

RECEPTIVITY in Sadhana

Second Edition

A COMPILATION FROM THE WORKS OF
Sri Aurobindo & the Mother

Compiled by Jamshed M Mavalwalla

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Sri Aurobindo and the Mother**



Sri Aurobindo Society

AUROPUBLICATIONS

POWERFUL THOUGHTS, INSPIRING VISION

Receptivity in Sadhana

Second Edition

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The idea for the comprehensive compilation: Vijay bhai
Compiler: Jamshed M Mavalwalla
Proofreading: Archana Udaykumar, and Radhika Raheja
Cover: Kavita Dutta and Uttam Mondal
E-book: Vivechana Saraf and Uttam Mondal
Help in preparing the second edition: Uttam Mondal

The photograph of the flower on the cover has been given the spiritual significance 'Receptivity' by the Mother.

The botanical name of the flower is *Gladiolus Xhortulanus*.
(*The Spiritual Significance of Flowers* Part I page 80)

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

The fifth book in the series of comprehensive compilations on virtues and qualities prescribed by Sri Aurobindo and the Mother as necessary for doing Yoga is *Receptivity in Sadhana*.

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 an understanding of the virtue of receptivity. The headings are intended to guide the reader towards a clearer and deeper understanding. However, it is important to read the quotations themselves, for the words of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother are infused with a consciousness infinitely higher than our own. Therefore, reading these quotations will also help the reader elevate their consciousness.

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

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

Jamshed M. Mavalwalla

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I—What Is Receptivity in Yoga?

1.

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

1. Quietude, equality ...

2. Absolute faith ...

3. Receptivity—the power to receive the Divine Force and to feel its presence and the presence of the Mother in it and allow it to work, guiding one’s sight and will and action. If this power and presence can be felt and this plasticity made the habit of the consciousness in action,—but plasticity to the Divine Force alone without bringing in any foreign element,—the eventual result is sure.” (CWSA 29: 266)

2.

“Receptivity is the capacity of admitting and retaining the Divine Workings.” (CWM 14: 146)

3.

“Receptivity: conscious of the Divine Will and surrendered to it.” (CWM 14: 146)

4.

“Integral receptivity: the whole being is aware of the Divine Will and obeys it.” (CWM 14: 146)

5.

“Psychic receptivity: the psychic responds joyously to the ascending force.” (CWM 14: 146)

6.

“What characterises the substance of the psychic world?”

The substance of the psychic world is a substance proper to it, with its own psychic characteristics: a sense of immortality, a complete receptivity to the divine influence, an entire submission to this influence by which it is wholly impregnated.” (CWM 4: 228)

7.

“Mental receptivity: always ready to learn.” (CWM 14: 146)

8.

“Emotional receptivity: emotions wanting to be divinised.” (CWM 14: 146)

9.

“Vital receptivity happens only when the vital understands that it must be transformed.

The vital blossoms in aspiration for the Divine.” (CWM 14: 146)

10.

“Supramentalised receptivity: the receptivity of tomorrow.”
(CWM 14: 147)

11.

“Intimacy with the Divine: complete surrender to the Divine and total receptivity to His influence, without any conditions to this intimacy.” (CWM 14: 21)

12.

“Integral mental purity: silent, attentive, receptive, concentrated on the Divine—this is the path to purity.”
(CWM 14: 150)

13.

“The cat means receptivity.” (CWM 17: 6)

14.

“You did not answer, Mother, my question about the vision I had of you lying flat on the ground....”

(Mother laughs) I suppose it is the symbol of perfect surrender. I lay on my back, isn’t it so?

On your back, upon the ground.

It is the attitude of perfect receptivity in total

I—What Is Receptivity in Yoga?

abandon. It must be the figurative expression of the attitude of the body.

Because truly, I do not know if there are 'bits', organs that have still what may be called the spirit of independence, but truly the body has made its surrender; that is to say, it no longer has its own will—it has no desire, no will of its own, and it is as though all the while 'listening', all the while, to catch the Indication." (CWM 11: 140)

II—Perfect Receptivity

1.

“Can one say, Mother, that perfect receptivity comes only with constant union with the Divine?”

If we call ‘perfect receptivity’ the receptivity that receives only the Divine Influence and no other, it is certain—and at the same time it is perfect purity.

This is what we should strive for.” (CWM 16: 388)

III—The Divine Forces Are at Work to Satisfy Every Receptivity

1.

“... the divine forces elude completely the laws of the material world: they are omnipresent, always at work to satisfy every receptivity, every sincere aspiration.” (CWM 2: 114)

2.

“And indeed you are bathed in the Consciousness, bathed in the Force, bathed in the Protection and to the extent you have faith and open yourself, you receive all that, and it helps you in keeping fit and in rejecting the little inner disturbances and re-establishing order when these come, in protecting yourself against small attacks or accidents which might have happened.” (CWM 5: 176)

3.

“One does not know—it is perhaps something you will know one day, perhaps you will be told one day, perhaps one will be able to make you understand it—you cannot imagine the immense flood of force that is at your disposal! And generally you do not feel it even. When you feel it, something in you shrinks because it is too much and produces a kind of instinctive fear in your cells; and when you receive it, more than three-quarters of it is thrown

III—The Divine Forces Are at Work to Satisfy Every Receptivity away like an overfilled vessel! It gushes out, spills over, because you are not able to hold it. I have met a very large number of people who complained that they were receiving nothing, that is to say, they said they did not have the forces they needed. It was because they were absolutely incapable of receiving them, and there was a hundred thousand times more force than what they could receive. It is like that. You are all in a sea of tremendous vibrations, and you are not at all aware of it because you are not receptive.” (CWM 5: 269–270)

4.

“Doesn’t the Divine help if he is not called?”

It is not altogether like that.... The divine Consciousness works always, everywhere and in the same way. The divine Grace is active everywhere, and in all circumstances in the same way. And so on. But according to your personal attitude, you create within yourself the conditions for receiving what is done or not receiving it. And trust—indeed, trust in the Truth, trust in the Grace, trust in the divine Knowledge—this puts you in that state of receptivity in which you can receive these things. Whilst, if you have no trust... you may still try to receive something—there are people, for instance, who fling a sort of challenge, they throw a challenge at the Divine and tell him: ‘Here’s the situation such as it is, I am in these conditions which seem

III—The Divine Forces Are at Work to Satisfy Every Receptivity

to me at least inextricable, it is impossible to get out of them. But if the Divine pulls me out of the difficulty, I shall put my trust in him.' There are many people—they do not formulate it like this but many feel and think in this way. Well, this is the worst of all possible conditions. Generally it puts you into a complete hole. And it is exactly the state most opposed to trustfulness. And besides, it is quite a vulgar bargaining: 'If you do this for me, I shall have faith that you exist. I am going to try and see if you really exist and whether you are what they say. Do this, and we are going to see clearly if you succeed. Then I shall trust in you.' And many people do that, even without being aware of it. Any number of men say: 'How can I have trust in the Divine? I have such a lamentable and unhappy life!' That is to say, they limit the divine Consciousness to their little personal needs." (CWM 5: 370)

5.

"Then you say, 'Oh, divine Love came to me!' What a joke! It is just that you were simply, for some reason or other, just a little open, so you felt it. But it is there, always, like the divine Consciousness. It is the same thing, it is there, all the time, in its full intensity; but one is not even aware of it; or else in this way, spasmodically: suddenly one is in a good state, so one feels something and says, 'Oh, the divine Consciousness, divine Love have turned to me, have come to me!' It is not at all like that. One has just a tiny

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little opening, very tiny, at times like a pinhead, and naturally that force rushes in. For it is like an active atmosphere; as soon as there is a possibility of being received, it is received. But this is so for all divine things. They are there, only one does not receive them, for one is closed up, blocked, one is busy with other things most of the time. Most of the time one is full of oneself. So, as one is full of oneself, there is no place for anything else. One is very actively (*laughing*) busy with other things. One is filled with things, there is no place for the Divine.

But He is there.

It is like all the wonders that are there around you; you do not see them. Do you see them?... No. Sometimes, one moment when you are just a tiny bit more receptive, or else when in sleep you are less exclusively busy with your small affairs, you have a gleam of something and see, feel something. But usually, as soon as you are awake again, all this is obliterated—first, as you know, by the formidable ego which is all full of itself, and the whole universe moves in accordance with this ego: you are at the centre, and the universe turns round you. ...

So, at first, to begin with, one must be able to get out of the ego. Afterwards, it has to be, you understand, in a certain state of inexistence. Then you begin to perceive things as they are, from a little higher up. But if you want to know things as they really are, you must be *absolutely* like a mirror: silent, peaceful, immobile, impartial, without

III—The Divine Forces Are at Work to Satisfy Every Receptivity preferences and in a state of total receptivity. And if you are like that, you will begin to see that there are many things you are not aware of, but which are there, and which will start becoming active in you.” (CWM 6: 136–137)

6.

“Try to be satisfied with what you receive—for it is a matter of *receptivity*, because—you can believe me—*I give always much* more than what the people are capable of receiving—and in two or three minutes they could have quite enough to go for a whole month. But the mind interferes with its ignorant demands and the whole thing is spoiled.” (CWM 14: 147)

7.

“*Sweet Mother,*

Sri Aurobindo tells us: ‘God’s grace is more difficult to have or to keep than the nectar of the Immortals.’ What does this mean? Doesn’t the Divine Grace always pour down on us, depending only on our receptivity?

The Grace is always there, eternally present and active, but Sri Aurobindo says that it is extremely difficult for us to be in a condition to receive it, keep it and make use of what it gives us.

III—The Divine Forces Are at Work to Satisfy Every Receptivity

Sri Aurobindo even says that it is more difficult than to drink from the cup of the gods who are immortal.

To receive the divine grace, not only must one have a great aspiration, but also a sincere humility and an absolute trust.” (CWM 16: 250)

8.

(A sadhak wrote that after bright periods of sadhana, dark periods returned again and again.)

This is a proof that your whole being is not united around the central psychic Presence.

This is a personal task that each individual must do for himself. The help is always there but the effectivity of its action is in the measure of the receptivity and the conscious appeal.

After all it is a question of patience in the endeavour.” (CWM 14: 332)

9.

“The help is always there.

It is you who must keep your receptivity living.

The Divine help is much vaster than what any human being is able to receive.” (CWM 14: 86)

10.

“Who is worthy or unworthy in front of the Divine Grace?

All are children of the one and the same Mother.

III—The Divine Forces Are at Work to Satisfy Every Receptivity

Her love is equally spread over all of them.

But to each one She gives according to his nature and receptivity.”(CWM 14: 85)

11.

“Mother,

I have just heard that about the new developments in Bengal. You said that Bengal is not receptive to Your Force and does not accept You. Nothing could be sadder for Bengal. But, Mother, how is it that Bengal, having worshipped You, the Divine Mother, throughout the ages and appealed to You in all circumstances, is now in such a deplorable and lamentable state?

Mother, how far am I responsible (for I must confess that I feel guilty) and what should I do so that You do not forsake this miserable land?

My dear child,

I did not say anything against Bengal in particular. I said that all the events that are taking place are due to the lack of receptivity in *human beings*, who still seem to be in the same state of consciousness that was natural and general three or four hundred years ago.

Obviously, one could have hoped that the Bengalis, because of their faith, would have given the example of a greater receptivity and refused to yield to these movements of unconscious violence. But as you very

III—The Divine Forces Are at Work to Satisfy Every Receptivity
rightly say, each one can find the answer within himself and sincerely ask himself how much he has taken advantage of his stay here! If even here the result is slight and mediocre, what can one expect from those who are not under the direct and immediate influence?

The only remedy: 'Awake and collaborate'!" (CWM 13: 359–360)

12.

"Love is one of the great universal forces; it exists by itself and its movement is free and independent of the objects in which and through which it manifests. It manifests wherever it finds a possibility for manifestation, wherever there is receptivity, wherever there is some opening for it. What you call love and think of as a personal or individual thing is only your capacity to receive and manifest this universal force. But because it is universal, it is not therefore an unconscious force; it is a supremely conscious Power. Consciously it seeks for its manifestation and realisation upon earth; consciously it chooses its instruments, awakens to its vibrations those who are capable of an answer, endeavours to realise in them that which is its eternal aim, and when the instrument is not fit, drops it and turns to look for others." (CWM 3: 69)

13.

"Your hands are open to give everything, but I can only receive a small part of it because I am not receptive enough."

This is the exact image of the state of the world which suffers because it is not receptive, when it could live in beatitude if it would open to the Divine Love.

But there is a remedy:

Sincere and constant aspiration." (CWM 16: 365)

14.

"It seems to me, Mother, that the flame that calls and the flame that responds are one and the same."

Essentially they are the same; but the plenitude of the response far exceeds the intensity of the call. The response always exceeds our receptivity by far. (CWM 16: 388)

IV—Sadhana Done by Receptivity

1.

"Yesterday you wrote in regard to the Mother, 'Experiencing what?' I meant experiencing what we feel. For sometimes we feel that our experiences are felt not only by us but by the Mother in us.

Naturally, the Mother does sadhana in each sadhak—only it is conditioned by their need and their receptivity." (CWSA 32: 329–330)

2.

"No one is initiated in this Yoga in any formal way. Those are accepted by the Mother who are found to be called or chosen from within for this path or for Sri Aurobindo's work. That acceptance is sufficient. Those are considered as called or chosen who can open and be receptive to the Power that goes from her here and can feel its working. If by doing what he is doing now, he can in time thus open and receive and feel the Power that will be a sign that he is meant for this way of Yoga. Nothing else is needed; prayer and aspiration are sufficient, if there is sincerity and a true call within." (CWSA 35: 542)

3.

"Please initiate me into a tangible form of Yoga. I make this assurance that I shall follow your instructions to the

very letter and refer to you my doubts and difficulties on the way.

There is no method in this Yoga except to concentrate, preferably in the heart, and call the presence and power of the Mother to take up the being and by the workings of her force transform the consciousness; one can concentrate also in the head or between the eyebrows, but for many this is a too difficult opening. When the mind falls quiet and the concentration becomes strong and the aspiration intense, then there is a beginning of experience. The more the faith, the more rapid the result is likely to be. For the rest one must not depend on one's own efforts only, but succeed in establishing a contact with the Divine and a receptivity to the Mother's Power and Presence." (CWSA 32:216–217)

4.

"Letters and answering of letters are not indispensable for the sadhana; the sadhak's reception of silent help is much more important; the written word is only a minor means, and to expect answers because others have them is quite a wrong idea. The only necessity in this sadhana is to open yourself to the Divine Force; if one is open the necessary understanding or knowledge will come of itself through spiritual experience." (CWSA 35: 448)

5.

"The conditions and limits under which Yoga or sadhana has to be worked out are not arbitrary or capricious; they arise from the nature of things. These including the will, receptivity, assent, self-opening and surrender of the sadhak have to be respected by the Yoga-force—unless it receives a sanction from the Supreme to override everything and get something done—but that sanction is sparingly given." (CWSA 29: 182) (CWSA 35: 479)

6.

"But all are free in their inner being, free to accept or refuse, free to receive or not to receive, to follow this way or another. What the Mother can do for the disciple depends on his willingness or capacity to open himself to her help and influence and on the completeness of his consent and confidence. If they are complete, the work done will be perfect and true; if they are imperfect, the work will be marred by the distortions brought in by his mind and his vital failings, if they are denied, then nothing can be done. Or, rather, nothing will be done; for the attempt in such circumstances might lead to a breaking rather than a divine building of the nature, or even there might be a reception of hostile forces instead of the true light and power. This is the law of the relation on the spiritual plane: the consent of the disciple must be at every moment free, but his confidence, if given, must be

complete and the submission to the guidance absolute.”
(CWSA 36: 391)

7.

“It is not by intellect that one can progress in the Yoga, but by psychic and spiritual receptivity—as for knowledge and true understanding it grows in sadhana by the growth of the intuition, not of the physical intellect.” (CWSA 31: 12)

8.

“It is not possible to accept his suggestion about joining with those who are in personal attendance upon me. They were not admitted as a help to their sadhana but for practical reasons. In fact here also there is some misconception. Continual personal contact does not necessarily bring out the action of the Force. Hriday had that personal contact with Ramakrishna and the opportunity of personal service to him, but he received nothing except on one occasion and then he could not contain the Force and the realisation which the Master put into him. The feeling of losing himself which X had was on the special occasions of the Darshan and the pranam to the Mother. That he had this response shows that he can answer to the Force, that he has the receptivity, as we say, and that is a great thing; all do not have it and those who have it are not always conscious of its cause but only of its

result. But he should reason less and rather try to keep himself open as he was in those moments.”(CWSA 35: 37)

9.

“By this Yoga we not only seek the Infinite, but we call upon the Infinite to unfold himself in human life. Therefore the Shastra of our Yoga must provide for an infinite liberty in the receptive human soul. A free adaptability in the manner and the type of the individual’s acceptance of the Universal and Transcendent into himself is the right condition for the full spiritual life in man.” (CWSA 23: 57)

10.

“The ideal sadhaka should be able to say in the Biblical phrase, ‘My zeal for the Lord has eaten me up.’ It is this zeal for the Lord,— *utsāha*, the zeal of the whole nature for its divine results, *vyākulatā*, the heart’s eagerness for the attainment of the Divine,—that devours the ego and breaks up the limitations of its petty and narrow mould for the full and wide reception of that which it seeks, that which, being universal, exceeds and, being transcendent, surpasses even the largest and highest individual self and nature.

But this is only one side of the force that works for perfection. The process of the integral Yoga has three stages, not indeed sharply distinguished or separate, but in a certain measure successive. There must be, first, the

effort towards at least an initial and enabling self-transcendence and contact with the Divine; next, the reception of that which transcends, that with which we have gained communion, into ourselves for the transformation of our whole conscious being; last, the utilisation of our transformed humanity as a divine centre in the world.” (CWSA 23: 58)

11.

“I have written somewhere:

‘The absolute of every being is its unique relation with the Divine and its unique manner of expressing the Divine in the manifestation.’

This is what is called here in India the truth of the being or the law of the being, the *dharma* of the being: the centre and the cause of the individuality.

