force come down, but the nervous weakness also rises up and resists and counteracts their influence and prevents them from settling in the being. That is because your mind assents to the nervous weakness, accepts its suggestions as true, is full of apprehensions and doubts, believes even that it is the Force which creates the nervous trouble. If you fear the action of the Force, how can the Force do its work?" 5 September 1936 (CWSA 32: 283)

24. Mind's doubts are the enemy of our nature's enlightenment

"All your nature must be plastic to her touch,—not questioning as the self-sufficient ignorant mind questions

and doubts and disputes and is the enemy of its enlightenment and change; not insisting on its own movements as the vital in man insists and persistently opposes its refractory desires and ill-will to every divine influence; not obstructing and entrenched in incapacity, inertia and tamas as man's physical consciousness obstructs and clinging to its pleasure in smallness and darkness cries out against each touch that disturbs its soulless routine or its dull sloth or its torpid slumber." (CWSA 32: 24)

25. Once you have been chosen then doubts are a waste of time and energy; they are of no use at all

"…And once you have been chosen, you are sure of the thing. Therefore, doubts, hesitations, depressions, uncertainties, all this is quite simply a waste of time and energy; it is of no use at all.

From the moment one has felt just once within himself: 'Ah! *This* is the truth for me', it is finished; it is finished, it is settled. Even if you spend years cutting your way through the virgin forest, it's of no importance—it is finished, it is settled.

That is why I told you one day, 'After all, you all are here because you have wanted it somewhere; and if you wanted it somewhere, it means that the Divine wanted it thus in you.'" (CWM 7: 339)

26. It is doubt that cuts you off from the light and divine energy and gives the attack

"It is doubt, gloominess, lack of confidence, a selfish turning back upon yourself that cuts you off from the light and divine energy and gives the attack this advantage. It is this that is the cause of your falling ill and not microbes." (CWM 3: 56)

27. It is not that the doubts of the intellect may not assail even when the inward soul has received the call

"But outward circumstances are only a cover for the real workings of the spirit, and if it is the spirit that has been touched, the inward soul that has received the call, the *śraddhā* will remain firm and resist all attempts to defeat or slay it. It is not that the doubts of the intellect may not assail, the heart waver, the disappointed desire of the life mind sink down exhausted on the wayside. That is almost inevitable at times, … There will very possibly be many of those trying obscurations of which even the Vedic Rishis so often complained, 'long exiles from the light', and these may be so thick, the night on the soul may be so black that faith may seem utterly to have left us. But through it all the spirit within will be keeping its unseen hold and the soul will return with a new strength to its assurance which

was only eclipsed and not extinguished, because extinguished it cannot be when once the inner self has known and made its resolution [*saṅkalpa*, *vyavasāya*.]." (CWSA 24: 774–775)

28. It is doubtful that any amount of writing can ever persuade the eternal doubt in man which is the penalty of his native ignorance

"I have started writing about Doubt, but even in doing so I am afflicted by the 'doubt' whether any amount of writing or of anything else can ever persuade the eternal doubt in man which is the penalty of his native ignorance. In the first place, to write adequately would mean anything from 60 to 600 pages, but not even 6000 convincing pages would convince Doubt." (CWSA 28: 338)

IX—E. We have to reject paralysing doubt and mere intellectual scepticism

"The intellect cannot be a sufficient guide in the search for spiritual truth and realisation and yet it has to be utilised in the integral movement of our nature. And while, therefore, we have to reject paralysing doubt or mere intellectual scepticism, the seeking intelligence has to be trained to admit a certain large questioning, an intellectual rectitude not satisfied with half-truths, mixtures of error or approximations and, most positive and helpful, a perfect readiness always to move forward from truths already held and accepted to the greater corrective, completing or transcending truths which at first it was unable or, it may be, disinclined to envisage. A working faith of the intellect is indispensable, not a superstitious, dogmatic or limiting credence attached to every temporary support or formula, but a large assent to the successive suggestions and steps of the Shakti, a faith fixed on realities, moving from the lesser to the completer realities and ready to throw down all scaffolding and keep only the large and growing structure." (CWSA 24: 777)

"In the end these doubts and depressions and despairs must cease. Where the call of the soul perseveres, the response of the Divine must come." (CWSA 28: 343)

"To reject doubts means control of one's thoughts—very certainly so. But the control of one's thoughts is as necessary as the control of one's vital desires and passions or the control of the movements of one's body—for the Yoga, and not for the Yoga only." (CWSA 32: 242–243)

"It is not only quite possible to be free of all doubt, it is an absolutely indispensable condition…" (CWM 17: 50–51)

"Q: *I aspire for Your Grace to come and lift me from the ordinary consciousness to the spiritual consciousness.*

A: For the Grace to help you, you must fulfil the conditions, and the very first condition is to reject all doubt, however slight. I repeat again: you would do well to read once more, carefully and attentively, the first two chapters of *The Mother*." 16 July 1936 (CWM 17: 137)

"You have indulged to a great extreme this habit of the recurrence of doubt, this mental formation or sanskara, and so the adverse force finds it easy to throw it upon you, to bring back the suggestion.

You must have a steady working will to repel it whenever it comes and to refuse the tyranny of the sanskara of doubt—to annul the force of its recurrence. I think you have hardly done that in the past, you have rather supported the doubts when they came. So for some

time at least you must do some hard work in the opposite direction. The help (I am not speaking of a divine intervention from above but of my help and the Mother's) will be there. It can be effective in spite of your physical mind, but it will be more effective if this steady working will of which I speak is there as its instrument.

There are always two elements in spiritual success—one's own steady will and endeavour and the Power that in one way or another helps and gives the result of the endeavour." (CWSA 32: 440)

"I suppose I have had myself an even more completely European education than you and I have had too my period of agnostic denial, but from the moment I looked at these things I could never take the attitude of doubt and disbelief which was for so long fashionable in Europe. Abnormal, otherwise supraphysical experiences and powers, occult or Yogic, have always seemed to me something perfectly natural and credible. Consciousness in its very nature could not be limited by the ordinary physical human-animal consciousness; it must have other ranges." (CWSA 28: 572)

In surrender, no part of the being must hide behind doubts

"The surrender must be total and seize all the parts of the being. It is not enough that the psychic should respond and

the higher mental accept or even the inner vital submit and the inner physical consciousness feel the influence. There must be in no part of the being, even the most external, anything that makes a reserve, anything that hides behind doubts, confusions and subterfuges, anything that revolts or refuses." (CWSA 32: 3)

IX—F. Methods of rejecting doubt

1. Doubts are nothing; keep the fire of aspiration burning

"Go on the path of Yoga without doubt of the ultimate success—surely you cannot fail! Doubts—they are nothing; keep the fire of aspiration burning, it is that that conquers." (CWSA 28: 347)

2. Open, aspire, and wait for the experience of Light

"When you have truly had enough of it and want things to be different, then you have the courage, the strength, the capacity to conquer these three terrible enemies: fear, doubt and scepticism. But I repeat, it is not enough to sit down one fine day, watch yourself be, and struggle with these things inside you once and for all. You have to do it and do it again and again and continue in a way which seems almost endless, to be sure that you have got rid of it all. In reality, you are perhaps never truly rid of it, but there comes a time when inside yourself, you are so different that you can no longer be touched by these things. You can see them, but you see them with a smile, and at a simple gesture they go away, back to where they came from, perhaps a little changed, perhaps a little less

strong, less obstinate, less aggressive—until the time when the Light is so strong that all darkness vanishes.

As for the marvels Sri Aurobindo tells us about, it is better not to describe them, because each individual feels them, undergoes them, experiences them in his own way—and for each person that is the best way. One must not adopt another's way, one must go one's own way, then the experience has its full value, its full inestimable value.

And finally, I wish that you may all have these experiences yourselves. And for that, faith, confidence, much humaneness and great goodwill are needed.

Open, aspire, and ... wait. It will surely come, the Grace is there. It asks only to be able to work for everyone." 10 October 1958 (CWM 10: 13–14)

"Essentially, it is quite possible that what is most lacking is faith. There is always a tiny corner in the thought which doubts and debates. So that spoils everything. It is only just when one is in an absolutely critical situation, when the mind realises that it can do nothing, absolutely nothing, when it stands there quite stupid and incapable, then, at that moment, if one aspires for a higher help, the aspiration has exactly that kind of intensity which comes from despair, and that takes effect." (CWM 5: 366)

3. The more enlightened part of the being must impress on the body the necessity of an entire trust in the Divine's Grace

"In the ordinary consciousness of the body there is a more or less hidden anxiety about the consequences of the slightest physical disturbance. It can be translated by these words of doubt about the future: 'And what will happen?' It is this anxiety that must be checked. Indeed this anxiety is a lack of confidence in the Divine's Grace, the unmistakable sign that the consecration is not complete and perfect.