Everyone carries his truth within himself, a truth which is unique, which is altogether his own and which he must express in his life. Now what is this truth? This is the question I have been asked:

‘What is this truth of the being, and how is it expressed externally in physical life?’

It is expressed in this way: each individual being has a direct and unique relation with the Supreme, the Origin, That which is beyond all creation. It is this unique relation which must be expressed in one's life, through a unique mode of being in relation with the Divine. Therefore, each one is directly and exclusively in relation with the Divine—the relation one has with the Divine is unique and exclusive; so that you receive from the Divine, when you are in a receptive state, the *totality* of the relation it is *possible* for you to have, and this is neither a sharing nor a part nor a repetition, but exclusively and uniquely the relation which each one can have with the Divine." (CWM 8: 279)

12.

"Sweet Mother, what does an exclusive self-opening to the divine Power' mean?"

Instead of self-opening we could put receptivity, something that opens in order to receive. Now, instead of opening and receiving from all sides and from everyone, as is usually done, one opens only to the Divine to receive only the divine force. It is the very opposite of what men usually do. They are always open on the surface, they receive all the influences from all sides. And then this produces inside them what we might call a *pot-pourri* (*Mother laughs*) of all kinds of contradictory movements which naturally

create countless difficulties. So here, you are advised to open only to the Divine and to receive only the divine force to the exclusion of everything else. This diminishes all difficulties almost entirely. Only one thing remains difficult. It is... One can do it and, unless one is in a state of total alchemy, well, it is difficult to be in contact with people, to speak to them, for example, to have any kind of exchange with them without absorbing something from them. It is difficult. If one is in a kind of... if one is in an atmosphere that's like a filter, then everything that comes from outside is filtered before it touches you. But it is very difficult; it requires a very wide experience. That is why, also, people who wanted the easiest path went into solitude to sit under a tree, did not speak any more and saw nobody; for this helps to diminish undesirable exchanges. Only, it has been noticed that these people begin to become enormously interested in the life of little animals, the life of plants, for it is difficult not to have any exchange with anything at all. So it is much better to face the problem squarely and be surrounded by an atmosphere so totally concentrated on the Divine that what comes through this atmosphere is filtered in its passage." (CWM 6: 212–213)

13.

"Somebody has asked a question: 'In the present state of the sadhana, what is the utility of a personal

contact with you? To what extent does a personal contact with you help us?’

What is meant by a personal contact? To see me, speak to me, what? Individually, collectively, how?

Individually.

Oh! (laughing) to have interviews?

You may answer that it depends on the use one makes of them.

It is very difficult to answer, for it is a purely personal question. It depends on the moment, depends on the state one is in, and above all, as I say, it depends on whether one knows how to use this contact properly.

Don't you see, if one is inwardly open, if one is receptive, one receives right down into the subtle physical all that is necessary for one's integral progress. And in the order of things, the outer contact should come only as a crowning and an aid so that the body—the material physical consciousness and the body—may be able to follow the movement of the inner being.

But if you believe that this contact is going to replace the inner receptivity, you are mistaken, it is not much use. For example, people who are quite closed up, who receive nothing within, who have no opening to the forces and who imagine that because they are going to

spend half an hour or an hour sitting in front of me and chatting, this is going to help them to transform themselves, they make a gross mistake. But if they are inwardly open, if they are in contact with the Force and make an effort to transform themselves, then, at a particular moment, perhaps a conversation or a material contact, a presence, may help them to make a more integral progress.” (CWM 8: 306–307)

14.

“Observing X’s recent conduct, I have lost half my respect for him. And when I observe other things done by him, it is all the more so. People will not follow a hard-working sadhak like Y or Z; they see what the well-known great sadhaks do. When they see X speaking to the C.I.D. man as if he were his oldest friend or keeping his own kitchen where he invites his relatives and friends; when they see A freely reading newspapers, going to hotels and talking to anybody, they naturally feel justified in following their example. And when, in spite of their conduct, these men get inwardly and outwardly much more than others, I do not think people can be blamed for doing as they do.

Who gets? How does A get more than others inwardly? X does not get more, he receives more—if others had an equal receptivity, they would get as much as he, and some do get plentifully.” (CWSA 32: 405)

15.

“The Asram is not a religious association. Those who are here come from all religions and some are of no religion. There is no creed or set of dogmas, no governing religious body; there are only the teachings of Sri Aurobindo and certain psychological practices of concentration and meditation, etc., for the enlarging of the consciousness, receptivity to the Truth, mastery over the desires, the discovery of the divine self and consciousness concealed within each human being, a higher evolution of the nature.” (CWSA 36: 531)

“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.

In other words, this means:

(1) To constantly enrich the possibilities of the instrument.

(2) To ceaselessly perfect the functioning of this instrument.

(3) To make this instrument increasingly receptive and obedient to the Divine.

To learn to understand and do more and more things. To purify oneself of all that prevents one from being totally surrendered to the Divine. To make one's consciousness more and more receptive to the Divine Influence.

One could say: to widen oneself more and more, to deepen oneself more and more, to surrender oneself more and more completely." (CWM 16: 435–436)

16.

"When Sri Aurobindo left his body he said that he would not abandon us. And, in truth, during these twenty-one years, he has always been with us, guiding and helping all those who are receptive and open to his influence.

In this year of his centenary, his help will be stronger still. It is up to us to be more open and to know how to take advantage of it. The future is for those who have the soul of a hero. The stronger and more sincere our faith, the more powerful and effective will be the help received." (CWM 13: 17)

17.

"There is certainly a great difference between calling and pulling—you can and must always call for help and the rest—the answer will be proportionate to your capacity of reception and assimilation. Pulling is a selfish movement

that may bring down forces quite disproportionate to your capacities and thus are harmful. (CWM 14: 78)

18.

“Mother, when one is identified with the Divine in the higher part of the being while neglecting the lower parts—neglecting life—doesn’t the Divine, in the part where one is identified with Him, advise one to attend to the lower parts?”

And if before even beginning, one has decided that this must not happen, perhaps one makes it impossible for oneself to receive the advice of the Divine!

For, truly speaking, each one finds only what he wants to find of the Divine. Sri Aurobindo has said this by turning it the other way round; he has said—I am not quoting the exact words, only the idea: what you expect from the Divine is what you find in the Divine; what you want from the Divine is what you meet in the Divine. He will have for you the aspect you expect or desire.

And His manifestation is always adapted to each one’s receptivity and capacity. They may have a real, essential contact, but this contact is limited by their own capacity for receiving and approach.... It is only if you are able to go out of all limits that you can meet the total Divine as He totally is.

And this capacity for contact is perhaps what constitutes the true hierarchy of beings. For everyone carries within himself the Divine, and therefore everyone has the possibility of uniting with the Divine—that possibility is the same in all. But according to each one's capacity—in fact, according to his position in the divine hierarchy—his approach will be more or less partial or total." (CWM 8: 44–45)

19.

"For, life is a battlefield in which the Divine succeeds in detail only when the lower nature is receptive to its impulses instead of siding with the hostile forces. And even then the test is not so much external as internal: a divine movement cannot be measured by apparent signs—it is a certain kind of vibration that indicates its presence—external tests are of no avail, since even what is in appearance a failure may be in fact a divine achievement.... What you have to do is to give yourself up to the Grace of the Divine; for, it is under the form of Grace, of Love, that it has consented to uplift the universe after the first involution was established." (CWM 3: 171)

20.

"Seeing is of many kinds. There is a superficial seeing which only erects or receives momentarily or for some time an image of the Being seen; that brings no change, unless the inner bhakti makes it a means for change. There is also

the reception of the *living* image of the Divine in one of his forms into oneself,—say, in the heart,—that can have an immediate effect or initiate a period of spiritual growth. There is also the seeing outside oneself in a more or less objective and subtle physical or physical way.” (CWSA 29: 363)

21.

“Now, at a particular time, a set of circumstances, inner and outer, has caused one to be receptive to a certain vibration; for example, as you say, while looking at the stars or contemplating a landscape or reading a page or hearing a lecture, one has suddenly an inner revelation, an experience, something that strikes him and gives him the impression of being open to something new. But if you want to hold on to this tightly like that, you will lose everything, because one can’t keep the past, one must always go forward, advance, advance. This illumination must prepare you so that you can organise your whole being on this new level, in order to be able suddenly, one day, to leap up again to a higher step.” (CWM 7: 35)

22.

“It may be said that perfection is attained, though it remains progressive, when the receptivity from below is equal to the force from above which wants to manifest.” (CWM 15: 78)

V—How to Increase Receptivity

1.

“What the Guru can do for the sadhak depends upon the latter’s receptivity—not upon any method or rule of sadhana. Certain psychological conditions or attitudes of the consciousness tend to increase the receptivity—e.g., humility towards the Guru, devotion, obedience, trust, a certain receptive passivity to his influence. The opposite things—independence, a critical attitude, questionings—go the other way and make it necessary for the Guru to help only indirectly or behind the veil. But the main thing is a kind of psychological openness in the consciousness which comes or increases of itself with the help of the will to receive and the right attitude. If there is that then it is not necessary to pull anything from the Guru, only to receive quietly. Pulling from him often draws untruly or things for which the consciousness is not ready to assimilate.” (CWSA 29: 191)

2.

“True humility is humility before the Divine, that is, a precise, exact, *living* sense that one is nothing, one can do nothing, understand nothing without the Divine, that even if one is exceptionally intelligent and capable, this is nothing in comparison with the divine Consciousness, and this sense one must always keep, because then one always

has the true attitude of receptivity—a humble receptivity that does not put personal pretensions in opposition to the Divine.” (CWSA 5: 45)

3.

“Mother, on what does receptivity depend?”

It depends first of all upon sincerity—on whether one really wants to receive—and then... yes, I believe the principal factors are sincerity and humility. There is nothing that closes you up more than vanity. When you are self-satisfied, you have that kind of vanity of not wanting to admit that you lack something, that you make mistakes, that you are incomplete, that you are imperfect, that you are... There is something in the nature, you know, which grows stiff in this way, which does not want to admit—it is this which prevents you from receiving. You have, however, only to try it out and get the experience. If, by an effort of will you manage to make even a very tiny part of the being admit that ‘Ah, well, yes, I am mistaken, I should not be like that, and I should not do that and should not feel that, yes, it is a mistake’, if you manage to make it admit this, at first, as I said just now, it begins by hurting you very much, but when you hold on firmly, until this is admitted, immediately it is open—it is open and strangely a flood of light enters, and then you feel so glad

afterwards, so happy that you ask yourself, 'Why, was I foolish enough to resist so long?' " (CWM 6: 117)

4.

"*Sweet Mother,*

How can one increase one's receptivity?

Receptivity is proportionate to self-giving." (CWM 16: 333)

5.

"*Dear Mother,*

I am never satisfied, even though You have given me a very rare chance. My vital being always wants more and more; it is never satisfied with what You give it.

My child, I am going to reveal something that you will try to understand: you are dissatisfied not because I fail to give you all that you need, but because *I give you more, far more than you are able to receive. Open yourself, increase your receptivity* by giving yourself more, and you will see that all discontentment will disappear." (CWM 16: 6667)

6.

"My love is always with you; if then you do not feel it, it is because you are not capable of receiving it. It is your receptivity that is lacking and should be increased; for this you must open yourself, and one opens oneself only if one

gives oneself. Surely you are trying more or less consciously to draw the forces and the divine love towards you. The method is bad. Give yourself without calculating and without expecting anything in return, and then you will become capable of receiving.” (CWM 14: 148)

7.

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

consciousness in which it is done that is important.” (CWM 4: 372)

8.

“All quietude of the mind makes good conditions for the receptivity to act.” (CWSA 29: 143)

9.

“In silence lies the greatest receptivity. And in an immobile silence the vastest action is done.

Let us learn to be silent so that the Lord may make use of us.” (CWM 16:427)

10.

“It [calmness] is only the proper condition for receptivity. Naturally, it is the proper thing to do if you want to be receptive or become conscious of inner things. So long as the mind is jumping about or rushing out to outside things, it is not possible to be inward, collected, conscious within.” (CWSA 30: 228)

11.

“Do not attach so much importance to mistakes or insist on your non-receptiveness and unconsciousness. You have only to turn always to the Force that gives you calmness and in the calmness you will become progressively more and more conscious and receptive.” (CWSA 29: 146)

12.

"The peace comes fully at the meditation time because the Mother's concentration at that time brings down the power of the higher consciousness and one can receive it if one is able to do so. Once it begins to come, it usually increases its force along with the receptivity of the sadhak until it can come at all times and under all conditions and stay longer and longer till it is stable. The sadhak on his side has to keep his consciousness as quiet and still as possible to receive it. The Peace, Power, Light, Ananda of the higher spiritual consciousness are there in all veiled above. A certain opening upwards is needed for it to descend—the quietude of the mind and a certain wide concentrated passivity to the descending Influence are the best conditions for the descent." (CWSA 30: 481–482)

13.

"If the peace once becomes stable, there is no farther assimilation needed for that, as that means the whole system is sufficiently prepared to receive and absorb continuously. There may be periods of assimilation necessary for other things, but these periods need not interrupt the inner status. For instance if Force or Ananda or Knowledge begin to descend from above, there might be interruptions and probably would be, the system not being able to absorb a continuous flow, but the peace would remain in the inner being. Or there might even be something like periods of struggle on the surface, but the

inner being would remain calm and still, watching and undisturbed and, if there is knowledge established within, understanding the action. Only for that the whole being vital, physical, material must have become open and receptive to the peace. Peace would then go on perhaps deepening and becoming wider and wider, but periods of interruption and assimilation would not be needed.” (CWSA 30: 480)

14.

“Recover yourself now and proceed on your way with a deeper and truer aim in you. Your efforts at sadhana up till now have been too exclusively on the vital plane; aspire for a full opening of the psychic, clear your movements of all ego and strive to make yourself open and aspire only to be a receptacle of the true consciousness and an instrument of the Divine.” (CWSA 35: 751)

15.

“For aspiration is aspiration: if you have aspiration, in itself it has a power. Only, this aspiration calls down an answer, and this answer, the effect, which is the result of the aspiration, depends upon each one, for it depends upon his receptivity. I know many people of this kind: they say, ‘Oh! But I aspire all the time and still I receive nothing.’ It is impossible that they should receive nothing, in the sense that the answer is sure to come. But it is they who do not

receive. The answer comes but they are not receptive, so they receive nothing. ...

On the other hand, there are people who are more passive, so to speak, more open, more attentive, and even if a very slight amount of force comes, they become aware of it immediately and use it fully.

When you have an aspiration, a very active aspiration, your aspiration is going to do its work. It is going to call down the answer to what you aspire for. But if, later, you begin to think of something else or are not attentive or receptive, you do not even notice that your aspiration has received an answer. This happens very frequently. So people tell you: 'I aspire and I don't receive anything, I get no answer!' Yes, you do have an answer but you are not aware of it, because you continue to be active in this way, like a mill turning all the time." (CWM 6: 115–116)

16.

"There is no part of you that is not open, but you have to make the opening always wider and the reception more complete; but that too will be done progressively if you remember and call the Mother's force at all times and remain confident, vigilant and devoted, as you have been and are." (CWSA 32: 154)

17.

"It is with the widening of the consciousness and the one pointedness of the aspiration that the receptivity increases." (CWM 14: 147)

18.

"I am speaking, of course, of difficulties on the path of yoga, incomprehension, limitations, things like obstacles, which prevent you from advancing. And when I say 'widen yourself', I mean widen your consciousness. ...

But if, when you have to face anguish, suffering, revolt, pain or a feeling of helplessness—whatever it may be, all the things that come to you on the path and which precisely are your difficulties—if physically, that is to say, in your body consciousness, you can have the feeling of widening yourself, one could say of unfolding yourself—you feel as it were all folded up, one fold on another like a piece of cloth which is folded and refolded and folded again—so if you have this feeling that what is holding and strangling you and making you suffer or paralysing your movement, is like a too closely, too tightly folded piece of cloth or like a parcel that is too well-tied, too well-packed, and that slowly, gradually, you undo all the folds and stretch yourself out exactly as one unfolds a piece of cloth or a sheet of paper and spreads it out flat, and you lie flat and make yourself very wide, as wide as possible, spreading yourself out as far as you can, opening yourself

and stretching out in an attitude of complete passivity with what I could call 'the face to the light': not curling back upon your difficulty, doubling up on it, shutting it in, so to say, into yourself, but, on the contrary, unfurling yourself as much as you can, as perfectly as you can, putting the difficulty before the Light—the Light which comes from above—if you do that in all the domains, and even if mentally you don't succeed in doing it—for it is sometimes difficult—if you can imagine yourself doing this *physically*, almost materially, well, when you have finished unfolding yourself and stretching yourself out, you will find that more than three-quarters of the difficulty is gone. And then just a little work of receptivity to the Light and the last quarter will disappear." (CWM 8: 285–286)

19.

"In any case anyone can receive the [Mother's] force who has faith and sincerity, whose psychic being has begun to wake and who opens himself,—whether he knows or not that he is receiving. If X even imagines that he is receiving, that may open the way to a real reception,—if he *feels* it, why question his feeling? He is certainly trying hard to change and that is the first necessity; if one tries it can always be done, in more or less time." (CWSA 32: 239)

20.

“Take up the work and have faith, the force will come in proportion to the need; and your receptivity depends on your faith and confidence.” (CWM 14: 320)

21.

“When there is full faith and consecration, there comes also a receptivity to the Force which makes one do the right thing and take the right means and then circumstances adapt themselves and the result is visible.” (CWSA 29: 234)

22.

“... the development of the receptivity and for that the sole thing necessary is an entire or at least a dominant will to receive.” (CWSA 27: 719)

23.

“The voidness is the best condition for a full receptivity.” (CWSA 30: 77)

“The voidness (if by that you mean silence and emptiness of thoughts, movements etc.) is the basic condition into which the higher consciousness can flow.” (CWSA 30: 77)

24.

“In order to be filled anew the vessel must get empty sometimes.

It is when we are preparing for greater receptivities that we feel empty." (CWM 14: 147)

25.

"I am happy with the work You have so graciously granted me. O Mother, let me feel Your presence constantly.

I am glad that the work pleases you. I am sure that it will do you a lot of good to work; it increases the receptivity considerably." (CWM 17: 163)

26.

"Half an hour's meditation in the day ought to be possible— if only to bring a concentrated habit into the consciousness which will help it, first to be less outward in work and, secondly, to develop a receptive tendency which can bear its fruits even in the work." (CWSA 29: 224–225)

27.

"But it is best not to struggle with the resistances but to stand back from them, observe as a witness, reject these movements and call on the Divine Power to remove them. ... To observe the movements as a witness without being discouraged or disturbed is the best way to effect the necessary detachment and separation. This also would help to increase the receptivity to any aid that may be given to him and to bring about the reliance, *nirbhara*." (CWSA 31: 746–747)

28.

"Now, if one is able to consciously unite with one's psychic being, one can *always* be in this state of receptivity, inner joy, energy, progress, communion with the divine Presence. And when one is in communion with That, one sees it everywhere, in everything, and all things take on their true meaning. On what does that depend?...

On an inner rhythm. Perhaps a grace. In any case on a receptivity to something that is beyond you." (CWM 8: 304–305)

29.

"You did well to speak to X and also to write to Mother. Of course Mother had observed X's difficulties,—it is correct that the difficulty is the lack of a certain free opening—otherwise all that could be removed quickly and the necessary change of nature (mind, ego etc.) carried on by smooth gradations. To write as you do is helpful for opening oneself and for receiving the precise touch. X's logic about the Mother knowing and therefore there being no need to write is applicable if there is a free or at least a sufficient flow of giving and reception between the Mother and the sadhak, but when a serious difficulty comes, this logic is not so applicable. Naturally, we shall do our best to help him in his struggle." (CWSA 32: 365–366)

30.

"One can increase the receptivity also?..."

How can we increase the receptivity? By progressing.

One must first know how to open himself and then, in a great quietude know how to assimilate the forces one has received, not to throw them out again. One must know how to assimilate them.

So the progress lies in a normal but progressive equilibrium, periods of assimilation—reception, assimilation—and periods of expenditure, and knowing how to balance the two, and alternate them in a rhythm which is your personal one. You must not go beyond your capacity, you must not remain below it, because the universal vital forces are not something which you could put into a strong box. They must circulate. So you must know how to receive and at the same time to spend, but to increase the capacity of reception so as to have more and more of the things which are to be used up, to be spent. Besides, this is what happens, as I said, this is what happens quite naturally with children. They begin, make a certain effort, receive a certain force spontaneously, assimilate it and then after a few days, two days, ten days, twenty days they can spend more. After a year they can do much more, because quite naturally they alternate the reception and the expenditure, and they progress in their stature. They of course do it unconsciously, but when one

is older it becomes more difficult; one stops growing up, for example. So this means that there's a certain period of expansion which has stopped. But it can be prolonged, then, with an inner discipline, a method one finds: it has to be one's own method." (CWM 7: 139–140)

31.

"Naturally, when one spends, one must recuperate and must have the time that is needed to recuperate; but what a child cannot do one day, he can do the next. So if you never go beyond the limit you have reached, you will never progress. It is quite obvious that people who practise physical culture, for example, if they make progress, it is just because they gradually exceed, go beyond what they could do.

It is all a matter of balance. And the period of receptivity should be in proportion to the period of expenditure.

But if one confines oneself to what one can do at a given moment... First of all it is impossible, for if one doesn't progress, one falls back. Therefore, one must *always* make a little effort to do a little more than before. Then one is on the upward path. If one is afraid of doing too much, one is sure to go down again and lose one's capacities.

One must always try a little more, a little better than one did the day before or the previous moment. Only, the more one increases one's effort, the more should one

increase one's capacity of receptivity and the opportunities to receive. For instance, from the purely physical point of view, if one wants to develop one's muscles, a progressive effort must be made by them, that is to say, a greater and greater effort, but at the same time one must do what is needed: massage, hydrotherapy, etc. to increase at the same time their capacity to receive.

And rest. A rest which is not a falling into the unconscious—which generally tires you more than it refreshes—but a conscious rest, a concentration in which one opens oneself and absorbs the forces which come, the universal forces." (CWM 8: 195)

32.

"It is only effort, in whatever domain it be—material effort, moral effort, intellectual effort—which creates in the being certain vibrations which enable you to get connected with universal vibrations; and it is this which gives joy. It is effort which pulls you out of inertia; it is effort which makes you receptive to the universal forces. And the one thing above all which spontaneously gives joy, even to those who do not practise yoga, who have no spiritual aspiration, who lead quite an ordinary life, is the exchange of forces with universal forces. People do not know this, they would not be able to tell you that it is due to this, but so it is." (CWM 4: 32)

33.

"Mother,

On the last few occasions I have felt very tired after Darshan work. During this period I do not do much physical work, I do not get nervous or excited, and this time I did not feel the sense of personal responsibility either. But I remain present all the time and at the end I feel dead tired. If I have to work I feel all right, but the fatigue comes after that. Why? What to do?

It is because you are receptive to the Force when you work and that sustains you. But when you are not under the strain of the work you are less receptive. You must learn to be receptive in all circumstances and always—especially when you take rest—it must not be the 'rest' of inertia but a true rest of receptivity.

Blessings." (CWM 17: 297–298)

34.

"You are mistaken in thinking that the sadhana of X, Y and Z does not suffer by the dispersion of their minds in all directions. They would have been far farther on the path if they did a concentrated Yoga—even Y who has an enormous receptivity and is eager for progress might have gone thrice as far as he has done. ... I see too that those who get into the direct line (there are not as yet very many), get of themselves the tendency to give up these

mind-dispersing interests and occupations and throw themselves fully into the sadhana.” (CWSA 31: 324)

35.

“In your desire for progress and your aspiration for realisation, take great care not to attempt to pull the forces towards you. Give yourself, open yourself with as much disinterestedness as you can attain through a constant self-forgetfulness, increase your receptivity to the utmost, but *never* try to *pull* the Force towards you, for wanting to pull is already a dangerous egoism. You may aspire, you may open yourself, you may give yourself, but never seek to take. When things go wrong, people blame the Force, but it is not the Force that is responsible: it is ambition, egoism, ignorance and the weakness of the vessel.

Give yourself generously and with a perfect disinterestedness and from the deeper point of view nothing bad will ever happen to you. Try to take and you will be on the brink of the abyss.” (CWM 9: 241–242)

36.

“Your letter of today makes it very clear what is happening. The Force that you felt had come down at first, came to open the way for the descent of the higher consciousness into the mind and body. That was why it descended with such force and the difficulty of holding or assimilating it was simply because the body was unaccustomed. But as often happens the Force is preparing its own reception and

habituating the body to the descent. Having done that sufficiently it is coming down as a massive peace.” (CWSA 30: 444)

37.

“A successful cure of *X*’s mother would be certainly a considerable achievement, and though difficult owing to the tenacity and malignance and extreme intractability of the disease, it is not impossible. What you say is true, the Force was acting before, but it acted with immediate rapidity and completeness only with those who had sufficient faith and receptivity (mainly sadhaks) or in other good conditions.

These cases seem to indicate a new power of the Force and a new technique. Your idea that it may spread and happen elsewhere is not without foundation; for, when once something is there in the earth-atmosphere that was not there before, it begins to work on many sides in an unforeseen way. Thus since the Yoga has been in action, its particular opening movements have come to a number of people who were at a distance and not connected with us and who understood nothing of what was happening to them.” (CWSA 35: 501)

38.

“Well, for the will it is the same thing. Instead of being the support of the ladder it is a kind of force, a very powerful

current which passes through all these states, starting from above—it is the supreme Will—and coming down into the physical manifestation. Hence, if you get into affinity with this vibration or this force, you can enter 'the state of will'; that is, whatever state of being you may find yourself in—physical, vital, mental, etc.—if you enter a certain state of consciousness and force, you come into contact with this power of will: it penetrates into you and you can use it for any purpose. If your reception is free from all egoism, if you are pure, completely surrendered and accept only what comes from the Divine, and if you don't mix anything with it, egoism or desires or limitations... well, it is a state a bit difficult to attain, but if you attain it, you receive this force of will in its original state, pure (for it comes down pure, it is only in its reception that it gets deformed), then, instead of being your will it becomes an expression of the divine Will. And this happens without your leaving the physical body—you can receive the force of the divine Will without leaving the physical." (CWM 4: 399–400)

39.

"Sweet Mother, when we concentrate on one of your photos—there are many photos, each one with a different expression—does it make a difference for us, the one on which we concentrate?"

If you do it purposely, yes, of course. If you choose this photo for a particular reason or that other one for another reason, surely. It has an effect. It is as though you were choosing to concentrate on one aspect of the Mother rather than another; for example, if you choose to concentrate on Mahakali or Mahalakshmi or on Maheshwari, the results will be different. That part of you which answers to these qualities will awaken and become receptive. So, it is the same thing. But somebody who has only one photo, whichever it may be, and concentrates, without choosing this one or that, because he has only one, then it is of no importance which one it is. For the fact of concentrating on the photograph puts one in contact with the Force, and that is what is necessary in the case of everyone who responds automatically.

It is only when the person who concentrates puts a special will, with a special relation, into his concentration that it has an effect. Otherwise the relation is more general, and it is always the expression of the need or the aspiration of the person who concentrates. If he is absolutely neutral, if he does not choose, does not aspire for any particular thing, if he comes like this, like a white page and absolutely neutral, then it is the forces and aspects he needs which will answer to the concentration and perhaps even the person himself will not know what particular things he needs, because very few people are conscious of themselves." (CWM 7: 271)

40.

“There is a love in which the emotion is turned towards the Divine in an increasing receptivity and growing union. What it receives from the Divine it pours out on others, but freely without demanding a return. If you are capable of that, then that is the highest and most satisfying way to love.”
(CWSA 31: 291)

VI—Surrender Prepares Receptivity

1.

“For here, there are two movements with a transitional stage between them, two periods of this Yoga,—one of the process of surrender, the other of its crown and consequence. In the first the individual prepares himself for the reception of the Divine into his members. For all this first period he has to work by means of the instruments of the lower Nature, but aided more and more from above. But in the later transitional stage of this movement our personal and necessarily ignorant effort more and more dwindles and a higher Nature acts; the eternal Shakti descends into this limited form of mortality and progressively possesses and transmutes it. In the second period the greater movement wholly replaces the lesser, formerly indispensable first action; but this can be done only when our self-surrender is complete. The ego person in us cannot transform itself by its own force or will or knowledge or by any virtue of its own into the nature of the Divine; all it can do is to fit itself for the transformation and make more and more its surrender to that which it seeks to become.” (CWSA 23: 86)

2.

“I wrote so because the action of the sadhana does not depend on the Mother alone, but also on the attitude, will and openness of the sadhak. That is a well-known fact of

the spiritual life which everybody is supposed to know. The Mother's Force can do everything only when there is a real and true and complete surrender and openness to the Mother." (CWSA 32: 218–219)

3.

"Surrender is from within, opening and giving mind, vital, physical, all to the Mother for her to take them as her own and recreate them in their true being which is a portion of the Divine; all the rest follows as a consequence. It would not then be necessary to ask her word and order outwardly in every detail; the being would feel and act according to her will; her sanction would be sought but as the seal of that inner unity, receptiveness of her will and obedience." (CWSA 32: 346–347)

4.

"Surrender must be luminous, active, a willed offering to the Mother and reception of her Force and support to its workings, at the same time a strong vigilant will to reject all that is not hers." (CWSA 29: 79–80)

VII—Receptivity Is the Result of a True Passivity

1.

“Now, if you want to get true inspiration, inner guidance, the guide, and if you want to have the force, to receive the force which will guide you and make you act as you should, then you do not move any longer, that is—I don’t mean not move physically but nothing must come out from you any more and, on the contrary, you remain as though you were quite still, but open, and wait for the Force to enter, and then open yourself as wide as possible to take in all that comes into you. And it is this movement: instead of out-going vibrations there is a kind of calm quietude, but completely open, as though you were opening all your doors in this way to the force which must descend into you and transform your action and consciousness.

Receptivity is the result of a true passivity.” (CWM 6: 112–113)

2.

“But Mother, to be able to become passive an effort has to be made, hasn’t it?”

Not necessarily, that depends upon people. An effort? One must, yes, one must want it. But is the will an effort?... Naturally, one must think about it, must want it. But the two things can go together, you see, there is a moment

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when the two—aspiration and passivity—can not only be alternate but simultaneous. You can be at once in the state of aspiration, of willing, which calls down something—exactly the will to open oneself and receive, and the aspiration which calls down the force you want to receive—and *at the same time* be in that state of complete inner stillness which allows full penetration, for it is in this immobility that one can be penetrated, that one becomes permeable by the Force. Well, the two can be simultaneous without the one disturbing the other, or can alternate so closely that they can hardly be distinguished. But one can be like that, like a great flame rising in aspiration, and at the same time as though this flame formed a vase, a large vase, opening and receiving all that comes down.

And the two can go together. And when one succeeds in having the two together, one can have them constantly, whatever one may be doing. Only there may be a slight, very slight displacement of consciousness, almost imperceptible, which becomes aware of the flame first and then of the vase of receptivity—of what seeks to be filled and the flame that rises to call down what must fill the vase—a very slight pendular movement and so close that it gives the impression that one has the two at the same time.” (CWM 6: 113)

3.

“And these results are never immediate. For if one tries to have them at once, one remains in a state of activity which is quite the contrary of true receptivity. One must be as neutral, as immobile, as passive as one can be, with a background of silent aspiration not formulated in words or ideas or even in feelings; something that does this (*gesture like a mounting flame*) in an ardent vibration, but which does not formulate, and above all, does not try to understand.

With a little practice one reaches a state which may be obtained at will, in a few seconds, that is, one doesn't waste any of the meditation time. Naturally, in the beginning, one must slowly quieten the mind, gather up one's consciousness, concentrate; one loses three-quarters of the time in preparing oneself. But when one has practised the thing, in two or three seconds one can get it, and then one benefits from the whole period of receptivity.

Naturally, there are still more advanced and perfected states, but that comes later. But already if one reaches that state, one profits fully by the meditation.

We are going to try.” (CWM 9: 116)

4.

“That is why I have emphasised the fact that all depends upon the person, because everything depends upon his habitual aspiration, the thing he usually wants to realise,

for he is naturally in touch with the forces which will answer his aspiration. So, if for a certain time one stops the activity of this aspiration and remains silently receptive, passive, well, the effect of the habitual aspiration remains and will draw just those forces which ought to answer it." (CWM 4: 283)

5.

"And yet the Consciousness is at work, working all the time. It moulds them from within whether they want it or not. But then, when they become conscious of this, there are people who are shocked by it, who are so stupid as to revolt and say: 'Ah! no, I want it to be *myself*!' Myself, that is, an imbecile who knows nothing. And then, that stage too passes. At last there comes a moment when one collaborates and says: 'Oh! What joy!' And you give yourself, you want to be as passive and receptive as possible so as not to stand in the way of this divine Will, this divine Consciousness that is acting. You become more and more attentive, and exactly to the extent you become more attentive and more sincere, you feel in what direction, in what movement this divine Consciousness is working, and you give yourself to it wholly. The thing ripens more quickly. And in this way you are truly able to do in a few minutes the work that would otherwise take years. And that is the goal of yoga: one can do the work in a few hours, in a concentrated, shortened time; one can

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do in another way what Nature is doing—Nature will do it, Nature will succeed in transforming all this, but when one sees the time she has taken to do what she has done till now, if one wants to do all that in another way....” (CWM 5: 62)

6.

“A *great* passivity is needed for the Force to be able to pass through quickly and reach the body. I see that each time there is a pressure for acting upon one part of the body or another, the thing begins by an absolute passivity which is... the ‘perfection of inertia’. You understand? It is the perfection of that which inertia represents as imperfect... something that has no activity of its own. It is just the *most* difficult thing for those who have a very well-developed mind, very difficult. Because the whole body has worked all its life for being just in this state of receptivity to the mind, which makes it obedient, passive, etc., and it is that which must be abolished.

How to explain?... The development through mind means a constant and general awakening of the whole being, even the most material, an awakening as a result of which there is also something quite opposite to sleep. And to receive the Supreme Force, one must have, on the contrary, the equivalent of immobility—the immobility of sleep, *but absolutely conscious*, absolutely conscious. The body feels the difference. It feels the difference to such an

extent that... for example, I stretch myself in the evening and I remain like that, for hours together I remain so; and if after a time I fall into ordinary sleep, my body wakes up in a terrible anguish! And then it begins again to put itself back into that state. This anguish I feel from time to time—and it goes away as soon as it gets back into the true attitude, which is a state of immobility, but absolutely conscious. ‘Immobility’, I do not know how to say it.... But it is almost the opposite of the inertia in immobility.” (CWM 11: 191–192)

7.

“Besides the gods, there is our self, the spirit within who supports all this action of the gods. Our spirit too must turn from its absorption in its figure of itself as it sees it involved in the movement of individual life, mind, body and subject to it and must direct its gaze upward to its own supreme Self who is beyond all this movement and master of it all. Therefore the mind must indeed become passive to the divine Mind, the sense to the divine Sense, the life to the divine Life and by receptivity to constant touches and visitings of the highest be transfigured into a reflection of these transcendences; but also the individual self must through the mind’s aspiration upwards, through uplifting of itself beyond, through constant memory of the supreme Reality in which during these divine moments it has lived,

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ascend finally into that Bliss and Power and Light.” [Kena
Upanishad: Commentary] (CWSA 18: 94)

VIII—Receptivity Is Proportionate to Expenditure

1.

“Let us learn therefore to make judicious use of what we may have or earn while giving the least possible play to our personality and, above all, let us not forget that charity should not be confined to material aid.

Nor in the field of forces is it possible to accumulate, for receptivity occurs in proportion to expenditure: the more one expends usefully, the more one makes oneself capable of receiving. Thus the intelligence one can acquire is proportionate to the intelligence one uses. We are formed to manifest a certain quantity of intellectual forces, but if we develop ourselves mentally, if we put our brains to work, if we meditate regularly and above all if we make others benefit by the fruit, however modest, of our efforts, we make ourselves capable of receiving a greater quantity of ever deeper and purer intellectual forces. And the same holds true for love and spirituality.