As a practical means of overcoming this subconscient fear each time that something of it comes to the surface, the more enlightened part of the being must impress on the body the necessity of an entire trust in the Divine's Grace, the certitude that this Grace is always working for the best in our self as well as in all, and the determination to submit entirely and unreservedly to the Divine's Will." (CWM 15: 140)

4. When doubt assails, stand by and wait for it to pass
5. Avail yourself of the satsanga of those who are already advanced on the path
6. Holding fast to the principle of self-surrender

"The [next] process is to stand aside and watch the working of the divine power in yourself. This working is often attended with disturbance and trouble in the system, therefore faith is necessary, though perfect faith is not always possible at once; for whatever impurity is in you, harboured openly or secretly lurking, is likely to rise at first and be repeated so long as it is not exhaustively swept out, and doubt in this age is an almost universal impurity. But even when doubt assails, stand by and wait for it to pass, availing yourself if possible of the *satsanga* of those who are already advanced on the path, but when that is absent, still holding fast to the principle of the yoga, self-surrender." (CWSA 13: 74)

7. All doubt of our strength to accomplish is a denial of the omnipotence of the spirit
8. Man carries the seed of the divine life in himself
9. Behind is the call and guidance of an omnipotent power

"All paralysing self-distrust has to be discouraged, all doubt of our strength to accomplish, for that is a false assent to impotence, an imagination of weakness and a denial of the omnipotence of the spirit. A present incapacity, however heavy may seem its pressure, is only a trial of faith and a temporary difficulty and to yield to the sense of inability is for the seeker of the integral Yoga a non-sense, for his

object is a development of a perfection that is there already, latent in the being, because man carries the seed of the divine life in himself, in his own spirit, the possibility of success is involved and implied in the effort and victory is assured because behind is the call and guidance of an omnipotent power." (CWSA 23–24: 779–780)

10. Three ways by which the mind can make itself a channel or instrument of Truth
11. The mind must fall silent in the Self and give room for a wider and greater
12. The mind must make itself passive to an inner Light
13. The mind must itself change from the questioning, intellectual, superficial mind it now is to an intuitive intelligence

"The mind can think and doubt and question and accept and withdraw its acceptance, make formations and unmake them, pass decisions and revoke them, judging always on the surface and by surface indications and therefore never coming to any deep and firm experience of Truth, but by itself it can do no more. There are only three ways by which it can make itself a channel or instrument of Truth. Either it must fall silent in the Self and give room for a wider and greater consciousness; or it must make itself passive to an inner Light and allow that Light

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

"As to doubts and argumentative answers to them I have long given up the practice as I found it perfectly useless. Yoga is not a field for intellectual argument or dissertation. It is not by the exercise of the logical or the debating mind that one can arrive at a true understanding of Yoga or follow it. A doubting spirit, 'honest doubt' and the claim that the intellect shall be satisfied and be made the judge on every point is all very well in the field of mental action outside. But Yoga is not a mental field, the consciousness which has to be established is not a mental, logical or debating consciousness—it is even laid down by Yoga that unless and until the mind is stilled, including the intellectual or logical mind, and opens itself in quietude or silence to a higher and deeper consciousness, vision and knowledge, sadhana cannot reach its goal. For the same reason an unquestioning openness to the Guru is demanded in the Indian spiritual tradition; as for blame, criticism and attack on the Guru, it was considered reprehensible and the surest possible obstacle to sadhana." (CWSA 28: 337)

14. Getting over fundamental doubts can come by the growth of the psychic or by an enlargement of consciousness

"To go on perpetually answering persistent and always recurring doubts such as for long have filled this Asram and obstructed the sadhana, is merely to frustrate the aim of the Yoga and go against its central principle with no spiritual or other gain whatever. If anybody gets over his fundamental doubts, it is by the growth of the psychic in him or by an enlargement of his consciousness, not otherwise. Questions which arise from the spirit of enquiry, not aggressive or self-assertive, but as a part of a hunger for knowledge can be answered, but the 'spirit of doubt' is insatiable and unappeasable." (CWSA 28: 337–338)

15. Doubt is not possible when one realises one's soul

"In fact, so long as there is any doubt or hesitation, so long as one asks oneself the question of whether one has or hasn't realized this eternal soul in oneself, it proves that the *true* contact has not taken place. For, when the phenomenon occurs, it brings with it an inexpressible something, so new and so definitive, that doubt and questioning are no longer possible. It is truly, in the absolute sense of the phrase, a new birth." (CWM 9: 336)

"To attain that concentration much effort is necessary; an immediate or even a quick result is rarely possible. But if the inner door has once been opened, you may be sure that it will open again if you know how to persevere.

As long as the door has not been opened, you may doubt your capacity, but once opened, no more doubt is possible, if you go on willing and aspiring." (CWM 4: 9)

16. In the soul, doubt and darkness disappear in an assured and brilliant luminosity

"Thus to the soul perfected in this knowledge everything that is, seems or is experienced, thinker & thought, action, doer, sufferer, object, field, result, becomes only one reality, Brahman, Self, God and all this variety is only play, only movement of conscious-self in conscious-self. That moves, God has His lila, the Self rejoices in its own inner experiences of itself seen & objectivised. There arises in the soul not merely calm, resignation, desirelessness, heart's joy in God's presence, but with the perfect knowledge comes a perfect bliss in the conditioned & the unconditioned, in the transcendent & in the phenomenal, in action & in resting from action, in Ishwara & inapparent an Ishwara, in God's nearness & in God's remoteness, in what men call joy & what men call pain. Grief falls away from the soul, pain becomes rapture, doubt & darkness

disappear in an assured & brilliant luminosity." (CWSA 17: 401)

"The spiritual conversion begins when the soul begins to insist on a deeper life and is complete when the psychic becomes the basis or the leader of the consciousness and mind and vital and body are led by it and obey it. Of course if that once happens fully, doubt, depression and despair cannot come any longer, although there may be and are difficulties still. If it is not fully, but still fundamentally accomplished, even then these things either do not come or are brief passing clouds on the surface—for there is a rock of support and certitude at the base, which even if partially covered cannot disappear altogether." (CWSA 30: 365)

17. In the concrete experience of the Divine, doubt is impossible

"When the Peace of God descends on you, when the Divine Presence is there within you, when the Ananda rushes on you like a sea, when you are driven like a leaf before the wind by the breath of the Divine Force, when Love flows out from you on all creation, when Divine Knowledge floods you with a Light which illumines and transforms in a moment all that was before dark, sorrowful and obscure, when all that is becomes part of the One Reality, when the

Reality is all around you, you feel at once by the spiritual contact, by the inner vision, by the illumined and seeing thought, by the vital sensation and even by the very physical sense, everywhere you see, hear, touch only the Divine. Then you can much less doubt it or deny it than you can deny or doubt daylight or air or the sun in heaven—for of these physical things you cannot be sure that they are what your senses represent them to be; but in the concrete experience of the Divine, doubt is impossible." (CWSA 28: 338–339)

18. Greater things can only be brought by the progressive opening of a consciousness quieted and turned steadily towards spiritual experience

"But the decisive experiences cannot be brought, the permanence of a new state of consciousness in which they will be normal cannot be secured if the mind is always interposing its own reservations, prejudgments, ignorant formulas or if it insists on arriving at the Divine certitude as it would at the quite relative truth of a mental conclusion, by reasoning, doubt, enquiry and all the other paraphernalia of ignorance feeling and fumbling around after Knowledge; these greater things can only be brought by the progressive opening of a consciousness quieted and turned steadily towards spiritual experience." (CWSA 28: 339–340)

19. To get rid of doubt is to take discrimination as one's detector of truth and falsehood and open the door freely and courageously to experience

"For Doubt exists for its own sake; its very function is to doubt always and, even when convinced, to go on doubting still; it is only to persuade its entertainer to give it board and lodging that it pretends to be an honest truth-seeker. …the only way to get rid of Doubt is to take Discrimination as one's detector of truth and falsehood and under its guard to open the door freely and courageously to experience." (CWSA 28: 338)

"Your reasonings about faith and doubt have been of a rather extravagant kind because they came to this that one must either doubt everything or believe everything however absurd that anybody says. I have repeatedly told you that there is not only room for discrimination in Yoga, but a need for it at every step—otherwise you will get lost in the jungle of things that are not spiritual—as for instance the tangle of what I call the intermediate zone. I have also told you that you are not asked to believe everything told you by anybody and that there is no call to put faith in all the miraculous things narrated about Bijoykrishna or another. That, I have said, is a question not of faith but of mental belief—and faith is not mental belief in outward facts, but an intuition of the inner being about spiritual

things…. One has faith in the Guru even when he uses methods that your intellect cannot grasp or approves things as true of which you have yet no experience (for if his knowledge and experience are not greater than yours, why did you choose him as a Guru?). One has faith in the Path leading to the goal even when the goal is very far off and the way covered by mist and cloud and smitten repeatedly by the thunder bolt. And so on. Even in worldly things man can do nothing great if he has not faith—in the spiritual realm it is still more indispensable. But this faith depends not on ignorant credulity, but on a light that burns inside though not seen by the eyes of the outward mind, a knowledge within that has not yet taken the form of an outer knowledge." (CWSA 28: 344–345)

20. In spiritual matters discrimination has a huge place

"One thing however—I make a distinction between doubt and discrimination. If doubt meant a discriminant questioning as to what might be truth of this or that matter, it would be a part of discrimination and quite admissible; but what is usually meant now by doubt is a negation positive and peremptory which does not stop to investigate, to consider in the light, to try, to inquire, but says at once, 'Oh, no, I am never going to take that as possibly true.' That kind of doubt may be very useful in

ordinary life, it may be practically useful in battering down established things or established ideas or in certain kinds of external controversy to undermine a position that is too dogmatically positive; but I do not think it is of any positive use in matters even of intellectual inquiry. There is nothing it can do there that impartial discrimination cannot do much better. In spiritual matters discrimination has a huge place, but negating doubt simply stops the path to Truth with its placard 'No entry' or its dogmatic 'This far and no farther.'" (CWSA 28: 345)

21. Be very quiet and peaceful, with the faith that what is true will take place

"When one aspires for something, if at the same time one knows that the aspiration will be heard and answered in the best way possible, that establishes a quietude in the being, a quietude in its vibrations; whilst if there is a doubt, an uncertainty, if one does not know what will lead one to the goal or if ever one will reach it or whether there is a way of doing so, and so on, then one gets disturbed and that usually creates a sort of little whirlwind around the being, which prevents it from receiving the real thing. Instead, if one has a quiet faith, if whilst aspiring one knows that there is no aspiration (naturally, sincere aspiration) which remains unanswered, then one is quiet. One aspires with as much fervour as possible, but does not

stand in nervous agitation asking oneself why one does not get immediately what one has asked for. One knows how to wait. I have said somewhere: 'To know how to wait is to put time on one's side.' That is quite true. For if one gets excited, one loses all one's time—one loses one's time, loses one's energy, loses one's movements. To be very quiet, calm, peaceful, with the faith that what is true will take place, and that if one lets it happen, it will happen so much the quicker. Then, in that peace everything goes much better." (CWM 5: 395–396)