We are like channels: if we do not allow what they have received to pour out freely, not only do they become blocked and no longer receive anything, but what they contain will spoil. If, on the contrary, we allow all this flood of vital, intellectual and spiritual forces to flow abundantly, if by impersonalising ourselves we know how to connect our little individuality to the great universal current, what

we give will be returned to us a hundredfold.” (CWM 2: 102)

2.

“Yes—the system has to take rest so as to assimilate and renew its receptive power.” (CWSA 30: 70)

3.

“When one is assimilating, one is not receiving.” (CWSA 30: 70)

4.

“But all the while you externalise yourself and all the while you bring back something from this externalisation; it is like something porous: a force goes out and then a force comes in. There are pulsations like that. And this is why it is so important to choose the environment in which one lives, because there is constantly a kind of interchange between what you give and what you receive. People who throw themselves out a great deal in activity, receive more. But they receive on the same level, the level of their activity. Children, for example, who are younger, who always move about, always shout and romp and jump (very rarely do they keep quiet, except while asleep, and perhaps not even so), well, they spend much and they receive much, and generally it is the physical and vital energy that is spent and it is physical and vital energies

that are received. They recuperate a good part of what they spend. So there, it is very important for them to be in surroundings where they can, after they have spent or while they are spending, recover something that is at least equal in quality to theirs, that is not of an inferior quality.

When you no longer have this generosity in your movements, you receive much less and this is one of the reasons—one of the chief reasons—why physical progress stops. It is because you become thrifty, you try not to waste; the mind intervenes: 'Take care, don't tire yourself, don't do too much, etc.' The mind intervenes and physical receptivity diminishes a great deal. Finally, you do not grow any more—by growing reasonable, you stop growing altogether!

But receptivity opens to other levels. Those who live in a world of desires and passions, increase their vital receptivity so much at times that it reaches proportions very unpleasant to themselves and to their surroundings. And then there are those who live in the mental consciousness; their mental receptivity grows very much. All who create mentally, study and live in mental activity, if the mental activity is constant, can progress indefinitely. Mind in the human being does not stop functioning even when the physical instrument has deteriorated. It may no longer manifest its intelligence materially, if there is a lesion in the brain, for example, but nothing can prevent the mind itself, independently of the instrument, from

progressing, from continuing to grow. It is a being that lasts infinitely longer than the physical. It is still young when physically one is already old. Only when you do not take enough care to keep your brain in a good state, only if accidents occur and there are lesions then you can no longer express yourself. But the mind in itself continues to grow. 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: 207–209)

5.

“On what do our physical reserves depend, Mother?”

Physical reserves? You mean the reserve of energy?

Yes.

It depends on the capacity to receive the universal vital force; because in fact, through food also it is these vital forces one receives but one receives them from below. But

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in order to have reserves you must know how to receive the universal vital forces constantly and to have a kind of balance in the being which prevents you from spending more than you have.

A proportion has to be kept between the receptivity and the expenditure. It is a kind of harmony in the being which must be established. Only, some people have an almost instinctive power of attracting towards them the vital forces or absorbing them—the universal vital forces, I mean—and so they make up their expense as they go along spending. These people can produce much more than others. Some of them, in certain conditions like sleep or a kind of repose or relaxation, can accumulate forces and later they exhaust them, so to say, in their activities and they must yet once again charge the battery afterwards—this is already a much less favourable condition.” (CWM 7: 71–72)

IX—Opening and Receptivity

1.

“Opening is a change of the consciousness by which it becomes receptive to the Divine.” (CWSA 29: 105)

2.

“What is real opening?”

It is the receptivity to the Mother’s presence and her forces.” (CWSA 32: 150)

3.

“Opening is a thing that happens of itself by sincerity of will and aspiration. It means to be able to receive the higher forces that come from the Mother.” (CWSA 29: 105)

4.

*“How can I meditate? What is meant by opening?
Where should I open?”*

An inner purity and receptivity that freely lets in the Mother’s influence. Begin with the heart.” (CWM 14: 38)

5.

“In this Yoga all depends on whether one can open to the Influence or not. If there is a sincerity in the aspiration and a patient will to arrive at the higher consciousness in spite

of all obstacles, then the opening in one form or another is sure to arrive. But it may take a long or a short time according to the prepared or unprepared condition of the mind, heart and body; so if one has not the necessary patience, the effort may be abandoned owing to the difficulty of the beginning. ... For the rest one must not depend on one's own efforts only, but succeed in establishing a contact with the Divine and a receptivity to the Mother's Power and Presence." (CWSA 29: 107)

6.

"Do not allow yourself to be troubled or discouraged by any difficulties, but quietly and simply open yourself to the Mother's force and allow it to change you.(CWSA 32:218)

7.

"When you decided to tell the Mother, it had the effect of opening something in your physical consciousness and the Mother's Force acted. It often happens so—the action of the Mother's Force depends on a certain power of receptivity in the mind or vital or body—and openness is the first necessary condition for the receptivity." (CWSA 32:218)

8.

"These [*calling the Mother, praying to her*] are acts of the mind; openness is a state of consciousness which keeps it

turned to the Mother, free from other movements expecting and able to receive what may come from the Divine.” (CWSA 29: 105)

9.

“To be open is simply to be so turned to the Mother that her Force can work in you without anything refusing or obstructing her action. If the mind is shut up in its own ideas and refuses to allow her to bring in the Light and the Truth, if the vital clings to its desires and does not admit the true initiative and impulses that the Mother's power brings, if the physical is shut up in its desires, habits and inertia and does not allow the Light and Force to enter in it and work, then one is not open. (SABCL 25: 123-124) (CWSA 32: 151)

10.

“How to become one with the Divine?”

Open yourself to the Mother's Force and aspire—in time you will become one with the Divine.” (CWSA 32:218)

11.

“In one of your letters you have written about being 'sufficiently open' to receive the Force. What did you mean by this?”

I mean simply a certain receptivity in the consciousness—mind, vital, physical, whichever is needed. The Mother or myself send a force. If there is no openness, the force may be thrown back or return (unless we put a great force which it is not always advisable to do) as from an obstruction or resistance: if there is some openness, the result may be partial or slow; if there is the full openness or receptivity, then the result may be immediate. Of course there are things that cannot be removed all at once, being an old part of the nature, but with receptivity these also can be more effectively and rapidly dealt with. Some people are so open that even by writing they get free before the book or letter reaches us.” (CWSA 35: 489)

12.

“The resistance you speak of and the insufficient receptivity and the inability to continue in communion while doing work, must all be due to some part of the physical consciousness that is still not open to the Light—probably something in the vital physical and the material subconscious which stands in the way of the physical mind being in its mass free and responsive.

There is no harm in raising the aspiration from below to meet the power from above. All that you have to be careful about is not to raise up the difficulty from below before the descending Power is ready to remove it.” (CWSA 29: 260)

13.

“If you open yourself to the Force and the Help, there will be *no strain*.” (CWM 14: 145)

14.

“Opening: the help is constant in all the domains. It is for us to know how to benefit from it.” (CWM 14: 145)

15.

“Integral opening of the being towards the Divine: the first step of the ascent.” (CWM 14: 145)

16.

“The opening to the Divine Light cannot be made through coercion [compulsion].” (CWM 14: 144)

X—How to Open to Become Receptive

1.

"Q: What does 'opening' mean? Is it: 'not to keep anything secret from the Mother'?"

A: That is the first step towards opening." (CWSA 32: 150-151)

2.

"Q: How does one 'open'?"

A: By faith and surrender in a quiet mind." (CWSA 32: 151)

3.

"It is by the constant remembrance that the being is prepared for the full opening. By the opening of the heart the Mother's presence begins to be felt and by the opening to her Power above the Force of the higher consciousness comes down into the body and works there to change the whole nature." (CWSA 32:167)

4.

"It is by confidence in the Mother that the opening needed will come when your consciousness is ready. ... it is not by meditation alone that what is needed will come. It is by faith and openness to the Mother." (CWSA 29: 109)

5.

“Q: *Is our inner being already open to the Mother or does it open in the course of sadhana?*”

A: The inner being does not open except by sadhana, or by some psychic touch on the life.” (CWSA 32: 162)

6.

“There are two main things to be secured as the foundations of sadhana – the opening of the psychic being and the realisation of the Self above. For the opening of the psychic being, concentration on the Mother and self-offering to her are the direct way. The growth of Bhakti which you feel is the first sign of the psychic development. A sense of the Mother’s presence or force or the remembrance of her supporting and strengthening you is the next sign.” (CWSA 30: 321)

7.

“Openness is not always complete from the first—a part of the being opens, other parts of the consciousness remain still closed or half open only—one has to aspire till all is open. Even with the best and most powerful sadhak the full opening takes time; nor is there anyone who has been able to abandon everything at once without any struggle. There is no reason to feel therefore that if you call you will not be heard—the Mother knows the difficulties

of human nature and will help you through. Persevere always, call always and then after each difficulty there will be a progress.” (CWSA 32: 156-157)

8.

“Yes, it is by quieting the mind that you will become able to call the Mother and open to her. The soothing effect was a touch from the psychic—one of the touches that prepare the opening of the psychic with its gift of inner peace, love and joy.” (CWSA 32: 163)

9.

“No, it is not enough to be in the Asram—one has to open to the Mother and put away the mud which one was playing with in the world.” (CWSA 32: 156)

10.

“Q: *What are the signs of a real opening to the Mother?*

A: That shows itself at once—when you feel the divine peace, equality, wideness, light, Ananda, Knowledge, strength, when aware of the Mother's nearness or presence or the working of her Force, etc., etc. If any of these things are felt, it is the opening—the more are felt, the more complete the opening.” (CWSA 32: 150)

11.

"Q: How shall I to know that I am opening to the Mother and not to other forces?"

A: You have to be vigilant and see that there is no movement of disturbance, desire, ego." (CWSA 32: 150)

XI—The State of Receptivity

1.

“The Purusha is one thing and the ordinary mental will and force are another. The latter may be unsuccessful in their action. When you are in the Purusha consciousness, that of itself implies a state of concentration and receptivity.” (CWSA 28: 40)

2.

“As the vital difficulties can be fought down and conquered, so can the mental. Only one has to see that these are the inevitable obstacles and neither cling to them nor be terrified or overwhelmed because they are there. One has to persevere till one can stand back from the mind as from the vital and feel the deeper and larger mental and vital Purushas within one which are capable of silence, capable of a straight receptivity of the true Word and Force as of the true silence.” (CWSA 31: 21)

3.

“Aspiration is to call the forces. When the forces have answered, there is a natural state of quiet receptivity concentrated but spontaneous.” (CWSA 29: 57)

4.

“The contribution of the psychic being to the sadhana is: (1) love and bhakti, a love not vital, demanding and

egoistic but without conditions or claims, self-existent; (2) the contact or the presence of the Mother within; (3) an unerring guidance from within; (4) a quieting and purification of the mind, vital and physical consciousness by their subjection to the psychic influence and guidance; (5) the opening up of all this lower consciousness to the higher spiritual consciousness above for its descent into a nature prepared to receive it with a complete receptivity and right attitude—for the psychic brings in everything right thought, right perception, right feeling, right attitude.” (CWSA 30: 339)

5.

“Opening means that the consciousness becomes opened to the Truth or the Divine to which it is now shut—it indicates a state of receptivity.” (CWSA 29: 105)

6.

“When you are in a particular set of circumstances and certain events take place, these events often oppose your desire or what seems best to you, and often you happen to regret this and say to yourself, ‘Ah! how good it would have been if it were otherwise, if it had been like this or like that’, for little things and big things.... Then years pass by, events are unfolded; you progress, become more conscious, understand better, and when you look back, you notice—first with astonishment, then later with a smile—

that those very circumstances which seemed to you quite disastrous or unfavourable, were exactly the best thing that could have happened to you to make you progress as you should have. And if you are the least bit wise you tell yourself, 'Truly, the divine Grace is infinite.'

So, when this sort of thing has happened to you a number of times, you begin to understand that in spite of the blindness of man and deceptive appearances, the Grace is at work everywhere, so that at every moment it is the best possible thing that happens in the state the world is in at that moment. It is because our vision is limited or even because we are blinded by our own preferences that we cannot discern that things are like this.

But when one begins to see it, one enters upon a state of wonder which nothing can describe. For behind the appearances one perceives this Grace—infinite, wonderful, all powerful—which knows all, organises all, arranges all, and leads us, whether we like it or not, whether we know it or not, towards the supreme goal, that is, union with the Divine, the awareness of the Godhead and union with Him.

Then one lives in the Action and Presence of the Grace a life full of joy, of wonder, with the feeling of a marvellous strength, and at the same time with a trust so calm, so complete, that nothing can shake it any longer.

And when one is in this state of perfect receptivity and perfect adherence, one diminishes to that extent the resistance of the world to the divine Action; consequently,

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this is the best collaboration one can bring to the Action of the Divine. One understands what He wants and, with all one's consciousness, adheres to His Will." (CWM 8: 256–257)

XII—When the Mother Sees People, She Sees Their Receptivity

1.

"Yes, just so, I wanted to ask you: when you look at people in this way, what is it that you see?"

I believe I see... most exactly, it is their condition, the state in which they are. Especially, there are some who seem as though closed, who, as far as I am concerned, do not see, who are altogether in their outward consciousness; and then there are those who are open—there are... some children, a remarkable thing, who were as though entirely open (*gesture as of a flower to the sun*), ready to absorb. It is particularly the receptivity of people which I see, the state in which they are: those who come with an aspiration, those who come with a curiosity, those who come... as though with a kind of obligation, and then there are those who thirst for light—there are not many of them, but there are quite a few children. Today I saw one who was charming! ... Oh, wonderful!

And I see only that. Not what they think, what they say (all that appears to me superficial, uninteresting); it is the state of receptivity in which they happen to be. It is that particularly which I see." (CWM 11: 251)

2.

"A: *In Aspiration some people would like to know whether it would be possible for it to be not always the same people who come to see you on Tuesdays.*

You see, I am quite willing, but it is up to you. (*Mother laughs*) No! I am willing to see four of you.

(*Turning to C*) I have called him for the first time today, but in his place other people could take turns in coming. In any case I will be seeing him. But with you three, a fourth person can come, taking turns, a different one each time.

A: *Very well.*

All I ask is that they should be sincere, that they do not come out of mere curiosity. If they are sincere, if they truly want to progress, they may come one at a time, I am quite willing. I do not even need to know their names. You see, that has no importance to me. It is only the quality of the receptivity that counts. If they are open and feel that it does them good, then fine, it is very good...." (CWM 13: 314–315)

3.

"For some time past, but in a more and more precise manner, when I hear something or something is read to

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me, or when I hear music or someone narrates a fact, I feel immediately: the origin of the activity or the plane on which it is happening or the origin of the inspiration is rendered automatically by a vibration in one of the centres. And then, according to the quality of the vibration, it is either constructive or negative, and when that touches, however little it may be, at a given moment, a domain of Truth, there is... (how to say it?) a spark, as it were, of a vibration of Ananda. ...

The other day when Z read to me his article, it was neutral (*vague gesture at mid-height*), all the while neutral, then all of a sudden, a spark of Ananda; it was this which made me appreciate it. And just now, when you read this text of Y, there was a small ray of light (*gesture at the height of the throat*), then I knew. A pleasant ray of light—not of Ananda, but a pleasant light, so I knew that there was something in it.

And there are degrees, to be sure, almost an infinity of qualities.

That is the way given to me for finding out the position of things.

And it is quite, quite outside the thought. Only *afterwards*, when you asked me, for example, about the dream, I said, 'Logically, since the vibration is there (*downward gesture*), it must be a memory.' And with a kind of certitude, because... because the perception is altogether impersonal.

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It is an extraordinarily delicate mechanism and its field of receptivity (*gesture of gradation*) almost infinite.

My way of knowing people is also like that now. But since a long time past, when I see a photograph, for example, it does not at all pass through the thought; these are not deductions or intuitions—that creates a vibration somewhere. And then amusing things also happen. The other day I was given the photograph of someone, then I clearly felt it; by the place which was touched, by the answering vibration, I knew that this man had the habit of handling ideas and possessed the assurance of someone who teaches. I ask, in order to see, 'What does this man do?' I am told, 'He does business.' Then I say, 'But he is not made for business, he understands nothing of it.' And three minutes after I am told, 'Ah, excuse me, please; he is a professor!' (*Mother laughs*) It is like that." (CWM 11: 10–11)

XIII—How to Have an Endless Receptivity in Yoga

1.

“The supramental Yoga is at once an ascent towards God and a descent of Godhead into the embodied nature. ...

The call and the aspiration are only first conditions; there must be along with them and brought by their effective intensity an opening of all the being to the Divine and a total surrender.

This opening is a throwing wide of all the nature on all its levels and in all its parts to receive into itself without limits the greater divine Consciousness which is there already above and behind and englobing this mortal half-conscious existence. In the receiving there must be no inability to contain, no breaking down of anything in the system, mind or life or nerve or body under the transmuting stress. There must be an endless receptivity, an always increasing capacity to bear an ever stronger and more and more insistent action of the divine Force. Otherwise nothing great and permanent can be done; the Yoga will end in a break-down or an inert stoppage or a stultifying or a disastrous arrest in a process which must be absolute and integral if it is not [to] be a failure.

But since no human system has this endless receptivity and unfailing capacity, the supramental Yoga can succeed only if the Divine Force as it descends increases the personal power and equates the strength

that receives with the Force that enters from above to work in the nature. This is only possible if there is on our part a progressive surrender of the being into the hands of the Divine; there must be a complete and never failing assent, a courageous willingness to let the Divine Power do with us whatever is needed for the work that has to be done.” (CWSA 12: 169–170)

2.

“And Sri Aurobindo says: I am not a Jnani.... I do not seek knowledge. I have given myself to the Divine to accomplish His work and, by the divine Grace, at every moment I know what must be known in order to accomplish this work.