22. Be alert and sincere, and you can see when doubt awakens

"If you are very sincere, soon you notice some little indications, like small suggestions that satisfy your vanity or awaken in you doubts or make you a bit unconscious of what exactly is to be done—very tiny things. If you are very sincere, you see through them; particularly if you are alert enough not to allow yourself to be deceived by compliments or attempts that encourage you in these satisfactions of *amour-propre*." (CWM 5: 156)

23. In all doubt and depression, to say "I belong to the Divine, I cannot fail"

"In all doubt and depression, to say 'I belong to the Divine, I cannot fail'; to all suggestions of impurity and unfitness, to reply 'I am a child of Immortality chosen by Sri Aurobindo and the Mother; I have but to be true to myself and to them—the victory is sure; even if I fell, I would be sure to rise again'; to all impulsions to depart and serve some other ideal, to reply 'This is the greatest, this is the Truth, this alone can satisfy the soul within me; I will endure through all tests and tribulations to the very end of the divine journey.' This is what I mean by faithfulness to the Light and the Call." 31 March 1930 (CWSA 32: 104)

24. Call down the Mother's Force into the vital to remove its doubts

"Q: *My vital does not seem to have devotion for the Mother. Instead of loving her, it gets mixed with undivine forces. Protect me from these vital obstructions. I wish to feel that I am lying in the Mother's lap.*

The Mother is always with you. The vital has its desires and therefore does not believe in the Mother's presence. You have to call down the Mother's Force into it to remove its doubts and desires." 11 November 1933 (CWSA 32: 170)

25. No doubt can remain if there is the realisation of the Divine Consciousness and the Mother's Presence

"Q: *Do doubt and ego continue even after one has the realization of the Divine Consciousness and the Mother's Presence?*

A: No doubt can remain if there is the realisation of the Divine Consciousness and the Mother's Presence. Imperfections may remain in the outer being, but they do not trouble the inner being and can be got rid of quietly." (CWSA 32: 176)

26. When we take refuge in the indwelling Lord of all Nature, then the divine leads us safely through all the doubts

"The greatest Yoga is to take refuge from all the perplexities and difficulties of our nature with this indwelling Lord of all Nature, to turn to him with our whole being, with the life and body and sense and mind and heart and understanding, with our whole dedicated knowledge and will and action, *sarva bhāvena*, in every way of our conscious self and our instrumental nature. And when we can at all times and entirely do this, then the divine Light and Love and Power takes hold of us, fills both self and

instruments and leads us safe through all the doubts and difficulties and perplexities and perils that beset our soul and our life, leads us to a supreme peace and the spiritual freedom of our immortal and eternal status, *parāṁ śāntim*, *sthānaṁ śāśvatam*." (CWSA 19: 555)

IX—G. Utility and necessity of doubt in Yoga

"The enemy of faith is doubt, and yet doubt too is a utility and necessity, because man in his ignorance and in his progressive labour towards knowledge needs to be visited by doubt, otherwise he would remain obstinate in an ignorant belief and limited knowledge and unable to escape from his errors. This utility and necessity of doubt does not altogether disappear when we enter on the path of Yoga. The integral Yoga aims at a knowledge not merely of some fundamental principle, but a knowing, a gnosis which will apply itself to and cover all life and the world action, and in this search for knowledge we enter on the way and are accompanied for many miles upon it by the mind's unregenerated activities before these are purified and transformed by a greater light: we carry with us a number of intellectual beliefs and ideas which are by no means all of them correct and perfect and a host of new ideas and suggestions meet us afterwards demanding our credence which it would be fatal to seize on and always cling to in the shape in which they come without regard to their possible error, limitation or imperfection. And indeed at one stage in the Yoga it becomes necessary to refuse to accept as definite and final any kind of intellectual idea or opinion whatever in its intellectual form and to hold it in a questioning suspension until it is given its right place and

luminous shape of truth in a spiritual experience enlightened by supramental knowledge." (CWSA 23: 772)

When the sun of the gnosis has risen, doubt itself will pass away because its cause and utility have ended

"The Divine holds our hand through all and if he seems to let us fall, it is only to raise us higher. This saving return we shall experience so often that the denials of doubt will become eventually impossible and, when once the foundation of equality is firmly established and still more when the sun of the gnosis has risen, doubt itself will pass away because its cause and utility have ended." (CWSA 24: 774–775)

IX—H. Doubt often kills falsehood but rejects truth with the same impartial blow

"This is the position on which Yoga stands, a position based upon constant experience since men began to seek after the Divine. If it is not true, then there is no truth in Yoga and no necessity for Yoga. If it is true, then it is on that basis, from the standpoint of the necessity of this greater consciousness that we can see whether Doubt is of any utility for the spiritual life. To believe anything and everything is certainly not demanded of the spiritual seeker; such a promiscuous and imbecile credulity would be not only unintellectual, but in the last degree unspiritual. At every moment of the spiritual life until one has got fully into that higher Light, one has to be on one's guard and to be able to distinguish spiritual truth from pseudo-spiritual imitations of it or substitutes for it set up by the mind and by vital desire. A power to distinguish between truth of the Divine and the lies of the Asura is a cardinal necessity for Yoga. The question is whether that can best be done by the negative and destructive method of doubt, which often kills falsehood but rejects truth too with the same impartial blow, or a more positive, helpful and luminously searching power can be found which is not compelled by its inherent ignorance to meet truth and falsehood alike with the stiletto of doubt and the bludgeon of denial." (CWSA 28: 342)

"For, since the need of man's being is truth & light, the divine law, whose chief article it is that no just demand of the soul shall remain always unsatisfied, raises up Reason to clear away Superstition. Reason arrives as the Angel of the Lord, armed with her sword of doubt & denial (for it is the nature of intellectual Reason that beyond truth of objective appearance she cannot confidently & powerfully affirm anything, but must always remain with regard to fundamental truth agnostic and doubtful, her highest word of affirmation "probably", her lowest "perhaps"),—comes & cuts away whatever she can, often losing herself in a fury of negation, denying superstition indeed, but doubting & denying also even Truth because it has been a foundation for superstition or formed with some of its stones part of the building." (CWSA 17: 309)

IX—I. Other quotations on doubt

"The ancient seers believed in this possibility for man and held it to be his divine destiny; the modern thinker does not even conceive of it or, if he conceived, would deny or doubt." (CWSA 21: 284)

"This faith will be more and more justified as the higher knowledge opens, we shall begin to see the great and small significances that escaped our limited mentality and faith will pass into knowledge. Then we shall see beyond the possibility of doubt that all happens within the working of the one Will and that that will was also wisdom because it develops always the true workings in life of the self and nature. The highest state of the assent, the *śraddhā* of the being will be when we feel the presence of the Ishwara and feel all our existence and consciousness and thought and will and action in his hand and consent in all things and with every part of our self and nature to the direct and immanent and occupying will of the Spirit. And that highest perfection of the *śraddhā* will also be the opportunity and perfect foundation of a divine strength: it will base, when complete, the development and manifestation and the works of the luminous supramental Shakti." (CWSA 24: 781–782)

"When one is in the right consciousness, then there is the right movement, the right happiness, everything in harmony with the Truth.

When there is the wrong consciousness, there is demand, dissatisfaction, doubt, all kinds of disharmony." (CWSA 30: 228)

"All these doubts and questionings of the mind are useless. What has to happen is that this inner consciousness should be always there not troubled by any disturbance with the constant silence, inner happiness, calm quietude, etc., while the outer consciousness does what is necessary in the way of work etc…." (CWSA 30: 232)

"I don't think that real faith is so very superabundant in this Asram. There are some who have it, but for the most part I have met not only doubt, but sharp criticism, constant questioning, much mockery of faith and spiritual experience, violent attacks on myself and the Mother—and that has been going on for the last fourteen years and more. Things are not so bad as they were, but there is plenty of it left still, and I do not think the time has come when the danger of an excessive faith is likely to take body." (CWSA 32: 114)

Doubts about the Mother

"As for your doubts about the Mother, they are not likely to disappear so long as you think you can read the Mother's mind by the light of your own and pass your mental judgments on her and her action from those erroneous data. Nor can they easily disappear if your faith breaks down every time that she does something which your limited intelligence cannot understand or which is displeasing to the feelings and demands of your vital nature. If you do not believe that she has a consciousness greater and wider than yours and not measurable by ordinary standards and judgments, at the very least a Yogic consciousness, I do not see on what ground you are practising Yoga here under her guidance. Those who constantly doubt and criticise and blame or attribute her actions to the most common and vulgar human feelings and motives and yet pretend to accept her or to accept myself and my Yoga, are guilty of a stupid and irrational inconsequence. As for understanding, that is another matter. I would suggest that you must grow out of the ordinary mind and become conscious with the true consciousness before you can hope to do it. And for that faith and surrender and fidelity and openness are conditions of some importance." 6 November 1929 (CWSA 32: 341–342)

"You must never doubt that Mother loves you and you need never weep for that, for her feelings towards you cannot and will not change." (CWSA 32: 283)

"Q: *If a sadhak has the Mother's circle of protection around him, I don't think he will have gloom, depression, doubt or anything hostile to the Divine.*

A: These things may try to come but they will not be able to enter or stay." 24 August 1934 (CWSA 32: 306)

"*Q: Is there some doubting part in me, always doubting that the Mother is divine, or does something in me simply form for the enjoyment of doubt?*

A: If something forms for the enjoyment of doubt and if that something is in you, then that part must surely be a doubting part. Or if these formations (which are always busily going about in the atmosphere) present themselves to you and something in you responds, it means that there is a part in you which is still open to the suggestions of doubt.

There is, I suppose, something in your vital and exterior mind which is still prone to the idea that the Mother cannot be divine because she does not satisfy their desires or act according to their ideas." (CWSA 32: 340–341)

"Do not doubt that the Mother's love is and will be always with you. Trust in her grace and all this will go out of you and leave you the true child of the Mother which in your mind and heart you always are." 18 July 1935 (CWSA 32: 386)

"As to doubts and argumentative answer to them I have long given up the practice as I found it perfectly useless. Yoga is not a field for intellectual argument or dissertation. It is not by the exercise of the logical or the debating mind that one can arrive at a true understanding of Yoga or follow it. A doubting spirit, 'honest doubt' and the claim that the intellect shall be satisfied and be made the judge on every point is all very well in the field of mental action outside. But Yoga is not a mental field, the consciousness which has to be established is not a mental, logical or debating consciousness—it is even laid down by Yoga that unless and until the mind is stilled including the intellectual or logical mind and opens itself in quietude or silence to a higher and deeper consciousness, vision and knowledge, sadhana cannot reach its goal. For the same reason an unquestioning openness to the Guru is demanded in the Indian spiritual tradition; as for blame, criticism and attack on the Guru, it was considered reprehensible and the surest possible obstacle to sadhana.

If the spirit of doubt could be overcome by meeting it with arguments, there might be something in the

demand for its removal by satisfaction through logic. But the spirit of doubt doubts for its own sake, for the sake of doubt; it simply uses the mind as its instrument for its particular dharma and this not the least when that mind thinks it is seeking sincerely for a solution of its honest and irrepressible doubts. Mental positions always differ, moreover, and it is well known that people can argue for ever without one convincing the other." (CWSA 32: 380–381)

"It is perfectly useless therefore and it is inconsistent with the position she ought to occupy to accept the ordinary mind and consciousness as judge and tribunal and allow her to appear before it and defend her. Such a procedure is itself illogical and inconsequent and can lead nowhere; it can only create or prolong a false atmosphere wholly inimical to success in the sadhana. For that reason if these doubts are raised, I no longer answer them or answer in such a way as to discourage a repetition of any such challenge. If people want to understand why the Mother does things, let them get into the same inner consciousness from which she sees and acts. As to what she is, that also can only be seen either with the eye of faith or of a deeper vision. That too is the reason why we keep here people who have not yet acquired the necessary faith or vision; we leave them to acquire it from within as

they will do if their will of sadhana is sincere." (CWSA 32: 381)

"You allowed yourself to be surprised by the old movement of unreasoning jealousy and it brought back the old unreasoned thoughts and feelings—for you are no more than others here as a mere worker, you are here as the Mother's child and the work is there only because it is a part of the sadhana. Also this feeling of jealousy and other doubts and difficulties are not peculiar to you alone, they are common to human nature and most here have them or have had them and found it difficult to be free. So there is no reason to suppose because of their presence that you are unfit or will not be able to do the sadhana. The only danger is in these violent fits of despondency and the movement to go away that comes with them; but that also others have had who have now got over them and some still have them. There is no reason why you should not get over them as many others have done. The Mother's love and the Mother's grace are with you. The only other thing needed is the growth of the psychic consciousness and the psychic movement within you. That had begun and was fast increasing; it has only to reach a certain point, to occupy the mind and vital consciousness more strongly, then these things will no longer be able to return. What difficulties remain will then be minor things; there will be nothing that will try to take you away from the Mother. Be

patient therefore and persevere; recover your confidence in the Mother and let your soul grow in you. Beyond these storms there is a haven of joy and love and happiness that are your true goal. Persevere till you reach it." 25 October 1935 (CWSA 32: 386–387)

"Q: *Come down, Sir,—for heaven's sake give us something and make life more substantial and concrete. I am really beginning to doubt that things like divine Love, Knowledge, etc. can be brought down in me.*

In the old days long before you came (*The recipient of this letter first visited the Ashram in 1930 and came to stay in 1933.)* plenty of things were brought down—including the love. Hardly one could bear it and even then only in a small measure. Is it any better now, I wonder? It does not look like it. That is why I want the supermind first,—and especially the peace, the balance in an intensity unshakable. There are several who have been trying to push on with the intensities, but—. Well, let us hope for the best. For God's sake, peace, balance, an unshakable supramental poise and sanity first. Ecstasies and intensities of other kinds can come afterwards.
8 April 1935 (CWSA 35: 274–275)

"Q: *The following doubt came to me: "Is not the realisation of the Self sufficient? Hearing about your yoga, a Vedantin*

who sought the Self might say that it was only because you had not reached the highest that you wanted to do something on earth by means of the divine power, but that this aim had to be rejected before one could reach the highest."

A: These doubts come from the mind—for which action is inferior to thought and thought itself something that comes out from the Silence. It cannot understand the supramental view of things in which there is no division or opposition between the Supreme Existence and the supreme Power that sees, thinks, acts and creates." 7 December 1933 (CWSA 35: 301–302)

"I have made inwardly steps in front in the last two or three months which had seemed impossible because of the obstinate resistance for years together and it is not an experience which pushes me to despair and give up. If there is much resistance on one side, there have been large gains on the other—all has not been a picture of sterile darkness. You yourself are kept back only by the demon of doubt which bangs on you each door as you are opening it—you have only to set about resolutely slaying the Rakshasa and the doors will open to you as they have done to many others who were held up by their own mind or vital nature." 12 January 1933 (CWSA 32: 324–325)

"It is not that you are incapable of it, for it was several times on the point of being done. But your external mind has interfered always, questioning, doubting, asking for something more external, not waiting for the movement to continue, for the inward to externalise itself and make itself concrete. That is why I object to this worship of Doubt. It is not that I used not to have doubts myself more formidable than any you have ever thought of—but I did not allow them to interfere with the development of my experience. I let it continue until it had sufficient body for me to know what it was and what it could bring me." 2 August 1932 (CWSA 32: 481)

"I do not ask you to believe that the Divine Grace comes to all or that all can succeed in the sadhana or that I personally have succeeded or will succeed in the case of all who come to me. I have asked you if you cannot develop the faith that the Divine is—you seemed often to doubt it,—that the Divine Grace is and has manifested both elsewhere and here, that the sadhana by which so many profit is not a falsehood or a chimaera and that I have helped many and am not utterly powerless—otherwise how could so many progress under our influence?" (CWSA 32: 494)

"Q: *For the last few days, I have felt quite foreign here. I do not like going to work or doing anything else. If there is any reason for my being here, I don't know what it is.*

A: Why do you allow these suggestions to get hold of your mind? You have made great progress here which you could not have made over there—and as for usefulness, there are few whose work can be relied on as yours can. Dry moments come to all—that is not a reason for doubting one's call to the Yoga. Shake off these false suggestions—they must surely be the result of the old atmosphere coming in in such a mass—and regain the peace and stillness that you were having before." 18 August 1934 (CWSA 35: 612)

"Whatever else you doubt, you should not doubt that our love and affection will be always with you." (CWSA 32: 620)

"If at any time a deep sorrow, a searing doubt or an intense pain overwhelms you and drives you to despair, there is an infallible way to regain calm and peace.

In the depths of our being there shines a light whose brilliance is equalled only by its purity; a light, a living and conscious portion of a universal godhead who animates and nourishes and illumines Matter, a powerful and unfailing guide for those who are willing to heed his law, a

helper full of solace and loving forbearance towards all who aspire to see and hear and obey him. No sincere and lasting aspiration towards him can be in vain; no strong and respectful trust can be disappointed, no expectation ever deceived." (CWM 2: 20)

"Q: *What is the way to establish unity and homogeneity in our being?*

A: Keep the will firm. Treat the recalcitrant parts as disobedient children. Act upon them constantly and patiently. Convince them of their error.

In the depths of your consciousness is the psychic being, the temple of the Divine within you. This is the centre round which should come about the unification of all these divergent parts, all these contradictory movements of your being. Once you have got the consciousness of the psychic being and its aspiration, these doubts and difficulties can be destroyed. It takes more or less time, but you will surely succeed in the end. Once you have turned to the Divine, saying, 'I want to be yours', and the Divine has said, 'Yes', the whole world cannot keep you from it. When the central being has made its surrender, the chief difficulty has disappeared. The outer being is like a crust. In ordinary people he crust is so hard and thick that they are not conscious of the Divine within them. If once, even for a moment only, the inner being has said, 'I

am here and I am yours', then it is as though abridge has been built and little by little the crust becomes thinner and thinner until the two parts are wholly joined and the inner and the outer become one." (CWM 3: 7)

"Once you have chosen the path, you must boldly accept all the consequences of your choice. But if you choose and then draw back and choose again and again draw back, always wavering, always doubting, always fearful, you create a disharmony in your being, which not only retards your progress, but can be the origin of all kinds of disturbance in the mind and vital being and discomfort and disease in the body." (CWM 3: 91)

"We are moving nearer and nearer the hour of its complete triumph. Once the world-conditions are ready the full descent will take place carrying everything before it. Its presence will be unmistakable, its force will brook no resistance, doubts and difficulties will not torture you any longer. For the Divine will stand manifest—unveiled in its total perfection." (CWM 3: 180)

"But when one lives like this, quite open, like a flower blossoming in the sun before the Supreme Consciousness, the Supreme Wisdom, the Supreme Light, the Supreme Love, which knows all, which can do all, which takes charge

of you and you have no more worries—that is the ideal condition.

And why is it not done?