It is an admirable state; it is perfect peace of mind. There is no longer any need to accumulate acquired knowledge, received ideas which have to be memorised; it is no longer necessary to clutter one’s brain with thousands and thousands of things in order to have at one’s command, when the time comes, the knowledge that is needed to perform an action, to impart a teaching, to solve a problem. The mind is silent, the brain is still, everything is clear, quiet, calm; and at the right moment, by divine Grace a drop of light falls into the consciousness and what needs to be known is known. Why should one care to remember—why try to retain that knowledge? On the day or at the moment that it is needed one will have it again. At each second one is a blank page on which what must

be known will be inscribed—in the peace, the repose, the silence of a perfect receptivity.

One knows what must be known, one sees what must be seen, and since what must be known and seen comes directly from the Supreme, it is Truth itself; and it completely eludes all notions of reason or folly. What is true is true—that is all. And one has to sink very low to wonder whether it is folly or reason.

Silence and a modest, humble, attentive receptivity; no concern for appearances or even any anxiety to be—one is quite modestly, quite humbly, quite simply the instrument which of itself is nothing and knows nothing, but is ready to receive everything and transmit everything.

The first condition is self-forgetfulness, a total self-giving, the absence of ego.

And the body says to the Supreme Lord: 'What You want me to be, I shall be; what You want me to know, I shall know; what You want me to do, I shall do'." (CWM 10: 9–10)

3.

"These obstacles are usual in the first stages of the sadhana. They are due to the nature being not yet sufficiently receptive. You should find out where the obstacle is, in the mind or the vital, and try to widen the consciousness there, call in more purity and peace and in that purity and peace offer that part of your being sincerely and wholly to the Divine Power." (CWSA 31: 638)

4.

"She [The Mother] wants to show you nothing; it has nothing to do with the doings or misdoings of the sadhaks. Pranam is not intended for watching the Mother's expression or what she does with this one or that one or in what way she smiles or with how much of her hand she blesses—the sadhaks' preoccupation with these things is childish and for the most part full of mistaken inferences, imaginations, often curiosity, desire for gossip, criticism etc. Such a state of mind is a hindrance, not a help to sadhana. The proper attitude is one of self-dedication and simple and straightforward receptivity to what the Mother wishes to give, an undisturbed and undisturbing openness to her working in the being." (CWSA 32: 535)

5.

"All this happens because the mind and vital in these exaltations of the stress of the sadhana become very active. That is why it is necessary, first, to found your sadhana on a great calm, a great equality, not eagerly rushing after experiences or their fruit, but looking at them, observing, calling always for more and more Light, trying to be more and more wide, open, quietly and discerningly receptive. ...

Keep yourself open to the Mother's Force, but do not trust all forces. As you go on, if you keep straight, you will come to a time when the psychic becomes more

predominantly active and the Light from above prevails more purely and strongly so that the chance of mental constructions and vital formations mixing with the true experience diminishes. As I have told you, these are not yet and cannot be the supramental Forces; it is a work of preparation which is only making things ready for a future Yoga-siddhi." (CWSA 30: 311–312)

6.

"A difficulty comes or an arrest in some movement which you have begun or have been carrying on for some time. How is it to be dealt with?—for such arrests are inevitably frequent enough, not only for you, but for everyone who is a seeker; one might almost say that every step forward is followed by an arrest—at least, that is a very common, if not a universal experience. It is to be dealt with by becoming always more quiet, more firm in the will to go through, by opening oneself more and more so that any obstructing non-receptivity in the nature may diminish or disappear, by an affirmation of faith even in the midst of the obscurity, faith in the presence of a Power that is working behind the cloud and the veil, in the guidance of the Guru, by an observation of oneself to find any cause of the arrest, not in a spirit of depression or discouragement but with the will to find out and remove it. This is the only right attitude and, if one is persistent in taking it, the periods of arrest are not abolished,—for that cannot be at

XIII—How to Have an Endless Receptivity in Yoga

this stage,—but greatly shortened and lightened in their incidence. Sometimes these arrests are periods, long or short, of assimilation or unseen preparation, their appearance of sterile immobility is deceptive: in that case, with the right attitude, one can after a time, by opening, by observation, by accumulated experience, begin to feel, to get some inkling of what is being prepared or done.”
(CWSA 31: 664)

XIV—How to Know Initially That We Are Receptive

1.

“How can we know that we are receptive?”

When we feel the urge to give and the joy of giving to the Divine’s work, then we can be sure that we have become receptive.” (CWM 14: 148)

“To be receptive is to feel the urge to give and the joy of giving to the Divine’s Work all one has, all one is, all one does.” (CWM 14: 148)

XV—Receptivity to Universal Vital Forces

1.

"Sweet Mother, do the universal vital forces have any limits?"

I don't think that forces have a limit, because in comparison with us they are certainly unlimited. But it's our capacity of reception that is limited. We cannot absorb them beyond a certain measure, and then we must keep a balance between the expenditure and the capacity to receive. If one spends suddenly in a kind of impulse—for example, in an impulsive movement—if one spends much more than one has received, one needs a brief moment of concentration, calm, receptivity to absorb universal forces. You must put yourself in a certain condition to receive them; and then, they last for a certain time, and once you have spent them you must begin again to receive them. It is in this sense that there are limits. It isn't the forces that are limited, it is the receptivity.

Each person has a different receptivity. No two receptivities are the same in quality and quantity, but specially in quality. One enters into contact with very pure, very intense forces—what could be already called converted forces, that is, universal vital forces which are in contact with the Divine and not only receive the Divine but aspire to receive Him. So if you absorb these forces it gives

you a great strength for progress. It is in this that the quality is much more important. And for the quality of the universal vital forces, it depends naturally a great deal on what one is, but also much on what one does.

If one uses these forces for a purely selfish action of a base kind, well, one makes it almost totally impossible for himself to receive any new ones of as fine a quality. All depends on the utilisation of the forces one receives. If, on the other hand, you use them to make progress, to perfect yourself, it gives you... it increases your capacity of receiving enormously, and the next time you can have a lot more. All depends (in any case, principally) on the use made of them. 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: 138–140)

2.

“How does fasting produce a state of receptivity?”

It is because usually the vital being is very closely concentrated on the body and when the body is well fed it takes its strength from the food, its energy from the food, and it is one way... it is obviously almost the only way; not the only one, but the most important in the present conditions of life... but it is a very tamasic way of absorbing energy.

If you think about it, you see, it is the vital energy which is in either plants or animals, that is, logically it is of an inferior quality to the vital energy which should be in man, who is a slightly higher being in the gradation of the species. So if you draw from below you draw at the same time the inconscience that is below. It is impossible to eat without absorbing a considerable amount of inconscience; this makes you heavy, coarsens you; and then if you eat much, a large amount of your consciousness is absorbed in digesting and assimilating what you have eaten. So

already, if you don't take food, you don't have all this inconstance to assimilate and transform inside you; it sets free the energies. And then, as there is an instinct in the being to recuperate the energies spent, if you don't take them from food, that is, from below, you instinctively make an effort to take them through union with the universal vital forces which are free, and if one knows how to assimilate them one does so directly and then there is no limit.

It is not like your stomach which can digest only a certain amount of food, and therefore you can't take in more than that; and even the food you take liberates only a little bit, a very small quantity of vital energy. And so what can remain with you after all the work of swallowing, digesting, etc.? Not much, you see. But if you learn... and this indeed is a kind of instinct, one learns instinctively to draw towards himself the universal energies which move freely in the universe and are unlimited in quantity... as much of these as you are capable of drawing towards you, you can absorb—so instinctively when there is no support from below which comes from food, you make the necessary movement to recuperate the energies from outside, and absorb as much of them as you are capable of doing, and sometimes more. So this puts you in a kind of state of excitement, and if your body is very strong and can bear being without food for a certain length of time, then you keep your balance and can use these energies for

all kinds of things, as for example, to progress, to become more conscious and transform your nature. But if your physical body doesn't have much in reserve and grows considerably weak from not eating, then this creates an imbalance between the intensity of the energies you absorb and the capacity of the body to hold them, and then this causes disturbances. You lose your balance, and all the balance of forces is destroyed, and anything at all may happen to you. In any case, you lose much control over yourself and become usually very excited, and you take this excitement for a higher state. But often it is simply an inner imbalance, nothing more. It sharpens the receptivity very much. For example, precisely when one fasts and no longer takes the energies from below, well, if you breathe in the odour of a flower it nourishes you, the perfume nourishes you, it gives you a great deal of energy; but otherwise you do not notice it." (CWM 7: 60–61)

3.

"It is a fact that by fasting, if the mind and the nerves are solid or the will force dynamic, one can get for a time into a state of inner energy and receptivity which is alluring to the mind and the usual reactions of hunger, weakness, intestinal disturbance, etc. can be wholly avoided. But the body suffers by diminution and there can easily develop in the vital a morbid overstrained condition due to the inrush of more vital energy than the nervous system can

assimilate or coordinate. Nervous people should avoid the temptation to fast; it is often accompanied or followed by delusions and a loss of balance. Especially if there is a motive of hunger-strike or that element comes in, as it did in your case, fasting becomes perilous, for it is then an indulgence of a vital movement which may easily become a habit injurious and pernicious to the sadhana. Even if all these reactions are avoided, still there is no sufficient utility in fasting, since the higher energy and receptivity ought to come not by artificial or physical means but by intensity of the consciousness and strong will for the sadhana.” (CWSA 31: 431)

4.

“Some people don’t know how to receive the forces at all. These live on the energies concentrated in the body—for there is some concentrated energy in all the cells of the body. They live upon that, but after some time, they are drained out completely if they don’t know how to recuperate; when they have spent all the energies which were concentrated inside them either they fall ill or they never recuperate them. So this cannot last very long; it lasts the average lifetime of human beings, and yet, at the end of a certain number of years they are no longer able to make the same effort or to produce as much, or above all to make any progress.

But those who know instinctively or who have learnt to receive and accumulate the universal vital forces, these can last almost indefinitely. The wear and tear is very little, especially if they know how to do it and do it with knowledge and method; then here it can reach a certain degree of perfection.

When one knows, sometimes just two or three minutes are sufficient to recuperate the energies spent over a long period. Only, one must know how to do it.

But those who draw back upon themselves, who turn and double up on themselves, cannot do this. One must live all the time in a very vast and very expansive consciousness (I don't know if you understand the word, it means something which extends very homogeneously and quietly, as when the tide is at its height and the water spreads like that, quietly—that's the impression). The vital must be like that—then one is open to the universal forces. But if, for example, one has the very bad habit of exchanging vital forces with one's fellowmen, then one loses the capacity altogether. So unless one is in relation with someone, one receives nothing at all. But naturally if you receive forces through others, you receive at the same time all the difficulties of the other person, perhaps sometimes his qualities also, but these are less contagious. This indeed is something that shuts you up most." (CWM 7: 72–73)

5.

"In fact, the vital has three sources of subsistence. The one most easily accessible to it comes from below, from the physical energies through the sensations.

The second is on its own plane, when it is sufficiently vast and receptive, by contact with the universal vital forces.

The third, to which it usually opens only in a great aspiration for progress, comes to it from above by the infusion and absorption of spiritual forces and inspiration." (CWM 12: 55)

6.

"How to be worthy of Sri Aurobindo's Centenary?"

On the 1st of January this year You said: 'A special help has come on to the earth for Sri Aurobindo's centenary year.'

Will You please indicate the nature and action of this help and also what we should do to avail ourselves of it?

Those who will be able to become receptive by the mastery of the psychic upon their ego, will know what this help is and will have the full benefit of it." (CWM 12: 314) (CWM 14: 86)

XVI—Receptivity at the Playground Meditation

1.

“No, I told you this the other day, the concentration we have now is the opposite of meditation. In the common meditation [at the Ashram] we used to have, I tried to unify the consciousness of all who were present and to lift it in an aspiration towards higher regions; it was a movement of ascent, of aspiration—whereas what we do here [at the playground meditation], in concentration, is a movement of descent. Instead of an aspiration which rises up, what is required is a receptivity which opens so that the Force may enter into you. There are many ways of doing this; each one according to his particular nature should find out the best method. What is asked here is a receptive offering, not of the body or the mind or the vital, of a piece of your being, but of your entire being. No other thing is asked of you, only to *open* yourself; the rest of the work I undertake.” (CWM 4: 122)

“Here, at the Playground, the work is to unify all who are here, make them open and *bring down* the divine force into them. It is the opposite movement and that is why this concentration cannot replace the other, even as the other cannot replace this one. What happens here is exceptional—in the other meditation [*at the Ashram*] I gathered together the consciousness of all who were

XVI—Receptivity at the Playground Meditation

present and, with the power of aspiration, lifted it towards the Divine, that is, made each one of you progress a little. Here, on the other hand, I take you as you are; each one of you comes saying, 'Here we are with our whole day's activities, we were busy with our body, here it is, we offer to you all our movements, just as they were, just as we are.' And my work is to unify all that, make of it a homogeneous mass and, in answer to this offering (which each one can make in his own way), to open every consciousness, widen the receptivity, make a unity of this receptivity and bring down the Force. So at that moment each one of you, if you are very quiet and attentive, will surely receive something. You will not always be aware of it, but you will receive something." (CWM 4: 106)

XVII—Receptivity at the Balcony Darshan

1.

In this period Mother used to give Darshan every morning from her balcony. This was known as 'Balcony Darshan'. In the evening She was present in the Playground to receive the salute at the March Past and conduct the Concentration at the end of the 'Marching'.

"Sweet Mother, every day we go for the Balcony Darshan, and here at the Playground we come for the March Past and the Concentration. What should be our approach to each one of these things?"

The most indispensable thing in every case is receptivity.

At the Balcony, for example. When I come on the Balcony I make a special concentration, you notice that I look at everybody, don't you; I look, see, pass my eyes over every one, I know all who are there, and where they are, and I give each one exactly what he needs; I see his condition and give him what is necessary. It can go fast, because otherwise I would keep you there for half an hour, but I do it, that's what I do. That's the only reason why I come out, because otherwise I carry you in my consciousness. I carry you in my consciousness always, without seeing you, I do what is necessary. But here it is a moment when I can do it by touching the physical directly,

you see; otherwise it is through the mind that it acts, the mind or the vital. But here I touch the physical directly through the sight, the contact of sight; and that's what I do—each time.

So if each one who comes, comes with a kind of trust, of inner opening, and is ready to receive what is given, and naturally is not dispersed... there are people there who pass their time looking at what is happening, what the others are doing; and in this way they don't have much chance to receive anything very much... but if one comes concentrated on what he can receive and is as quiet as possible, and as though he were open to receive something, as though he were opening his consciousness, like this (*gesture*) to receive something—if one has a particular difficulty or problem, one can put it in an aspiration, but it is not very necessary, because usually between what people think about themselves and the condition in which they are, there is always a little difference, in the sense that it's not quite the thing; their way of feeling or seeing the thing creates a little deformation, so I am obliged to cross over their deformation; whereas if they don't think about anything, if they are simply like this (*gesture*), open and awaiting the Force—I go straight in and what has to be done I do. And that's the moment when I know exactly, you see, I do this (*gesture*), quite slowly—from above I see *very well, very well*—exactly the condition in which each one is. ...

The 'Concentration' is something absolutely different. I try, first, to make the atmosphere as calm, quiet, unified as possible, as though I were spreading the consciousness out wide, like this (*gesture*); and then from far above I bring down the Force as much as I can and put it upon you as strongly as I can. So this depends exclusively on whether one is quite tranquil and well concentrated; here one must be concentrated, one must not be dispersed, one must be concentrated, but very... how to put it?... plain, very horizontal. Like this (*gesture*). Then the Force puts a pressure. And it's above all for unifying, penetrating the whole and endeavouring to make of it something cohesive which can express collectively the Force from above. Each one receives according to his receptivity and the state in which he is." (CWM 7: 253–255)

2.

*"Sweet Mother,
What do you give us in the morning at the balcony, and
what should we try to do in order to receive what you are
giving?"*

Every morning at the balcony, after establishing a conscious contact with each of those who are present, I identify myself with the Supreme Lord and dissolve myself completely in Him. Then my body, completely passive, is nothing but a channel through which the Lord passes His forces freely and pours upon all His Light, His

Consciousness and His Joy, according to each one's receptivity.

The best way to receive what He gives is to come to the balcony with trust and aspiration and to keep oneself as *calm and quiet* as one can in *a silent and passive state of expectation*. If one has something precise to ask, it is better to ask it *beforehand*, not while I am there, because any activity lessens the receptivity. (CWM 16: 228–229)

XVIII—Receptivity at Pranam and Darshan Days

1.

“The best way to help X is to assist her by your own example and atmosphere to get the right attitude. Instead of the sense that she is very ill, she should be encouraged to have a bright and confident feeling, open to receive strength and health from us, contributing by her own faith to a speedy recovery. These ideas that they do not see the Mother, are outside the atmosphere, at a distance, are just the wrong notions and most likely to come in the way of and block your sisters’ receptivity; it is surprising that you should accept or echo them and not react against them at once. They are here in the Asram (a little nearer or farther makes no difference), in the Mother’s presence and atmosphere; meeting her every day at the Pranam where everyone who is open can receive as much of her touch and her help as they can hold,—that is what they should feel and make the most of their opportunity and not waste it by a negative attitude.” (CWSA 32: 323) (CWSA 35: 706)

2.

“The Mother deals with each one in a different way, according to their need and their nature, not according to any fixed mental rule. It would be absurd for her to do the same thing with everybody as if all were machines which had to be touched and handled in the same way. It does

not at all mean that she has more affection for one than for another or those she touches in a particular way are better sadhaks or less so. The sadhaks think in that way because they are full of ignorance and ego. Instead of thinking whether the Mother favours one more or the other less, comparing and watching what she does, they ought to be concerned at Pranam with only their own spiritual reception of her influence. Pranam is for that and not for these other things which have nothing to do with sadhana.” (CWSA 32: 533)

3.

“Pulling is a psychological act—people are always pulling vital force from each other though they do not do it consciously, i.e. with a purpose in the mind—it is instinctive in the vital to draw force from wherever it can. All contact is in fact a receiving and giving of vital forces in a small or great degree. You have yourself said that after meeting such and such person you felt empty and exhausted—that means the person drew your vital force out of you. That is what people do at pranam, instead of being quiet and receptive, they pull vitally. It can be stopped by cutting off connection, but if the Mother did that at pranam, then the pranam would be useless.” (CWSA 32: 565)

4.

"Today, looking at the Mother at the Pranam, there was a good receptivity. She stood before me a while longer than usual, and I experienced her working. The whole of my head was filled with nothing but her light. Is this true? Did she really do that?"

She does so every time, only today you not only received but were consciously receptive." (CWSA 32: 532)

5.

"Sweet Mother, why does one feel a different atmosphere on Darshan days? What should one do on these days?"

Different? You ask this question!... There is an invasion of more or less dark and foreign elements, who may come with goodwill, possibly, but who come with an almost total ignorance and throw it all out in the atmosphere; and so, naturally, if one is the least bit open to what is happening, one feels crushed under the weight of this increased ignorance.

I don't mean that there is no ignorance here! But still, the dose is different. Here, for all that, there is a sort of manipulation of the consciousness going on constantly, night and day, visibly, invisibly; and whether one wants it or not, in spite of everything one takes it in, and after some time it acts.

When a few people come, something changes, but it is not so much as to give a painful feeling; but when it is a rush like this, dashing in all at once, then the whole level comes down immediately, and unless one is able to withdraw into oneself and keep one's head above these submerging waters, this swamping flood of ignorance, if one can't raise one's head above it, well, one feels very uneasy.

No, Mother, it is an atmosphere of joy!

You find it an atmosphere of joy!

Yes, Mother.

Then it is personal, my child. It is something purely personal. And you ought to be able to keep it.

It comes because at this time there are memories awakening in you, a certain concentration. Or perhaps what you call joy is a vital pleasure, no? Isn't it a sort of excitement? When do you feel this joy?

Today, it was after Darshan.

I think it is the same thing that happens to people who are more receptive on their birthdays or who need to remember an event to awaken their receptivity.

In the days when Sri Aurobindo used to give Darshan, before he gave it there was always a concentration of certain forces or of a certain realisation which he wanted to give to people. And so each Darshan marked a stage forward; each time something was added. But that was at a time when the number of visitors was very limited. It was organised in another way, and it was part of the necessary preparation.

But this special concentration, now, occurs at other times, not particularly on Darshan days. And it occurs much more often, on other kinds of occasions, in other circumstances. The movement is much accelerated, the march forward, the stages succeed each other much more rapidly. And perhaps it is more difficult to follow; or in any case, if one doesn't take care to keep up, one is much more quickly out-distanced than before; one gets the feeling of being late or of being abandoned. Things change quickly.

And I ought to say that these Darshan times with all this rush of people serve not so much for an inner progress—that is to say, inside the Ashram—as for a diffusion outside. The use we make of these days is a little different; above all, it is to go farther, have a vaster field, reach more distant points. But the concentration is less and there is this inconvenience of a large crowd, which was always there but which has been much greater during these last years than at the beginning. At the beginning

there was not such a crowd; and perhaps the quality of the crowd was also a little different.

So the joy you were speaking about would rather be a kind of excitement or the feeling of a more intense or more active life; but it is not actually a greater Presence. One puts oneself, perhaps, into a more receptive state in which one receives more, but there is no intensification of the Presence—not to my knowledge.

So it must be within you that you have to find the reason, and the remedy for keeping this joy.” (CWM 8: 261–263)

XIX—Receptivity and Poetry

1.

“Why is my mind so wretchedly limited, my soul such a feeble flame?”

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.” (CWSA 27: 719)

2.

“In this case it is very possible that she got into some kind of connection with the actual world of Krishna and the Gopis—through the vital. This seems to be indicated first by the sense of extreme rapture and light and beauty and

secondly by the contact with the 'Blue Radiance' that was Krishna—that phrase and the expressions she uses have a strong touch of something that was authentic. I say through the vital, because of course it was presented to her in forms and words that her human mind could seize and understand; the original forms of that world would be something that could hardly be seizable by the human sense. The Hindi words of course belong to the transcribing agency. That would not mean that it was a creation of her personal mind, but only a transcription given to her just within the bounds of what it could seize, even though unfamiliar to her waking consciousness. Once the receptivity of the mind awakened, the rest came to her freely through the channel created by the vision. That her mind did not create the song is confirmed by the fact that it came in Hindi with so much perfection of language and technique." (CWSA 27: 16)

3.

"It is always the difficulty of expression that words can only suggest these deeper things though they can suggest them with a certain force—even a creative force—but there must be the receptivity in the reader also. Your phrases 'triumphant acres of the night' etc. have a considerable power in them; all the lines indeed are such that the significance could hardly be better conveyed, but still the full significance (the suggestion not merely of the idea, but

of the experience behind it) can only be got if the reader listens not only with the mind, but with the inner sense and feeling." (CWSA 27: 486)

4.

"When the current of inspiration comes to a stop, I think sometimes that perhaps you have forgotten me in your busy moments.

It does not depend on that at all. It depends on a certain state of receptivity—an opening of the channel between the inner plane where the inspiration comes and the outer through which it has to pass." (CWSA 27: 572)

5.

"As regards the 'opening of the channel', can it be done sooner by more concentration, meditation, etc., disregarding the literary side for the time being?

One can get the power of receptivity to inspiration by concentration and meditation making the inner being stronger and the outer less gross, tamasic and insistent." (CWSA 27: 572)

6.

"My mind does not know precisely how to silence itself. The same is true of Dilip. How then does he manage to receive from Above?"

The difference is that as his mind has opened to the Above, the Above can turn its activity into an activity of the Inspiration—its quickness, energy, activity enable it to transcribe quickly, actively, energetically what comes into it from the Above. Of course if one day it becomes silent also, it may probably become the channel of a still higher Inspiration.

Is silencing the mind to be done only at the time of writing or at other times too?

Silencing the mind at the time of writing should be sufficient—even not silencing it, but its falling quiet to receive." (CWSA 27: 584–585)

7.

"Words or phrases may be reiterated provided they acquire by their content a new colour each time. The word white has been fairly common of late in my work though perhaps the line in which it occurs, 'A white word breaks the eternal quietude', is not so stale as the other."

Obviously, it is desirable not to repeat oneself or if one has to it is desirable to repeat in another language and in a new light. Still even that cannot be overdone. The difficulty about most writers of spiritual poetry is that they have either a limited field of experience or are tacked on to a limited inspiration though an intense one. How to get out of it? The only recipe I know is to widen oneself (or one's receptivity) always. Or else perhaps wait in the eternal quietude for a new white word to break it—if it does not come, telephone." (CWSA 27: 595-596)

8.

"Your remark about my fifth line ['And if great music . . . '] is liable to seem hypercritical but really there is a subtle truth in it. However, it is not possible to begin the line with an 'A'—for then the connection with the rest of the stanza is not so direct nor will the balance between the two quatrains be very clear.

I do not agree about the hypercriticism—the reason I gave is of course a mental account, but the main test is the fall and feel of the words either on the 'solar plexus' or on the receptive intuition and here a slight alteration makes all the difference. 'a great music rolled' is obviously unconvincing whether as expression or rhythm. I had thought of 'when' in view of the intellectual construction of the lines, but dropped it because it lowered the rhythm and

impressiveness of the line. If 'when' however is to be there, I don't know whether 'mighty' is any longer the right word though better than 'great'. For inevitability (of whatever height) everything depends on the combination of words and the suggestive sound rhythm." (CWSA 27: 611-612)

9.

"Whatever Shakespeare may suggest,—a poet's critical theories are not always a just clue to his inspiration,—there is not here any true or exact holding up of a mirror to life and Nature, but instead a moved and excited reception and evocation. Life throws its impressions, but what seizes upon them is a greater and deeper life-power in the poet which is not satisfied with mirroring or just beautifully responding to what is cast upon it, but begins to throw up at once around them its own rich matter of receptive being and shaping force and so creates something new, something more personal, intimate, fuller of a first inner vision, emotion, passion of self-expression. This is the source of the new intensity; it is this impulse towards an utterance of the creative life-power within which drives towards the dramatic form and acts with such unexampled power in Shakespeare." (CWSA 26: 88)

10.

"A poem may pre-exist in the timeless as all creation pre-exists there or else in some plane where the past, present

and future exist together. But it is not necessary to presuppose anything of the kind to explain the phenomena of inspiration. All is here a matter of formation or creation. By the contact with the source of inspiration the creative Power at one level or another and the human instrument, receptacle or channel get into contact. That is the essential point, all the rest depends upon the individual case. If the substance, rhythm, form, words come down all together ready-formed from the plane of poetic creation, that is the perfect type of inspiration; it may give its own spontaneous gift or it may give something which corresponds to the idea or the aspiration of the poet, but in either case the human being is only a channel or receptacle, although he feels the joy of the creation and the joy of the *āveśā*, *enthousiasmos*, elation of the inrush and the passage.” (CWSA 27: 7–8)

11.

“I want to produce something Upanishadic. But I get no glimmering at all of the sovereignly spiritual-poetic. The poem, Yoga, which I am sending you, almost tells me what I should do to solve my difficulty; but the manner in which it tells seems to drive home the fact of my being so far from what I want—the sheer stupendous mantra.

I fear it is only eloquence—a long way from the mantra. From the point of view of a poetic eloquence there are

some forceful lines and the rest is well done, but— there is too much play of the mind, not the hushed intense receptivity of the seer which is necessary for the *mantra*.” (CWSA 27: 608–609)

12.

“You give me Force for English poetry—some lines come all right, others are jumbled, wrong, etc., and these things you correct by outer guidance, i.e. by correcting, checking, etc. till I become sufficiently receptive and then only a few changes will be necessary.

I do so in your English poetry because I am an expert in English poetry. In Bengali poetry I don’t do it. I only select among alternatives offered by yourself. Mark that for Amal I nowadays avoid correcting or changing as far as possible—that is in order to encourage the inspiration to act in himself. Sometimes I see what he should have written but do not tell it to him, leaving him to get it or not from my silence.” (CWSA 27: 570)

13.

“There is of course a third way [for success of japa], the reliance on the power of the mantra or name in itself, but then one has to go on till that power has sufficiently impressed its vibrations on the inner being to make it at a given moment suddenly open to the Presence or the

Touch. But if there is a struggling or insistence for the result, then this effect which needs a quiet receptivity in the mind is impeded. That is why I insisted so much on mental quietude and on not too much straining or effort—to give time to allow the psychic and the mind to develop the necessary condition of receptivity—a receptivity as natural as when one receives an inspiration for poetry and music. It is also why I do not want you to discontinue your poetry—it helps and does not hinder the preparation because it is a means of developing the right position of receptivity and bringing out the bhakti which is there in the inner being.” (CWSA 29: 328–329)

14.

“Of the new civilisation Kalidasa is the perfect and many-sided representative; he had the receptive, alchemistic imagination of the great world-poets, Shakespeare, Homer and Valmekie, and everything that was in his world he received into that alembic with a deep creative delight and transmuted into forms and sounds of magical beauty.” (CWSA 5: 371)

15.

“Indian poetry on the contrary, like the poetry of Europe, is the creation of an Aryan or Aryanised national mind, starts apparently from similar motives, moves on the same plane, uses cognate forms, and yet has something quite different in its spirit which creates a pronounced and

separating divergence in its aesthetic tones, type of imagination, turn of self-expression, ideative mind, method, form, structure. The mind accustomed to the European idea and technique expects the same kind of satisfaction here and does not meet it, feels a baffling difference to whose secret it is a stranger, and the subtly pursuing comparison and vain expectation stand in the way of a full receptivity and intimate understanding. At bottom it is an insufficient comprehension of the quite different spirit behind, the different heart of this culture that produces the mingled attraction and dissatisfaction.” (CWSA 20: 317)

16.

“The beauty and delight of all physical things illumined by the wonder of the secret spiritual self that is the inhabitant and self-sculptor of form, the beauty and delight of the thousand-coloured, many-crested, million-waved miracle of life made a hundred times more profoundly meaningful by the greatness and the sweetness and attracting poignancy of the self creating inmost soul which makes of life its epic and its drama and its lyric, the beauty and delight of the spirit in thought, the seer, the thinker, the interpreter of his own creation and being who broods over all he is and does in man and the world and constantly resees and shapes it new by the stress and power of his thinking, this will be the substance of the greater poetry

that has yet to be written. And that can be discovered only if and so far as the soul of man looks or feels beyond even these things and sees and voices the eternal and knows its godheads and gets to some close inward touch of the infinite ecstasy which is the source of the universal delight and beauty. For the nearer we get to the absolute Ananda, the greater becomes our joy in man and the universe and the receptive and creative spiritual emotion which needs for its voice the moved tones of poetic speech.” (CWSA 26: 266–267)

17.

“Sometimes it takes me months to get the right form of a line. ...

Allow me to point out that whatever I did in a jiffy [moment] would not be any more than provisionally final. It is not a question of making a few changes in individual lines, that is a very minor problem; the real finality only comes when all is felt as a perfect whole, no line jarring with or falling away from the level of the whole though some may rise above it and also all the parts in their proper place making the right harmony. It is an inner feeling that has to decide that and my inner feeling is not as satisfied in that respect with parts of the third section [of *Savitri*] as it is with the first two. Unfortunately the mind can’t arrange these things, one has to wait till the absolutely right thing

comes in a sort of receptive self-opening and calling-down condition. Hence the months.” (CWSA 27: 275)

18.

“The whole of *Savitri* is, according to the title of the poem, a legend that is a symbol and this opening canto is, it may be said, a key beginning and announcement. ...

What was important for me was to keep constantly before the view of the reader, not imaginative but attentive to seize the whole truth of the vision in its totality, the ever-present sense of the Inconscience in which everything is occurring. It is the frame as well as the background without which all the details would either fall apart or stand out only as separate incidents. That necessity lasts until there is the full outburst of the dawn and then it disappears; each phrase gives a feature of this Inconscience proper to its place and context. It is the entrance of the ‘lonely splendour’ into an otherwise inconscient obstructing and unreceptive world that has to be brought out and that cannot be done without the image of the ‘opaque Inane’ of the Inconscience which is the scene and cause of the resistance. There is the same necessity for reminding the reader that the ‘tread’ of the Divine Mother was an intrusion on the vacancy of the Inconscience and the herald of deliverance from it.” (CWSA 27: 341–342)

XX—Receptivity of the Body

1.

“Of all the domains of human consciousness, the physical is the one most completely governed by method, order, discipline, process. The lack of plasticity and receptivity in matter has to be replaced by a detailed organisation that is both precise and comprehensive. In this organisation, one must not forget the interdependence and interpenetration of all the domains of the being. However, even a mental or vital impulse, to express itself physically, must submit to an exact process. That is why all education of the body, if it is to be effective, must be rigorous and detailed, far-sighted and methodical. This will be translated into habits; the body is a being of habits. But these habits should be controlled and disciplined, while remaining flexible enough to adapt themselves to circumstances and to the needs of the growth and development of the being.”
(CWM 12: 12)

2.

“Physical receptivity: that which one should not have except towards the Divine.” (CWM 14: 147)

3.

“When you do not any longer have the other two fears [*mental and vital fear*], 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. ... 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. Generally in all sports (athletics and all competitions), a certain incident occurs: you must have noticed with your friends that some do much better than usual, while others who usually do well are almost incapacitated at that moment. They do much worse. Well, this depends on those small vibrations. Because you lose your full control. Your will has no longer the full control over the body, for it vibrates and answers to forces other than yours.... Naturally I am not speaking of those whose head is in a whirl or whose vital is altogether upset. Nothing can be done with them, it is better that they don't try. But I mean those who have some control over themselves, who undergo the training, you see, but at the time of the competition, cannot do as well

as usual; it depends on a lack of receptivity in the body which gets this little tremor in the cells of which you are not conscious but which acts as an obstruction. That prevents it from receiving the Force fully." (CWM 5: 167–168)

4.

"This evening when Y informed me that Z was ill, I exclaimed that she must have revolted against Mother. He asked me whether it was my belief that the cause for sickness is always a revolt or wrong attitude. I said Yes. He asked me to give a concrete example. I described an incident in which Mother found defects in my work, which led to a subdued revolt in me and consequent illness. He pointed to his fingers and said that he was not conscious that any revolt or wrong attitude was the cause of the pain in his fingers.

The wrong attitude can be in the *body consciousness* itself (lack of faith or of receptivity) and then it is very difficult to detect as it does not correspond to any wrong *thought* or *feeling*, the *body consciousness* being most often and in almost everybody *subconscious*." (CWM 16: 22)

XXI—Why Receptivity of the Body Is Limited

1.

“Why is the receptivity of the body limited?”

Because in the physical world, in order that things do not get mixed up, it was necessary that it should be somewhat fixed. If, for example, your body were so subtle and plastic that suddenly it began to melt just like that, in the presence of another person, it would be quite annoying! Or when you come nearer, if both were to get mixed up, it would be rather unpleasant! So, because of this, there was a greater concentration, a kind of fixity in the force to separate (it is indeed for the sake of separating) one individuality from another. And this fixity is just what prevents the body from progressing as rapidly as it could and should. And as one grows up and reaches one's normal height and constitution, one becomes still more rigid. For children have this plasticity of growth, they are changing all the time, they are visibly changing. Therefore so long as they are young and are growing and developing, they have a certain plasticity in them, but when you are over forty and as generally in life you then sit down and think that you have reached your goal and are about to gather the fruit of your labour, you become dry and hard like wood and even like stone in the end. And as the body is no longer able to adapt itself to the movement of inner

XXI—Why Receptivity of the Body Is Limited

transformation, it drags, it ages and cannot keep pace any more, it dries up. (CWM 5: 259–260)

XXII—The Body Can Progress Even with Limited Receptivity

1.

“The vital being, if it knows how to get connected with the universal force, can very easily have no retrogression; it can continue to ascend. And the mental being, it’s absolutely certain, is completely free from all degeneration if it continues to develop normally. So these always make progress so long as they remain co-ordinated and under the influence of the psychic.

It is only the physical being which grows and decomposes. But this comes from its lack of plasticity and receptivity and by its very nature; it is not inevitable. Therefore there is room to think that at a given moment, as the physical consciousness itself progresses consciously and deliberately, well, to a certain extent and increasingly the body itself will be able, first to resist decay—which, obviously, must be the first movement—and then gradually begin to grow in inner perfection till it overcomes the forces of decomposition.” (CWM 7: 420–421)

2.