One does not think of it, one forgets to do it, the old habits come back. And above all, behind, hidden somewhere in the inconscient or even in the subconscient, there is this insidious doubt that whispers in your ear: 'Oh! if you are not careful, some misfortune will happen to you. If you forget to watch over yourself, you do not know what may happen'—and you are so silly, so silly, so obscure, so stupid that you listen and you begin to pay attention to yourself and everything is ruined." (CWM 3: 256–257)

"Q: *Sweet Mother, what does a 'candid' faith mean?*

'Candid? It is simple, sincere and does not doubt. We speak mostly of the candour of a child, who has a simple faith without any doubts." (CWM 6: 236)

"One can only smile and say, 'Never doubt your experience, for your experience is the truth of your being, but do not imagine that it is a universal truth; and never on the basis of this truth deny the truth of others, because for each one, his experience is the truth of his being. And a total truth would only be the totality of all these individual truths... plus the experience of the Lord Himself!'" (CWM 10: 181)

"The ultimate victory of the Divine is certain beyond all doubt." 6 April 1942 (CWM 15: 81)

"And never doubt my affection, which is always with you to help you make this indispensable progress." (CWM 16: 75)

"Q: *Turn my consciousness towards You, Mother.*

A: Never doubt my love, and then quite naturally you will turn towards me." 10 June 1935 (CWM 17: 101)

X— Politics Is Strictly Forbidden in the Ashram

X—A. Rule for an ashramite—must abstain from political activities altogether

"The rule for permanent residents of the Asram is that they must abstain from political activities altogether. Although this rule is not rigidly imposed on disciples at a distance, yet it is expected that they should not do anything which would compromise the Asram, and, as a matter of fact, no disciple of Sri Aurobindo is at present participating in political agitation." 24 May 1930 (CWSA 35: 682–683)

"*Q. Is the Asrama free from politics?*

A: Entirely." (CWSA 35: 596)

"It is absolutely out of the question for anyone connected with the Ashram to intervene in politics of any kind." (CWM 17: 201)

"We are not here to do politics but to serve the Divine." (CWM 13: 119)

"It is understood that the Ashram is not doing politics and is not interested in elections." 25 June 1955 (CWM 13: 124)

A DECLARATION

"Sri Aurobindo withdrew from politics; and, in his Ashram, a most important rule is that one must abstain from all politics—not because Sri Aurobindo did not concern himself with the happenings of the world, but because politics, as it is practised, is a low and ugly thing, wholly dominated by falsehood, deceit, injustice, misuse of power and violence; because to succeed in politics one has to cultivate in oneself hypocrisy, duplicity and unscrupulous ambition.

The indispensable basis of our Yoga is sincerity, honesty, unselfishness, disinterested consecration to the work to be done, nobility of character and straightforwardness. They who do not practise these elementary virtues are not Sri Aurobindo's disciples and have no place in the Ashram. That is why I refuse to answer imbecile and groundless accusations against the Ashram emanating from perverse and evil-intentioned minds.

Sri Aurobindo always loved deeply his Motherland. But he wished her to be great, noble, pure and worthy of her big mission in the world. He refused to let her sink to the sordid and vulgar level of blind self-interests and ignorant prejudices. This is why, in full conformity to his will, we lift high the standard of truth, progress and transformation of mankind, without caring for those who, through ignorance, stupidity, envy or bad will, seek to soil

it and drag it down into the mud. We carry it very high so that all who have a soul may see it and gather round it." 25 April 1954 (CWM 13: 122–123)

"As for politics, if he still feels the political call, he certainly cannot come here. It is better if he exhausts these desires of the ordinary nature, before he takes up the spiritual life. If at any time he feels them fallen away from him and only the spiritual attraction left, he can then take up the spiritual life, though it would still remain to be decided which path was the right one for him." (CWSA 35: 542–543)

"Auroville is not a place for politics; no politics must be done in Auroville and in the offices of Auroville." 15 February 1973 (CWM 13: 220)

"Auroville wants to be a universal town where men and women of all countries are able to live in peace and progressive harmony, above all creeds, all politics and all nationalities.

The purpose of Auroville is to realise human unity." 8 September 1965 (CWM 13: 188)

"It is a rule of the Asram that resident sadhaks shall not engage in any kind of public or propagandist activity political, social or religious; it is only our special permission which could dispense any member of the Asram from

conformity to this rule. The Asram exists solely for Yoga and for a purely spiritual purpose; it is not a political or social or religious institution and it abstains from all these activities, this abstention is necessary for its existence. If any member engages in them, it involves the Asram itself and gives it the appearance of entering into activities which are not proper to it, and if any such impression of that kind is created, it may have serious consequences." (CWSA 35: 690)

The discussion of politics is discouraged

"*Q. Is politics necessary for some people here? We would seem to have sufficient difficulties in sadhana without adding that. Why do people take mental interest in something not likely to help the divine manifestation unless it is given as a work to some?*

A: No, it is not given as a work to anybody. People go on with that because it is a mental interest or habit they do not like giving up, it is like the vital habit of tea-drinking or anything else of the kind. Politics is not only not given as a work but the discussion of politics is discouraged as much as possible." 30 November 1933 (CWSA 35: 684)

The members are expected not to talk politics with people from outside

"I do not know why you said all you did to Miss Maitland about the British police. We do not care in the least about the matter, and we have no intention of making any move to get rid of them.

Farther, you must try to remember that this Asram is not concerned with politics and the members are expected not to talk politics with people from outside like Miss Maitland. She came here from an interest in Yoga and is not in the least interested in politics. If you begin to talk to her about the freedom of India and the misdeeds of the British Government, she will inevitably think in the end that the Consul was right and the Asram is full of revolutionaries under the garb of Yoga. It is surprising that the members of this Asram seem always unable to use discretion in their speech or measure its consequences or understand how easily false impressions are created.

Finally, those who see Miss Maitland are expected not to quarrel or dispute with her about her views or mental impressions about India. She is returning soon to England and they can surely have patience for this short time and maintain harmony and good feeling in their relations with her." 1929 (CWSA 35: 685)

X—B. Why politics, as it is practised at present, is forbidden in the Ashram

1. Politics has nothing to do with the spiritual life

"Politics as such has nothing to do with the spiritual life. If the spiritual man does anything for his country, it is in order to do the will of the Divine and as part of a divinely appointed work and not from any other common human motive. In none of his acts does he proceed from the common mental and vital motives which move ordinary men but acts out of the truth of the Spirit and from an inner command of which he knows the source." (CWSA 28: 420)

2. Politics is based on falsehood

"Politics is based on falsehood, we have nothing to do with it.

Morality is the shield that men flourish to protect themselves against Truth.

It is only the Divine's will that is unquestionable. And it is that which man, in all his actions, deforms and falsifies." (CWM 13: 124)

Q. Sweet Mother,

Are the presence and intervention of the Americans in Vietnam justifiable?

A: From what point of view are you asking this question? If it is from the political point of view, politics is steeped in falsehood, and I am not interested in it.

If it is from the moral point of view, morality is a shield which ordinary men flourish to protect themselves from the Truth.

If it is from the spiritual point of view, the Divine Will alone is justifiable, and it is That which men travesty (mockery) and deform in all their actions." 6 July 1966 (CWM 16: 336)

3. Politics is closed to the Truth

"*Today You have shown me the basic incompatibility between human law and the Truth. But this is a problem that confronts me very often.*

Politics and so-called justice are still, in humanity, what is most closed to the Truth. But their turn for conversion will also come, perhaps sooner than we think." 28 March 1968 (CWM 16: 376)

4. Completely give up the practice of publicly abusing people in politics

"Completely give up this ordinary vulgar political practice of publicly abusing people either in speech or writing. One should wage a war of ideas so that the truth may triumph, not a war of *personalities*." (CWM 15: 56)

5. Politics consists of dominating others by oneself or by one's party

"*Q. Sweet Mother,*

In connection with the Youth Camps [seminars, lasting several days, for the study of the works of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother.] You have said that we should not discuss politics.

In this connection I pray for some more specific guidance from You, Douce Mère, not only for us at the Youth Camps, but generally for us who go around the country giving talks on Sri Aurobindo's Action....

So far, we have considered 'Politics' as consisting of any movement, including intrigue and malpractice, to arrive at dominance either of oneself or of one's party over others. In this, one has to hold that one's own view or ideology is true and that of others is wrong.

This politics we must completely avoid. Is it not so?

Yes." (CWM 15: 56)

6. In politics, there is always an ugly fight

"In politics it is always fight and ugly fight—ugly. And it has become so bad. He was telling me always that things would become worse and worse, because it is the *end* of this age. We are entering into an age where things must be organised differently. It is a difficult time because of that... (CWM 15: 405–406)

7. Politics is limited by political parties
8. If people with courage would say, "We represent no party! We represent India," that would be magnificent

"Politics is always limited by party, by ideas, by duties also—unless we prepare a government that has no party, a government that admits all ideas because it is above parties. Party is limitation; it is like a box: you go into the box (*Mother laughs*).

Of course, if there were some people who had the courage to be in the government without a party—'We represent no party! We represent India'—that would be magnificent.

Pull the consciousness up, up, above party. And then, naturally, certain people who couldn't come into political

parties—that! that is truly working for tomorrow. Tomorrow it will be like that. All this turmoil is because the country must take the lead, must go above all these old political habits.

Government without party. Oh, it would be magnificent!" (CWM 15: 407)

9. In the Ashram, politics could bring a mountain of trouble

"I told you already—no such politics can originate from the Ashram; it could bring a mountain of trouble.

In the present case of this fray I ask you to be true to your faith in Sri Aurobindo and myself and to leave his fate to our responsibility. If it is the truth of his being that he should be liberated, he will surely be liberated.

With my love and blessings." 14 February 1946 (CWM 13: 122)

10. Politics, as it is practised, is a low and ugly thing

"… politics, as it is practised, is a low and ugly thing, wholly dominated by falsehood, deceit, injustice, misuse of power and violence; because to succeed in politics one has to cultivate in oneself hypocrisy, duplicity and unscrupulous ambition." (CWM 13: 122–123)

11. The politicians cover all their misdeeds with beautiful words

"… usually they [politician] cover all their misdeeds with beautiful words, but the misdeeds are there all the same. The world is organised in such a way that one can't be otherwise." (CWM 7: 297–298)

12. Confusion in Indian politics leaves a huge mass of divisions, warring tendencies, and no clear guide

"A great confusion in Indian politics which leaves it a huge mass of division, warring tendencies, no clear guide or compass anywhere." (CWSA 35: 20)

13. The political attitude is very superficial and shallow, has no depth, is just hollow words, and sounds very loud

"… the political attitude which is very, very superficial. It is very shallow, it has no depth, it is above all just words, very hollow words; it sounds very loud because it is hollow, they are big words." (CWM 7: 300–301)

14. Politics is a dirty and corrupting business full of "policy", "strategy", "tactics", and "diplomacy": in

other words, lying, tricking, and manoeuvring of all kinds

"Politics is like that, a dirty and corrupting business full of 'policy', 'strategy', 'tactics', 'diplomacy': in other words, lying, tricking, manoeuvring of all kinds. A few escape the corruption but most don't. It has after all always been a trade or art of Kautilya from the beginning, and to touch it and not be corrupted is far from easy. For it is a field in which people fix their eyes on the thing to be achieved and soon become careless about the character of the means, while ambition, ego and self-interest come pouring in to aid the process. Human nature is prone enough to crookedness as it is, but here the ordinary restraints put upon it fail to be at all effective." (CWSA 35: 200)

15. Politics is too rajasic, mixed and muddied with all sorts of egoistic motives

"*Q.Is there no likelihood of any political work being done by us?*

A: Not any! What is called politics is too rajasic, mixed and muddied with all sorts of egoistic motives. Our way is the pressure of the spirit upon the earth consciousness to change." 25 July 1933 (CWSA 35: 683)

"The accomplished types of the sattwic man are the philosopher, saint and sage, of the rajasic man the statesman, warrior, forceful man of action." (CWSA 24: 686–687)

16. Politics is an apparent game of strife, deceit, and charlatanism

"Politics itself, that apparent game of strife and deceit and charlatanism, can be a large field of absolute idealisms." (CWSA 25: 166)

X—C. The modern politician represents average pettiness, selfishness, egoism, and self-deception

"In either case, there is no guarantee that this ruling class or ruling body represents the best mind of the nation or its noblest aims or its highest instincts.

Nothing of the kind can be asserted of the modern politician in any part of the world; he does not represent the soul of a people or its aspirations. What he does usually represent is all the average pettiness, selfishness, egoism, self-deception that is about him and these he represents well enough as well as a great deal of mental incompetence and moral conventionality, timidity and pretence. Great issues often come to him for decision, but he does not deal with them greatly; high words and noble ideas are on his lips, but they become rapidly the claptrap of a party. The disease and falsehood of modern political life is patent in every country of the world and only the hypnotised acquiescence of all, even of the intellectual classes, in the great organised sham, cloaks and prolongs the malady, the acquiescence that men yield to everything that is habitual and makes the present atmosphere of their lives." (CWSA 25: 296–297)

"The politician and the statesman—and the world is now full of politicians but very empty of statesmen—act in accordance with this average general mind of the mass;

the one is governed by it, the other has always to take it into chief account and cannot lead it where he will, unless he is one of those great geniuses and powerful personalities who unite a large mind and dynamic force of conception with an enormous power or influence over men." (CWSA 25: 386)

X—D. The political mind is respectful of the status quo, disinclined to great adventures, more incapable of launching out into the new

"Moreover, the political mind has limitations of its own beyond those of the general average mind of the mass; it is even more respectful of the status quo, more disinclined to great adventures in which the safe footing of the past has to be abandoned, more incapable of launching out into the uncertain and the new. To do that it must either be forced by general opinion or a powerful interest or else itself fall under the spell of a great new enthusiasm diffused in the mental atmosphere of the times." (CWSA 25: 386)

"If the politician mind is left entirely to itself, we could expect no better tangible result of the greatest international convulsion on record than a rearrangement of frontiers, a redistribution of power and possessions and a few desirable or undesirable developments of international, commercial and other relations. That is one disastrous possibility leading to more disastrous convulsions—so long as the problem is not solved—against which the future of the world is by no means secure. Still, since the mind of humanity has been greatly moved and its sentiments powerfully awakened, since the sense is becoming fairly wide. A spread that the old status of things is no longer tolerable and the undesirability of an international balance

reposing on a ring of national egoisms held in check only by mutual fear and hesitation, by ineffective arbitration treaties and Hague tribunals and the blundering discords of a European Concert must be now fairly clear even to the politician mind, we might expect that some serious attempt towards the beginning of a new order should be the result of the moral collapse of the old." (CWSA 25: 386–387) First Step towards International Unity

X—E. Our attitude towards politics as it is practised

"The world goes on as it is. When there is nothing you or I can do to change it, we can only keep quiet, silent witness like Brahman. As in the world so here also. So many things go on: each one tries to prove his superiority; there is politics of all kinds, propaganda. I only witness like Brahman; I am neither for nor against, neither approve nor condemn." 26 April 1955 (CWM 13: 55)

"Q: The Mother has said that only a minor portion of the government will remain in British hands.

A: That seems to be a description of 'Dominion Status'. In the Dominions the British Government have only a nominal power, not any real sovereignty.

It is not the time to speak of these things—for we have kept politics out of our scope. What we have to do is not to trouble ourselves about it but to get the spiritual realisation. The rest will work itself out according to the Divine Decree." 26 January 1935 (CWSA 35: 205)

X—F. The attitude of a true politician

Q. Sweet Mother, what should be the attitude of a true politician?

A: But it's just the attitude of a true politician which I have given here. What the statesman speaks in the play *The Great Secret* [*information on the play given below]. It's the ideal politician, my child. One can't make a better one. It is the circumstances, he says that himself: 'a greater force than mine...' it's the way the world is organised; he started with the best intentions, he tried his very best, he could do nothing, because one can't do anything in the present circumstances and with politics as it is practised at present. Usually people are not frank enough to say what I have made him say. I have made him speak the truth and this proves that he is extremely frank; otherwise, usually they cover all their misdeeds with beautiful words, but the misdeeds are there all the same. The world is organised in such a way that one can't be otherwise. If one were a man who did not accept any kind of compromise, one could not remain in politics; one would quite simply be pushed out by the very force of things. There will be a time when all this will change, but not yet. Politics is perhaps the last thing which will change. There are many others which must change before. It is certainly one of the most recalcitrant things." (CWM 7: 297–298)

The Mother wrote the following drama in French for the dramatic performance held annually on December 1. *The Great Secret* was produced in 1949.

For *The Great Secret*, the Mother wrote the parts of the Statesman,

the Artist and the Unknown Man;

The Great Secret

Six Monologues and a Conclusion

Six of the world's most famous men have been brought together, apparently by chance, in a life-boat in which they have taken refuge when the ship that was carrying them to a world conference on human progress sank in mid-ocean.

There is also a seventh man in the boat. He looks young or, rather, ageless. He is dressed in a style belonging to no period or country. He sits at the helm, immobile and silent, but listens attentively to what the others are saying. They treat him as a nobody and take no notice of him.

The persons are:

The Statesman
The Writer
The Scientist
The Artist
The Industrialist
The Athlete
The Unknown Man

Water is running out, provisions have come to an end. Their physical suffering is becoming intolerable. No hope on the horizon: death is approaching. To take their minds off their present miseries, each one of them in turn tells the story of his life.

The curtain rises.

THE STATESMAN

Since you ask me, I will be the first to tell you what my life has been.

Son of a politician, I was familiar from childhood with government affairs and political issues. All that was freely discussed at the dinners which my parents gave for their friends and which I used to attend from the age of twelve onwards. The opinions of the various political parties were no mystery to me and my enthusiastic young mind would find a simple solution to every difficulty.

Naturally, my studies ran along these lines and I became a brilliant student of Political Science.

Later, when the time came to pass from theory to practice, I had to face the first serious difficulties and I began to understand how virtually impossible it is to put one's ideas into practice. I had to resort to compromises and my great ideal gradually crumbled away.

I also noticed that success does not really correspond to a person's worth, but rather to his capacity to adapt himself to circumstances and to make himself agreeable.

For that, one must flatter people's weaknesses rather than attempt to correct their imperfections.

No doubt, all of you know about my brilliant career, so I shall not dwell upon it. But I should like to tell you that as soon as I became Prime Minister and my position gave me some real power, I remembered the humanitarian ambitions of my youth and tried to be guided by them. I tried not to be a 'party man'. I wanted to find a solution to the great conflict between the various political and social trends that are tearing the world apart and all of which, nevertheless, in my opinion, have their advantages and disadvantages. None of them is perfectly good or wholly bad, and a way should be found to adopt what is good in each one in order to form a harmonious and practicable whole. But I was not able to discover the formula of the synthesis that would reconcile these contraries, not to speak of being able to translate it into action.

Thus, I wished for peace, concord, understanding between nations, collaboration for the good of all, and I was compelled by a force greater than mine to wage war and to triumph by unscrupulous means and uncharitable decisions.

And yet I am considered a great statesman, I am overwhelmed with honours and praise and people call me 'a friend of humanity'.

But I feel my own weakness and I know that I have lacked the true knowledge and power which would have enabled me to fulfil the beautiful hopes of my childhood.

And now that the end is near, I feel that I have done very little and perhaps even very badly, and I shall cross the threshold of death sad and disillusioned." (CWM 12: 475–477)

Then the voice of the Unknown Man is heard, calm, gentle, clear, full of a serene authority.