“But this substance *itself*—that is, this material physical substance which forms it constitutes an organism which lives for a certain length of time in a given form and then this form declines and dissolves—the substance itself

constituting these successive forms progresses through all these forms. That is, the molecular, cellular substance—perhaps even the cellular—the molecular and atomic, is progressing in its capacity to express the divine Force and Consciousness. Through all these organisms this substance becomes more and more conscious, more and more luminous, more and more receptive, until it reaches a perfection sufficient for it to become a possible vehicle for the divine Force itself which will be able to use it as it uses the elements of the other parts of the creation, like the mind or the vital.

And at that moment the physical substance will be ready to manifest in the world the new Consciousness, new Light, new Will. Through all the centuries, through countless lives, passing through innumerable organisms, using countless experiences it, so to speak, becomes refined; it is prepared, and becomes more and more receptive and open to the divine Forces.

So, a man as a momentary individual being may not appear to progress. But the progress is continued through him, as through all organisms.” (CWM 7: 421)

3.

“In the very, very old traditions—there was a tradition more ancient than the Vedic and the Chaldean which must have been the source of both—in that ancient tradition there is already mention of a ‘glorious body’ which would

be plastic enough to be transformed at every moment by the deeper consciousness: it would express that consciousness, it would have no fixity of form. It mentioned luminosity: the constituent matter could become luminous at will. It mentioned a sort of possibility of weightlessness which would allow the body to move about in the air only by the action of will-power and by certain processes of control of the inner energy, and so on. Much has been said about these things.

I don't know if there ever were beings on earth who had partially realised this, but in a very small way there have been partial instances of one thing or another, examples which go to prove that it is possible. And following up this idea, one could go so far as to conceive of the replacement of material organs and their functioning as it now is, by centres of concentration of force and energy which would be receptive to the higher forces and which, by a kind of alchemy, would use them for the necessities of life and the body." (CWM 9: 86–87)

XXIII—Receptivity and Illness

1.

“Only one doesn’t know how to use one’s mind, rather the opposite. Not only does one not know how to use it, but one uses it ill—as badly as possible. The mind has a considerable power of formation and a direct action on the body, and usually one uses this power to make oneself ill. For as soon as the least thing goes wrong, the mind begins to shape and build all the catastrophes possible, to ask itself whether it could be this, whether it could be that, if it is going to be like that, and how it will all end. Well, if instead of letting the mind do this disastrous work, one used the same capacity to make favourable formations—simply, for example, to give confidence to the body, to tell it that it is just a passing disturbance and that it is nothing, and if it enters a real state of receptivity, the disorder will disappear as easily as it has come, and one can cure oneself in a few seconds—if one knows how to do that, one gets wonderful results.” (CWM 5: 402)

“Spiritual power of healing: opening and receptivity to the divine influence.” (CWM 15: 155)

2.

“And if the illness has succeeded in touching the physical-physical, well, you must follow the procedure needed to get rid of it. This is what medical science calls ‘the course

of the illness'. One can hasten the course with the help of spiritual forces, but all the same the procedure must be followed. ... And then, once the thing is lodged there, all will depend not only on the receptivity of the body but still more on the willingness of the part which is the cause of the disorder." (CWM 4: 269)

3.

"How is one to look at the death of D? Is it a defeat of the healing force or the absence of receptivity on her side?"

It is a defeat of the healing force due to absence of receptivity in the body to the healing force.

I have heard that she had said she would not and could not give up her attachment to X. Perhaps her receptivity to Mother's force was very little because of this attachment. But whether that should be so little as to lead to the dissolution of the physical is a question.

Perhaps the attachment to X was only one side of the same thing that stood in the way of her receiving." (CWSA 35: 789–790)

4.

"But are not illnesses sometimes the result of microbes and not a part of the movement of the Yoga?"

Where does Yoga begin and where does it end? Is not the whole of your life Yoga? The possibilities of illness are always there in your body and around you; you carry within you or there swarm about you the microbes and germs of every disease. How is it that all of a sudden you succumb to an illness which you did not have for years? You will say it is due to a 'depression of the vital force'. But from where does the depression come? It comes from some disharmony in the being, from a lack of receptivity to the divine forces. When you cut yourself off from the energy and light that sustain you, then there is this depression, there is created what medical science calls a 'favourable ground' and something takes advantage of it. 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: 55–56)

5.

"Mother,

In my right leg—from the thigh right down to the heels—some nerves are not working properly. I have a feeling of numbness and I limp while walking, and sometimes if I am not careful it appears that I may lose control. Please see. It started when I was ill in January.

I wonder why these things do not get cured unless I inform you physically. When it is for others, I inform you in silence and it works. Can you tell me?

It depends on the physical receptivity of each one, and that receptivity depends itself on the more or less *dominating* mind.” (CWM 17: 220)

6.

“Mother,

Will any doctor believe that yesterday when I was writing my letter to you the swelling of my groin was so big that I had difficulty in walking. This morning when you received my letter, I began to feel that it was shrinking. By the time I got your reply it was reduced to half. Now I can run! The swelling of the foot also goes down in the same way, but neither goes away completely. They reach a point where they are harmless and then the progress stops.

This gives the exact measure of your body’s receptivity. Concentrate the force on the diseased parts and they will improve.” (CWM 17: 291)

7.

“Mother,

Before I begin to think that it is a fabrication of my mind, let me tell you that just before Darshan I had a boil

of the size of a table-tennis ball in a very awkward place on the buttock. Movement had become difficult. Before sleeping I told you, 'This won't do. If this remains I will have to remain in bed during the Darshan week.' I am not sure whether it is possible, but in the morning the boil had moved about 3 inches away from the awkward spot, giving me full freedom of movement; in a day or two it burst and now it is dried up. I still wonder whether actually the boil could move in this way.

Anything may happen. It is only our 'logical' minds which put limitations. I must congratulate your body for its receptivity.

With love and blessings." (CWM 17: 324)

8.

"So the first thing to do is to quieten oneself, bring peace, calm, relaxation, with a total confidence, in this little corner (not necessarily in the whole body). Afterwards you see what is the cause of the disorder. You look. Of course, there are many, but still you try to find out approximately the cause of this disorder, and through the pressure of light and knowledge and spiritual force you re-establish the harmony, the proper functioning. And if the ailing part is receptive, if it does not offer any obstinate resistance, you can be cured in a few seconds." (CWM 5: 184–185)

9.

"On one side, the action of the forces of Yoga hastens the movement of transformation of the being in those parts that are ready to receive and respond to the power that is at work upon it. Yoga, in this way, saves time. The whole world is in a process of progressive transformation; if you take up the discipline of Yoga, you speed up in yourself this process. The work that would require years in the ordinary course, can be done by Yoga in a few days and even in a few hours. But it is your inner consciousness that obeys this accelerating impulse; for the higher parts of your being readily follow the swift and concentrated movement of Yoga and lend themselves more easily to the continuous adjustment and adaptation that it necessitates. The body, on the other hand, is ordinarily dense, inert and apathetic. And if you have in this part something that is not responsive, if there is a resistance here, the reason is that the body is incapable of moving as quickly as the rest of the being. It must take time, it must walk at its own pace as it does in ordinary life. What happens is as when grown-up people walk too fast for children in their company; they have to stop at times and wait till the child who is lagging behind comes up and overtakes them. This divergence between the progress in the inner being and the inertia of the body often creates a dislocation in the system, and that manifests itself as an illness. This is why people who take up Yoga frequently begin by suffering from some physical

discomfort or disorder. That need not happen if they are on their guard and careful. Or if there is a greater and unusual receptivity in the body, then too they escape. But an unmixed receptivity making the physical parts closely follow the pace of the inner transformation is hardly possible, unless the body has already been prepared in the past for the processes of Yoga.” (CWM 3: 86–87)

10.

“Medicines are a *pis aller* that have to be used when something in the consciousness does not respond or responds superficially to the Force. Very often it is some part of the material consciousness that is unreceptive—at other times it is the subconscious which stands in the way even when the whole waking mind, life, physical consent to the liberating influence.” (CWSA 31: 578–579)

11.

“It seems to me that this happens quite often—much more often than one might think. For example, each time an illness is cured, each time an accident is avoided, each time a catastrophe, even a terrestrial catastrophe, is averted, in all these things, it is always an intervention of the vibration of harmony in the vibration of disorder that causes the disorder to cease.

So the people, the faithful, who always say, ‘By the grace of God, this has happened,’ are not so wrong.

I am simply observing a fact, that this vibration of order and harmony intervenes—the causes of its intervention have nothing to do with it, it is merely a scientific observation—and I have experienced this quite a number of times.” (CWM 10: 190)

12.

“This can be done at will, going out of one’s body and remaining just above it, the body is stretched out on a bed, a bench, on the ground, anywhere; you are stretched just above it and from there, consciously, you pull the Force from above, and if you are used to doing it, if your aspiration is strong enough, you get the answer; and then, from there, taking care not to re-enter your body, you begin to push these forces into the body, like that, regularly, until you see the body receiving them (for, the first few moments they don’t enter, because the body is quite upset by the illness, it is not receptive, it is tensed up), you push them gently, gently, quietly, without nervousness, very peacefully, into the body. But you must not be disturbed by anyone. If someone comes along, sees you stretched out and shakes you, it is extremely dangerous. You must do this in quiet conditions, ask people not to disturb you or better shut yourself up where they can’t disturb you. But you can concentrate slowly (this takes more or less time—ten minutes, half an hour, one hour, two hours—it depends upon the seriousness of the

disorder which has set in), slowly, from above, you concentrate the Force until you see that the body is receiving, that the Force is entering, the disorder is being set right and there is a relaxation in the body itself. Once that is done you can get back and you are cured.” (CWM 4: 270)

13.

“How to master physical suffering?”

It is just the experiences I am having now.

The body is in a state in which it sees that everything depends simply on how it is linked with the Divine—upon the state of its receptive surrender. I have had the experience even during these last days. The same thing which is the cause of a—more than a discomfort—a suffering, an almost unbearable ailment, with just a change in the receptivity of the body towards the Divine, disappears all of a sudden—and can even move to a blissful state. I have had the experience several times. For me it is only a question of sincerity become intense—in the consciousness that everything is the action of the Divine and that his action moves towards the quickest possible realisation, in the given conditions.

I might say: the cells of the body must learn to seek their support only in the Divine, until the moment when

they are able to feel that they are the expression of the Divine.

This is indeed the experience at present. The experience of changing the effect of things, that I have; but it is not mentalised, so I cannot tell it in words. But truly, the cells have begun to feel, first of all that they are wholly ruled by the Divine (this is translated by: 'What Thou wilt, what Thou wilt'), this state, and then a kind of receptivity which is (how to say it?) passive—not immobile, it is... probably one might say a *passive* receptivity (*Mother opens her hands with a smile*), but I do not know how to explain." (CWM 11: 273)

14.

"Human beings do not know how to preserve energy. When something happens, an accident or an illness, they ask for help and a double or triple dose of energy is administered. They feel that they are receptive and they receive it. This energy is given for two reasons: to repair the disorder caused by the accident or illness, and to give a power for transformation in order to mend, to change what was the true cause of the illness or accident." (CWM 15: 350)

15.

"It is a question of receptivity. I am doing the best that can be done for him, but he goes on thinking that he is ill. All

the time he is busy with that idea and he has made a strong formation of illness around him. He is unable to receive my help because of this formation. Let him discard the idea of illness and more than half the trouble will be over and it will be easy to cure him.” (CWM 15: 154)

16.

“The other means of cure is the use of spiritual power and influence. If certain psycho-spiritual means could be used, this would be as sure and effectual as the other. But this is not possible because there is no one there who has the right knowledge. The spiritual influence by itself can do it but the working is likely to be slow. It must ordinarily be conveyed through someone on the spot and you yourself are obviously the right instrument. What you have to do is to keep the idea that I am sending to you power for this object, to make yourself receptive to it and at the same time make your own will and natural influence on the child a direct channel for it. The will must be a quiet will, calm and confident and intent on its object, but without attachment and unshaken by any amount of resistance and unalarmed and undiscouraged by the manifestations of the illness. Your attitude to the child must be that of a calm and firm protecting affection free from emotional weakness and disturbance.” (CWSA 36:375– 376)

17.

"Therefore most microbes have behind them a bad will and that is what makes them so dangerous. And unless one knows the quality and kind of bad will and is capable of acting upon it, there is a ninety-nine per cent chance of not finding the true and complete remedy. The microbe is a very material expression of something living in a subtle physical world and that is why these very microbes (as I have said there) that are always around you, within you, for years together do not make you ill and then suddenly they make you fall ill.

There is another reason. The origin of the microbes and their support lie in a disharmony, in the being's receptivity to the adverse force." (CWM 5: 180)

18.

"Once, I complained to you about some pain and you asked me which part of the body was affected. When I told you which, I did not know about its correspondence with the vital, the mind, etc., yet the pain disappeared.

I don't see any contradiction!... There are two ways of curing an illness spiritually. One consists in putting a force of consciousness and truth on the physical spot which is affected. In this case the effect produced depends naturally on the receptivity of the person. Supposing the person is receptive; the force of consciousness is put upon the affected part and its pressure restores order. Many of

you here can tell how Sri Aurobindo cured them. It was like a hand which came and took away the pain. It is as clear as that.

In other cases, if the body lacks receptivity altogether or if its receptivity is insufficient, one sees the inner correspondence with the psychological state which has brought about the illness and acts on that. But if the cause of the illness is refractory, not much can be done. Let us say the origin is vital. The vital absolutely refuses to change, it clings terrifically to the condition in which it is; then that is hopeless. You put the force, and usually it provokes an increase in the illness, produced by the resistance of the vital which did not want to accept anything. I speak of the vital but it can be the mind or something else.

When the action is directly upon the body, that is, on the affected part, it is possible that one is relieved; then, some hours later or even after a few days, the illness returns. This means that the cause has not been changed, that the cause is in the vital and is still there; it is only the effect which has been cured. But if one can act simultaneously upon both the cause and the effect, and the cause is sufficiently receptive to consent to change, then one is completely cured, once for all." (CWM 4: 264–265)

19.

"Each spot of the body is symbolical of an inner movement; there is there a world of subtle correspondences. But this is a long and complex subject and we cannot enter into its details just now. The particular place in the body affected by an illness is an index to the nature of the inner disharmony that has taken place. It points to the origin, it is a sign of the cause of the ailment. It reveals too the nature of the resistance that prevents the whole being from advancing at the same high speed. It indicates the treatment and the cure. If one could perfectly understand where the mistake is, find out what has been unreceptive, open that part and put the force and the light there, it would be possible to re-establish in a moment the harmony that has been disturbed and the illness would immediately go." (CWM 3: 88)

XXIV—How to Increase the Receptivity of the Body

1.

“Physical culture is the process of infusing consciousness into the cells of the body. One may or may not know it, but it is a fact. When we concentrate to make our muscles move according to our will, when we endeavour to make our limbs more supple, to give them an agility, or a force, or a resistance, or a plasticity which they do not naturally possess, we infuse into the cells of the body a consciousness which was not there before, thus turning it into an increasingly homogeneous and receptive instrument, which progresses in and by its activities. This is the primary importance of physical culture. Of course, that is not the only thing that brings consciousness into the body, but it is something which acts in an overall way, and this is rare. I have already told you several times that the artist infuses a very great consciousness into his hands, as the intellectual does into his brain. But these are, as it were, local phenomena, whereas the action of physical culture is more general. And when one sees the absolutely marvellous results of this culture, when one observes the extent to which the body is capable of perfecting itself, one understands how useful this can be to the action of the psychic being which has entered into this material substance. For naturally, when it is in possession of an organised and harmonised instrument which is full of

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strength and suppleness and possibilities, its task is greatly
facilitated.” (CWM 10: 30)

2.

COMPETITIONS 1969

“Since the beginning of this year a new consciousness is at work upon earth to prepare the men for a new creation, the superman. For this creation to be possible the substance that constitutes man’s body must undergo a big change, it must become more receptive to the consciousness and more plastic under its working.

These are just the qualities that one can acquire through physical education.

So, if we follow this discipline with such a result in view, we are sure to obtain the most interesting result.

My blessings to all, for progress and achievement.”
(CWM 12: 278)

3.

COMPETITIONS 1970

“What better offering can we make to the Divine, than to offer the skill of our growing bodies?

Let us offer our efforts towards perfection, and physical education will take for us a new meaning and a greater value.

The world is preparing for a new creation, let us help through physical education, by making our bodies

stronger, more receptive and more plastic, on the way to physical transformation.” (CWM 12: 278–279)

4.

“How can one increase the receptivity of the body?”

It depends on the part. The method is almost the same for all parts of the being. To begin with, the first condition: to remain as quiet as possible. You may notice that in the different parts of your being, when something comes and you do not receive it, this produces a shrinking—there is something which hardens in the vital, the mind or the body. There is a stiffening and this hurts, one feels a mental, vital or physical pain. So, the first thing is to put one’s will and relax this shrinking, as one does a twitching nerve or a cramped muscle; you must learn how to relax, be able to relieve this tension in whatever part of the being it may be.

The method of relaxing the contraction may be different in the mind, the vital or the body, but logically it is the same thing. Once you have relaxed the tension, you see first if the disagreeable effect ceases, which would prove that it was a small momentary resistance, but if the pain continues and if it is indeed necessary to increase the receptivity in order to be able to receive what is helpful, what should be received, you must, after having relaxed this contraction, begin trying to widen yourself—you feel you are widening yourself. There are many methods. Some

find it very useful to imagine they are floating on water with a plank under their back. Then they widen themselves, widen, until they become the vast liquid mass. Others make an effort to identify themselves with the sky and the stars, so they widen, widen themselves, identifying themselves more and more with the sky. Others again don't need these pictures; they can become conscious of their consciousness, enlarge their consciousness more and more until it becomes unlimited. One can enlarge it till it becomes vast as the earth and even the universe. When one does that one becomes really receptive. As I have said, it is a question of training. In any case, from an immediate point of view, when something comes and one feels that it is too strong, that it gives a headache, that one can't bear it, the method is just the same, you must act upon the contraction. One can act through thought, by calling the peace, tranquillity (the feeling of peace takes away much of the difficulty) like this: 'Peace, peace, peace... tranquillity... calm.' Many discomforts, even physical, like all these contractions of the solar plexus, which are so unpleasant and give you at times nausea, the sensation of being suffocated, of not being able to breathe again, can disappear thus. It is the nervous centre which is affected, it gets affected very easily. As soon as there is something which affects the solar plexus, you must say, 'Calm... calm... calm', become more and more calm until the tension is destroyed." (CWM 4: 265–266)

5.