THE UNKNOWN MAN

What you want to know, I can tell you.

All of you have had a similar experience, although your activities are so different in their nature and scope. All six of you have come to a similar conclusion in spite of the success that has crowned your efforts. For you have been living in the surface consciousness, seeing only the appearance of things and unaware of the true reality of the universe.

You represent the ´elite of mankind, each one of you has achieved in his own sphere the utmost of what man is capable of; you are therefore at the summit of the human race. But from this summit you look down into an abyss and you can go no further. None of you are satisfied but at the same time none of you know what to do. None of you know the solution to the twofold problem presented by life and your own goodwill. I say a twofold problem, for in fact

it has two aspects, one individual and the other collective: how can one fully realise one's own good and the good of others? None of you have found the solution, for this riddle of life cannot be solved by mental man, however superior he may be. For that, one must be born into a new and higher consciousness, the Truth-Consciousness. For behind these fleeting appearances there is an eternal reality, behind this unconscious and warring multitude there is a single, serene Consciousness, behind these endless and innumerable falsehoods there is a pure, radiant Truth, behind this obscure and obdurate ignorance there is a sovereign knowledge.

And this Reality is here, very near, at the centre of your being as it is at the centre of the universe. You have only to find it and live it and you will be able to solve all your problems, overcome all your difficulties.

This, you may say, is what the religions preach: most of them have spoken of this Reality, calling it God, but they have supplied no satisfactory solution to your problem, no convincing answer to your questions, and they have totally failed in their attempt to provide a remedy to the ills of suffering humanity.

Some of these religions were based on prophetic revelation, others on a philosophical and spiritual ideal, but very soon the revelation changed to rituals and the philosophical ideal to dogmas, and so the truth they contained vanished. Moreover, and most important, all

religions, almost without exception, offer man an almost identical other-worldly solution, based on death, not on life. Their solution amounts to this: bear all your miseries without complaining, for this world is irremediably evil, and you shall be rewarded for your meekness after death; or else: renounce all attachment to life and you shall escape forever from the cruel necessity of living. This certainly cannot provide any remedy to the sufferings of humanity on earth nor to the condition of the world in general. On the contrary, if we want to find a true solution to the confusion, chaos and misery of the world, we have to find it in the world itself. And this is in fact where it is to be found. It exists potentially, we have only to discover it; it is neither mystic nor imaginary; it is altogether concrete and disclosed to us by Nature herself, if we know how to observe her. For the movement of Nature is an ascending one; from one form, one species, she brings forth a new one capable of manifesting something more of the universal consciousness. All goes to show that man is not the last step in terrestrial evolution. The human species will necessarily be succeeded by a new one which will be to man what man is to the animal; the present human consciousness will be replaced by a new consciousness, no longer mental but supramental. And this consciousness will give birth to a higher race, superhuman and divine.

The time has come for this possibility, promised and anticipated for so long, to become a living reality upon

earth, and that is why you are all unsatisfied and feel that you have been unable to obtain what you wanted from life. Nothing but a radical change of consciousness can deliver the world from its present obscurity. Indeed, this transformation of the consciousness, this manifestation of a higher and truer consciousness, is not only possible but certain; it is the very aim of our existence, the purpose of life upon earth.

First the consciousness must be transformed, then life, then forms; it is in this order that the new creation will unfold. All Nature's activity is in fact a progressive return towards the Supreme Reality which is both the origin and the goal of the universe, in its totality as well as in its smallest element. We must become concretely what we are essentially; we must live integrally the truth, the beauty, the power and the perfection that are hidden in the depths of our being, and then all life will become the expression of the sublime, eternal, divine Joy.

There is a silence as the six men exchange glances, showing their approval. Then:

THE WRITER

Your words have a compelling force, a contagious power. Yes, we feel that a new door has opened before us, a new hope is born in our hearts. But it will take time to realise,

a long time perhaps. And now death awaits us, the end is near. Alas, it is too late.

THE UNKNOWN MAN
No, it is not too late, it is never too late.
Let us unite our wills in a great aspiration; let us pray for an intervention of the Grace. A miracle can always happen. Faith has a sovereign power. And if indeed we are to take part in the great work to be done, then an intervention will come and prolong our lives. Let us pray with the humility of the wise and the candid faith of a child; let us invoke with sincerity this new Consciousness, this new Force, Truth and Beauty which must manifest, so that the earth may be transformed and the supramental life realised in the material world.

They all concentrate in silence. The Unknown Man continues:

"O Supreme Reality, grant that we may live integrally the marvellous secret that is now revealed to us."

They all repeat the prayer softly and remain in silent concentration. Suddenly the Artist cries out:

Look! Look!

A ship appears, like a dot on the horizon, and slowly comes closer. Exclamations. The Unknown Man says:

Our prayer is heard.

When the ship becomes clearly visible, the Athlete jumps up onto the gunwale waving a white handkerchief which he pulls from his pocket. The ship comes nearer. The Scientist exclaims:

They have seen us. They are coming!

And the Unknown Man says slowly:

Here is salvation, here is new life!
Curtain.” (CWM 12: 493–496)

X—G. A transformation of politics

"There are two things which it is very difficult to change: finance and politics; the field of money and the field of government are the two points where man is weakest and most attached to falsehood. So, probably, transformation will come there last of all. One can hope for a social transformation, an economic transformation, a transformation of education; one can hope for all this long before the transformation of politics and of finance. I wrote this precisely to show people what the real state of the world is, and to give an indication of the way to get out of it. But when we are at the point of coming out, you will see that it is not so easy. Perhaps the first thing that will be transformed will be the scientific world, it is possible; because there a very great sincerity is required and a very persevering effort, and these already are qualities which open for you the door to a higher life...." (CWM 7: 297–298)

"There are two points which resist strongly—all that has to do with politics and all that has to do with money. These are the two points on which it is most difficult to change the human attitude.

In principle we have said that we have nothing to do with politics, and it is true that we have nothing to do with politics as it is practised at present. But it is quite obvious

that if politics is taken in its true spirit, that is, as the organisation of human masses and all the details of government and regulation of the collective life, and relations with other collectivities—that is, with other nations, other countries—it must necessarily enter into the supramental transformation, for so long as national life and the relations between nations remain what they are, it is quite impossible to live a supramental life on earth. So it will just have to change; we shall have to deal with that too." (CWM 9: 167)

"*Q. Mother, in the present world politics is divided into two big camps, that of America and that of Russia. How will the reconciliation come?*

… But if the true solution were found... not if it were found—perhaps it is found—if the true economic solution were applied, the very basis of their problems would collapse, there would remain only the political attitude which is very, very superficial. … But, you see, the only fairly true support of their attitude lies in the two things I have spoken about: a financial support and an economic support. Well, if the economic problem were solved, that is, if the solution were applied, the major part of the support of these political differences would disappear." (CWM 7: 300–301)

"It is to organise the country beyond politics. And it is the only way. ...

… The best way to go beyond politics is to spread the message of Sri Aurobindo. Because he is no more a political element wanting to take power; there are only his ideas and ideals. And, of course, if people could understand and realise his programme, the country could be very strong, very strong." (CWM 15: 405–406)

"Remain in politics and try to bring Truth into politics. It is a very sure way towards effective spirituality." (CWM 15: 56)

"Mother is with all those who are sincere in their aspiration towards a divine life above party and politics." 26 March 1971 (CWM 13: 125)

X—H. The guiding aim of spiritualized society in its political structure

"Therefore a society which was even initially spiritualized would make the revealing and finding of the divine Self in man the supreme, even the guiding aim of all its activities, its education, its knowledge, its science, its ethics, its art, its economical and political structure." (CWSA 25: 256)

[In its politics] "It would regard the peoples as group-souls, the Divinity concealed and to be self-discovered in its human collectivities, group-souls meant like the individual to grow according to their own nature and by that growth to help each other, to help the whole race in the one common work of humanity. And that work would be to find the divine Self in the individual and the collectivity and to realise spiritually, mentally, vitally, materially its greatest, largest, richest and deepest possibilities in the inner life of all and their outer action and nature." (CWSA 25: 257)

XI— Smoking and Alcoholic Drink Are Strictly Forbidden in Sadhana

XI—A. To abstain from smoking and drinking alcohol

"To those who want to practise the integral Yoga, it is strongly advised to abstain from three things:

1) Sexual intercourse
2) Smoking
3) Drinking alcohol"

12 June 1965 (CWM 14: 35)

"Drugs are prohibited in Auroville.

If there are any who take them, they do it deceitfully.

The ideal Aurovilian, eager to become conscious of the Divine Consciousness, takes neither tobacco, nor alcohol, nor drugs." February 1971 (CWM 13: 239)

XI—B. Harmful effects of smoking and drinking alcohol

1. Slow poisons such as tobacco and alcohol gradually destroy the will and the memory

"There must be no little exceptions to the rule that are indulged in 'just for once' but which are repeated very often—for as soon as one yields to temptation, even 'just for once', one lessens the resistance of the will-power and opens the door to every failure. One must therefore forgo all weakness ... One must submit to the austerity of a sensible and regular life, concentrating all one's physical attention on building a body that comes as close to perfection as possible. To reach this ideal goal, one must strictly shun all excess and every vice, great or small; one must deny oneself the use of such slow poisons as tobacco, alcohol, etc., which men have a habit of developing into indispensable needs that gradually destroy the will and the memory." (CWM 12: 51–52)

"*Q. Why do tobacco and alcohol destroy the memory and will?*

A: Why? Because they do so. There is no moral reason. It is a fact. There is a poison in alcohol, there is a poison in tobacco; and this poison goes into the cells and damages

them. Alcohol is never expelled, so to say; it accumulates in a certain part of the brain, and then, after the accumulation, these cells no longer function at all—some people even go mad because of it, that is what is called *delirium tremens*, the result of having swallowed too much alcohol which is not absorbed but remains in this way concentrated in the brain. And it is so radical even that... There is a province in France, for instance, which produces wine, a wine with a very low percentage of alcohol: I believe it is four or five per cent, a very low percentage, you understand; and these people, because they make it, drink wine as one drinks water. They drink it neat, and after some time they become ill. They have cerebral disorders. I knew people of this kind, the brain was disordered, didn't function any more. And tobacco—nicotine is a very serious poison. It is a poison that destroys the cells. I have said that it is a slow poison because one doesn't feel it immediately except when one smokes for the first time and it makes one very ill. And this should make you understand that it ought not to be done. Only, people are so stupid that they think it is a weakness and so continue until they get used to the poison. And the body no longer reacts, it allows itself to be destroyed without reacting: you get rid of the reaction.

It is the same thing physically as morally. When you do something you ought not to do and your psychic tells you in its still small voice not to do it, then if you do it in

spite of that, after a while it will no longer tell you anything, and you will no longer have any inner reactions at all to your bad actions, because you have refused to listen to the voice when it spoke to you. And then, naturally, you go from bad to worse and tumble into the hole. Well, for tobacco it is the same thing: the first time the body reacts violently, it vomits, it tells you, 'I don't want it at any cost.' You compel it with your mental and vital stupidity, you force it to do so; it doesn't react any longer and so lets itself be poisoned gradually until it decomposes. The functioning deteriorates; it is the nerves that are affected; they no longer transmit the will because they are affected, they are poisoned. They no longer have the strength to transmit the will. And finally people begin to tremble, they have nervous movements. There are quite a few, one doesn't need to go very far to find them. And they are like that only because they have committed excesses: they drank and smoked. And when they lift an object, their hands shake (*gesture*). That's what one gets by doing this." (CWM 6: 74–76)

2. Smoking, drinking and drugs lower the consciousness

"The people who live in Auroville and insist on following all the old habits—the old ones and the new ones too—which harm the consciousness, which lower the consciousness,

things like smoking, drinking and, of course, drugs... all that, it is as if you were cutting pieces off your being.

In the Ashram, naturally, I said No. We want to grow in consciousness; we do not want to descend into the pit of desires. To those who refuse to understand I say: the aim of Auroville is to discover a new, deeper, more complete, more perfect life and to show the world that tomorrow will be better than today.

Some people believe that smoking, drinking, etc. will form part of the life of tomorrow. That is their business. If they want to go through this experience, let them do it. They will realise that they are imprisoning themselves in their own desires. But anyway, I am not a moralist, not at all, at all, at all. It is their own business. It is their own business. If they want to go through this experience, let them do it. But the Ashram is not the place for it. Thank God, at the Ashram we have learnt that life is something else. True life is not the satisfaction of desires. I can affirm from experience that all the experiences brought by drugs, all that contact with the invisible world, can be had in a much better, more conscious and controlled way without drugs. Only, one must control oneself. It is more difficult than swallowing poison. But I am not going to preach." (CWM 13: 345)

3. Drinking diminishes the consciousness and ruins your health

"If they ask my advice, I would say, I advise you not to drink because it diminishes the consciousness and ruins your health. But some people do not ask my advice. And I do not want to make rules for Auroville as I did for the Ashram. It is not the same thing." (CWM 13: 344–345)

4. Alcohol has the power to kill thought and destroy character

"The Prophet Mohammed taught that there was sin in wine and gambling; and therefore all who respect the words of the Koran abstain from wine and gambling to their profit.

But on the other hand there are many good people all over the world who find it right to take spirits. We respect their opinions. But these same people cannot assert that it is wrong not to take alcohol.

If, then, there are people who think that it is wrong to take fermented drinks, and others, on the contrary, who think that it is good, yet there is no one to maintain that it is wrong not to take any. It is also debatable whether or not it is useful to drink, but no one would dream of claiming that it is harmful not to do so. And everyone would agree that in any case it is cheaper.

In every country there are societies for temperance or even total abstinence, whose members undertake not to touch spirits. And in certain towns it is even forbidden to sell them.

But in other places, the use of alcohol, formerly unknown, is spreading. In India, for example, where abstinence had reigned for so many centuries, alcohol has been introduced, more terrible than any demon in the ancient legends. For the terrible Rakshasas of which they speak could be harmful only to the body, whereas alcohol has even the power to kill thought and destroy character. So first of all it hurts the body. It hurts the children of parents who drink to excess. It hurts the intelligence of man and enslaves those who should be the servitors of humanity.

For every one of us should be a servant of humanity; and if by our food or our drink we weaken our minds or bodies, we are then only bad servants unable to perform their task." (CWM 2: 207–208)

5. A habitual drunkard is a weak-willed man governed by his vital and physical impulsions

"… that of the habitual drunkard … The weak-willed man is governed by his vital and physical impulsions, his mental being is not dynamic enough to make its will prevail over them. His will is not 'free' because it is not strong enough to be free, it is the slave of the forces that act on or in his vital and physical nature." (CWSA 28: 512)

6. An artificial need created in the subconscient does not care whether it is harmful

"It is the habit in the subconscient material that feels an artificial need created by the past and does not care whether it is harmful or disturbing to the nerves or not. That is the nature of all intoxications (wine, tobacco, cocaine etc.), people go on even after the deleterious effects have shown themselves and even after all real pleasure in it has ceased because of this artificial need (it is not real). The will has to get hold of this subconscient persistence and dissolve it." (CWSA 31: 435)

7. An example of the spontaneous effect of alcohol when the physical nature is not already perverted

"There is a story about some officers in North Africa—in Algeria—who had adopted a monkey. The monkey lived with them and one day at dinner they had a grotesque idea and gave the monkey something to drink. They gave it alcohol. The monkey first saw the others drink, this seemed to it something quite interesting, and it drank a glass, a full glass of wine. Afterwards it was ill, as ill as could be, it rolled under the table with all kinds of pains and was really in a very bad way, that is, it gave the men an example of the spontaneous effect of alcohol when the physical nature is not already perverted. It nearly died of poisoning. It

recovered. And some time later it was again allowed to come for dinner as it was all right, and somebody placed a glass of wine in front of it. It picked it up in a terrible rage and flung it at the head of the man who had given the glass to it.... By that it showed that it was much wiser than the men!" (CWM 9: 101)

8. Smoking is tamasic and prevents control of the mind

"Smoking is only a morbid craving of physical desire—there is no other reason for people doing it. Smoking is tamasic and prevents control of mind." (CWSA 31: 436)

"Tobacco is associated with tamas and incense sticks with adoration." (CWSA 30: 186)

9. Drinking affects the substance and quality of the vital energy

"There must necessarily be a difference between the vital energy of a cultured and well-educated man and of one who is rough and ignorant. If nothing else, a greater refinement and subtlety in the vital substance and therefore in the energy is there. Drinking Interactions with if excessive affects the substance and quality of the energy—but probably a moderate drinking and smoking would have a less perceptible effect. I don't think people

in ordinary life notice clearly, but they have often a general impression which they cannot explain or particularise." (CWSA 31: 330–331)

XI—C. Drunkenness in the working classes

"We have been accustomed to deal only with the economical side of this poverty, but there is a moral side which is even more important. The Indian peasantry have always been distinguished from the less civilized masses of Europe by their superior piety, gentleness, sobriety, purity, thrift and native intelligence. They are now being brutalized by unexampled oppression; attracted to the liquor shops which a benevolent Government liberally supplies, bestialized by the example of an increasingly immoral aristocracy and gradually driven to the same habits of looseness and brutality which disgrace the European proletariats. This degeneration is proceeding with an alarming rapidity. In some parts of the country it has gone so far that recovery seems impossible. We have heard of districts in which the peasantry are so far reduced to poverty by the exactions of Zamindars, planters and police that the sturdier classes among them are taking to highway robbery and dacoity as the only possible means of livelihood. We have heard of villages where the liquor shop and the prostitute, institutions unknown twenty-five years ago, have now the mastery of the poorest villagers. Many of the villages in West Bengal are now well supplied with these essentials of Western civilization. The people ground down between the upper millstone of the indigo planter and the nether millstone of the Zamindar, are

growing full of despair and look to violence as their only remedy. These conditions of the worst districts tend to become general and unless something is done to stem the tide of evil, it will sweep away the soul of India in its turbid current and leave only a shapeless monstrosity of all that is worst in human nature." (CWSA 7: 985–986) (*Bande Mataram*, March 31st, 1908)

"Drunkenness, you don't know what drunkenness is? Drunkenness means to drink alcohol, and it is something very widespread, unfortunately, over the whole earth, and it is men who drink, usually. Among the working classes, as soon as they have received their pay they go and drink away more than half of it, and when the wife goes to ask them for money to get food for them, she gets a beating. That's how things usually occur. And the Swedish Government had tried for a very long time, because these people were quite reasonable and found that it was one of the things which most harmed social peace; but they had never succeeded. But it seems that within something like two or three years of government, women succeeded in doing it." (CWM 7: 152–153)

"You complain that you live in misery; and I tell you that you live in misery because you waste your money on drinking and smoking and because you waste your energy

in sexual excess. All these—alcohol, tobacco and sexual excess—ruin your health...” (CWM 13: 173–174)

Those who have never smoked or drunk alcohol can keep their brain in a relatively good condition and can progress till the end of their life

"And those who have a sufficient physical balance, for example, those who have not gone to excesses of any kind, who have never mistreated their body, who have never poisoned themselves like most people—who have never smoked, drunk alcohol and so on—keep their brain in a relatively good condition and they can progress, even in their expression, till the end of their life. It is only if in the last years of their life they make a kind of withdrawal within themselves, that they lose their power of expression. But the mind goes on progressing.” (CWM 5: 209)

* * *

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