“That, the March Past, it is... it is more a physical action—preparing oneself for the physical action. It is more a way of opening oneself to the energy, the universal energy, to prepare for the action. It is a contact with the energy, the universal energy which is there, it is to help the body to participate in the work. At that moment it is something very physical. This is truly the basis of physical culture: to prepare the body for the action and the receptivity of energies to accomplish the work. And also the Marching, even when I am not there. But the March Past is for stimulating the receptivity of the body to the energies for realisation. It is based upon something which is expressed in all kinds of ways; but it is a kind of admiration... how to put it?... a spontaneous and also charming admiration for heroism, which is in the most material physical consciousness.

And this is a tremendous power for overcoming *tamas* and physical inertia. Besides it is upon this that all the fighting capacities of armies in the wars are founded. If human beings did not have this, well, one could never make them go to fight one another, stupidly, for things which they don't even know. And it is because this is there in the being that these great masses of men can be utilised, employed and put in motion.” (CWM 7: 255)

6.

“*Sweet Mother,*

I am unable to answer a question by a visitor. He is a young teacher at Cuddalore who has been coming here for the last three or four years. He says that every time he meditates for about half an hour, he feels terribly hungry. During meditation he gets peace, feels happy and all that. But why this hunger? He has tried taking full food before meditation, yet the hunger still appears. Why, Mother?

It is because by the quietness of the meditation he increases the receptivity of the body to the Force. This capacity to receive and absorb may translate, although not necessarily, by a capacity to eat—but it does not mean that food is just then needed.” (CWM 17: 393)

7.

“It is very good to have recovered the calm.

It is in the calm that the body can increase its receptivity and gain the power to contain.” (CWM 14: 134)

8.

“I am glad to know the disturbance was expelled last night. Now the receptivity in the body consciousness has to be kept so that it may not at all return or, if it tries, may immediately be expelled. You must always try to keep the quietude, not allow depressing or disturbing thoughts or feelings to enter you or take hold of your mind or your speech—there is no true reason after one has gained the

inner quietness and wideness why that should be allowed to lapse and these things enter. And if the mind keeps its quietude and receptivity to higher forces only, it can then easily pass on that quietude and receptivity to the body consciousness and even to the material cells of the body.” (CWSA 31: 564–565)

9.

“Equally, what we call our physical being is only a visible projection of a greater and subtler invisible physical consciousness which is much more complex, much more aware, much wider in its receptiveness, much more open and plastic and free.” (CWSA 28: 204)

10.

“The poor physical being has been accused of all the misdeeds. In the days of old it was always said that it was impossible, one could do nothing with something so inert, so obscure, so little receptive. But if it too was surrendered to the psychic it also would do the right thing in the right way, and then it would have a stability, a quietude, an exactness in its movements which the other parts of the being don’t have, a precision in the execution which one can’t have without a body. You have only to see when the body is just a little out of order, when it is ill, how many things you can no longer do, even with a strong will, a great concentration of the vital and the mind. Even when

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one has the precise knowledge of what ought to be done, if the body is out of order one can no longer do it. Even... I mean, even an activity which is not purely physical, as for instance, writing something.” (CWM 7: 44)

11.

“O divine Light, supramental Reality:

With this food, penetrate the whole body, enter into every cell, establish Thyself in every atom; may everything become perfectly sincere and receptive, free from all that obstructs the manifestation, in short, open to Thee all the parts of my body that are not already Thyself.” (CWM 13: 57)

XXV—Receptivity in Matter

1.

"Sweet Mother, what does 'inert passivity' mean?"

Inert passivity? It means... Passivity, we said the other day, didn't we, is what does not move, does not act, vibrate, respond—well, an inert passivity is just this, what is absolutely unconscious, inactive, what does not respond; whereas the other day we described a passivity which responds, which opens and is receptive, but doesn't move, doesn't act, which is the opposite of... Let us take passivity as the opposite of activity, something that does not act but is receptive and receives.

But an inert passivity is a passivity that receives nothing, it is like a stone; for instance, we say the stone has an inert passivity, don't we?... like the soil or sand. It is not quite true, for there is nothing which is not at least a little receptive to forces. But still, the more we go towards something we call unconscious, the more is it inert and passive at the same time. That is it.

So, an inert passivity in someone is a kind of incapability of vibrating, receiving, opening himself, responding, something that's quite unconscious and does not move in any way!" (CWM 6: 210)

2.

"The Inconscience is an inverse reproduction of the

supreme superconscience: it has the same absoluteness of being and automatic action, but in a vast involved trance; it is being lost in itself, plunged in its own abyss of infinity. ... Yet is this involved consciousness still a concealed knowledge by identity; it carries in it the awareness of all the truths of existence hidden in its dark infinite and, when it acts and creates,—but it acts first as Energy and not as Consciousness,—everything is arranged with the precision and perfection of an intrinsic knowledge. ...

We can, in this knowledge, understand more clearly the stages of the emergence of consciousness from involution to its evolved appearance, of which we have already attempted some general conception. The material existence has only a physical, not a mental individuality, but there is a subliminal Presence in it, the one Conscious in unconscious things, that determines the operation of its indwelling energies. If, as has been affirmed, a material object receives and retains the impression of the contacts of things around it and energies emanate from it, so that an occult knowledge can become aware of its past, can make us conscious of these emanating influences, the intrinsic unorganised Awareness pervading the form but not yet enlightening it must be the cause of this receptivity and these capacities. What we see from outside is that material objects like plants and minerals have their powers, properties and inherent influences, but as there is no faculty or means of communication, it is only by being

brought into contact with person or object or by a conscious utilisation by living beings that their influences can become active,—such a utilisation is the practical side of more than one human science.” (CWSA 22: 570–571)

3.

“Since we are made up of an imperfect substance, we cannot but share in this imperfection.

Therefore, whatever degree of perfection, consciousness or knowledge is possible to our inmost being, the very fact that it incarnates in a physical body gives rise to obstacles to the purity of its manifestation; and on the other hand, the aim of its incarnation is victory over these obstacles, the transformation of Matter. We must therefore not be surprised or saddened if we encounter obstacles within ourselves, for every single being on earth has difficulties to overcome.

... From the general point of view, the imperfection of Matter comes from its lack of receptivity to the more subtle forces which are to be manifested through it. But this lack of receptivity itself has many causes, and to explain them would lead us too far away from the heart of our subject. Besides, I think that, in the last analysis, all difficulties lie in the illusion of personality, that is, the illusion that one thing can be distinct from the whole.” (CWM 2: 55)

XXVI—Precious Stones and Well-Made Machines Have Certain Receptivity

1.

"You say that perhaps stones also feel love?"

It is possible.

Can it be known?

One can feel it. There is a certain state of consciousness in which one perceives this divine Love wherever it is found, and one does not feel so great a difference between creatures as it appears physically. There is much more aspiration than one would think in things we call inanimate. Much more. In stones also there is a kind of spontaneous sense of what is higher, more noble, more pure, and though they cannot express it in any way, they feel it, and this affects them differently.

Even in things, even in objects, even in stones, there is a strange receptivity which comes from this Presence. There are stones—if you know how to do it—that can accumulate forces. They can accumulate forces, keep them and transmit them. One can take stones (what are called precious stones) and concentrate forces into them and they keep them. And these forces irradiate slowly, very gradually. But if one knows how to do it one can

accumulate such a quantity as would last, so to speak, indefinitely.” (CWM 5: 228–229)

2.

“Sweet Mother, last time you said that stones have a kind of receptivity.

Yes.

What kind of receptivity?

Perhaps they have even something resembling sensitivity. For instance, if you have a precious stone—precious stones of course have a much more perfect structure than ordinary ones, and with perfection consciousness increases—but if you take a precious stone, you can charge it with consciousness and force; you can put, accumulate force within it. So it is receptive, otherwise it will not receive it, it could not keep it. You can charge it. As one charges an electric battery, you can charge a stone with force, put conscious force into a stone; it keeps it and can transmit it to someone. Therefore this stone has a receptivity. Otherwise it could not do this.” (CWM 6: 229)

3.

“Are these forces of any use when they come out from the stones?

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Receptivity

Certainly, yes! The stone can preserve the force almost indefinitely. There are those stones which can serve as a link, there are stones which can serve as a battery. There are stones which can hold a force for protection. That indeed is remarkable, my child. One can accumulate in a stone (particularly in amethysts) a force for protection, and the force truly protects the one who wears the stone. It is very interesting, I have experienced it. I knew someone who had a stone of this kind, charged with the power of protection, and it was wonderful when he wore it.... There are stones which can be used to foretell events. Some people know how to read in these stones events which are going to happen. Stones can carry messages. Naturally, this requires an ability on both sides: on one side, a sufficiently strong power of concentration; on the other, a power to see and read directly, without using very precise words either. Consequently, because they can serve as batteries, it means that they carry within them the source of the force itself, otherwise they wouldn't be receptive. It is a force of this kind that is at the origin of crystallisations, as in rock-crystals, for instance, which form such magnificent patterns, with such a complete harmony, and that comes from one thing alone, this Presence at the centre. Now, one doesn't see because one has no inner sensibility, but once one has the direct perception of the forces of love behind things, one sees that they are the

same everywhere. Even in constructed things: one can come to understand what they say.” (CWM 5: 229)

4.

“*Sweet Mother, what does 'an inert automaton' mean?*

Automaton—it’s just a little more than inert passivity. Automaton—it’s a mechanical movement; and ‘inert’ means unconscious. So it is an unconscious mechanical movement, something that has no soul, no spirit, no will, no urge, something that is merely a machine, that has no consciousness; and inert, absolutely without any consciousness and any receptivity. It is yet... I don’t think even a watch, for example, could be called an inert automaton. A watch has something like a soul: a machine, when it is very well made, has something like a soul, it responds, it has a certain receptivity. But the other is something which has no receptivity, no consciousness, and is only like a machine which one rewinds and which does just this (*Mother makes automatic movements*), you see, without knowing why or how!” (CWM 6: 212)

XXVII—Receptivity on Birthdays

1.

"Sweet Mother,

What is the meaning of one's birthday, apart from its commemorative character? How can one take advantage of this occasion?

Because of the rhythm of the universal forces, a person is supposed to have a special receptivity on his birthday each year.

He can therefore take advantage of this receptivity by making good resolutions and fresh progress on the path of his integral development." (CWM 16: 308)

2.

"Sweet Mother,

I would like to know the true meaning of birthdays, for it is an important day here.

From the viewpoint of the inner nature, the individual is more receptive on his birthday from year to year, and thus it is an opportune moment to help him to make some new progress each year.

Blessings." (CWM 16: 398–399)

3.

"I don't see why people in general exalt their birthdays. Of course, you wrote once that on birthdays the physical is more open and receptive to the Mother than on other days.

It is not a question of a physical birthday or of the body—it is taken as an occasion for opening a new year of life with a growing new birth within. That is the meaning in which the Mother takes the birthday." (CWSA 32: 524–525)

4.

"Is a physical contact with you indispensable?"

No, this physical contact is not indispensable. Certainly for those who have the true attitude, the physical contact helps the body to follow the movement of transformation, but the body is rarely in a state to profit by it. Generally on birthdays it is more receptive." (CWM 13: 7980)

5.

"Sweet Mother,

When there are special dates, are there special forces at work in the world on those days? What special thing is happening today on the 60th anniversary of Sri Aurobindo's arrival?"

The forces are always present, waiting to be received. The function of special dates is mainly to awaken sluggish memories and blunted receptivities. Actually it is the town of Pondicherry that should have celebrated this 60th anniversary, for Sri Aurobindo's arrival has altered its destiny considerably.

Blessings." (CWM 17: 365)

XXVIII—Flowers and Receptivity

1.

“On the plane of Matter they [plants] are the most open to my influence—I can transmit a state of consciousness more easily to a flower than to a man: it is very receptive, though it does not know how to formulate its experience to itself because it lacks a mind. But the pure psychic consciousness is instinctive to it. When, therefore, you offer flowers to me their condition is almost always an index to yours. There are persons who never succeed in bringing a fresh flower to me—even if the flower is fresh it becomes limp in their hands. Others, however, always bring fresh flowers and even revitalise drooping ones. If your aspiration is strong your flower-offerings will be fresh. And if you are receptive you will be also very easily able to absorb the message I put in the flowers I give you. When I give them, I give you states of consciousness; the flowers are the mediums and it all depends on your receptivity whether they are effective or not.” (CWM 3: 132)

2.

“Are flowers mere symbols and nothing more? Can the flower symbolising silence, for example, help in the realisation of silence?”

It is when Mother puts her force into the flower that it becomes more than a symbol. It then can become very

effective, if there is receptivity in the one who receives.”
(CWSA 32: 559)

3.

“Mother, when flowers are brought to you, how do you give them a significance?”

To the flowers? But it’s in the same way, by entering into contact with the nature of the flower, its inner truth. Then one knows what it represents.” (CWM 5: 230)

4.

“Flowers are extremely receptive. All the flowers to which I have given a significance receive exactly the force I put into them and transmit it. People don’t always receive it because most of the time they are less receptive than the flower, and they waste the force that has been put in it through their unconsciousness and lack of receptivity. But the force is there, and the flower receives it wonderfully.”
(CWM 6: 229)

5.

“I knew this a very long time ago. Fifty years ago.... There was that occultist who later gave me lessons in occultism for two years. His wife was a wonderful clairvoyant and had an absolutely remarkable capacity—precisely—of transmitting forces. They lived in Tlemcen. I was in Paris.

I used to correspond with them. I had not yet met them at all. And then, one day, she sent me in a letter petals of the pomegranate flower, 'Divine's Love'. At that time I had not given the meaning to the flower. She sent me petals of pomegranate flowers telling me that these petals were bringing me her protection and force.

Now, at that time I used to wear my watch on a chain. Wrist watches were not known then or there were very few. And there was also a small eighteenth century magnifying-glass... it was quite small, as large as this (*gesture*).... And it had two lenses, you see, like all reading-glasses; there were two lenses mounted on a small golden frame, and it was hanging from my chain. Now, between the two glasses I put these petals and I used to carry this about with me always because I wanted to keep it with me; you see, I trusted this lady and knew she had power. I wanted to keep this with me, and I always felt a kind of energy, warmth, confidence, force which came from that thing.... I did not think about it, you see, but I felt it like that.

And then, one day, suddenly I felt quite depleted, as though a support that was there had gone. Something very unpleasant. I said, 'It is strange; what has happened? Nothing really unpleasant has happened to me. Why do I feel like this, so empty, emptied of energy?' And in the evening, when I took off my watch and chain, I noticed that one of the small glasses had come off and all the

petals were gone. There was not one petal left. Then I really knew that they carried a considerable charge of power, for I had felt the difference without even knowing the reason. I didn't know the reason and yet it had made a considerable difference. So it was after this that I saw how one could use flowers by charging them with forces. They are extremely receptive." (CWM 6: 230)

6.

"Do flowers retain the force always, even when they decay?"

Decay? No, my child; when they dry up, yes. Decayed flowers are just nothing. A decomposition takes place, so the thing disappears. Perhaps it brings energy to the soil, that's quite possible; but still, when it decays it is good only to make manure to grow other flowers. But if it dries up, it is preserved, it can remain for quite a long time.

Those small packets which I give on Kali Puja day are made to be preserved for one year. For a year they keep their force intact and I renew them every year to make sure that... I know that there isn't one in ten among you who makes a proper use of it... but still, I give it on the off-chance for those who know how to use it. It is prepared to keep the force for one year. And when I give the new one, you can dispose of the other. Usually it has fallen to dust.

Not always.... But these little packets keep their charge of force exactly for one year." (CWM 6: 231)

7.

"Mother, certain flowers come in a particular season; does this mean that during that season a greater force is at work?"

This is a question which is difficult to answer. ... Take, for instance, the 'transformation' flowers; note that if one is quite attentive, one will see that in different seasons one flower is replaced by another with a similar or close significance, and you can go all round the year in this way—if you know how to make use of things! There are also permanent things which are always there.... But flowers, for example, like the 'transformation' flowers, have a season, quite a long one, but still a season. The 'realisation' flower has a fairly long season, but it doesn't come at the same time as the 'transformation' flower.... They... how shall I put it?... overlap. One begins before the other finishes. But the seasons when they come abundantly are not the same, and all flowers are like that. Yes, it is arranged. This answers your question, doesn't it? These are shades in the meaning and it is possible that some seasons are more favourable; one may lay greater stress on one movement than on another." (CWM 6: 231–232)

8.

"The fragrance of the flowers given by the Mother is often something extraordinary."

Flowers are very receptive and they are happy when they are loved." (CWM 16: 371)

XXIX—How the Force Acts

1.

“Anyhow, the clue is that the Force does not act in a void and in an absolute way, like a writing on a blank paper or in the air, the ‘Let there be light and there was light’ formula. It comes as a Force intervening and acting on a very complex nexus of forces that were in action and displacing their disposition and interrelated movement and natural result by a new disposition, movement and result. It meets in so doing a certain opposition, very often a strong opposition from many of the forces already in possession and operation. To overcome it three factors are needed, the power of the Force itself, i.e. its own sheer pressure and direct action on the field of action (here the man, his condition, his body), the instrument (yourself) and the instrumentation (treatment, medicine). I have often used the Force alone without any human instrument or outer means, but here all depends on the recipient and his receptivity—unless as in the case of many healers there are unseen beings or powers that assist.” (CWSA 35: 504)

2.

“Speaking semi-seriously, I am not here to do miracles to order, but to try to get in a new consciousness somewhere in the world—which is itself however to attempt a miracle. If physical miracles happen to tumble in in the process,

well and good, but you can't present your medical pistol in my face and call on me to stand and deliver. As for the Force, application of my force, short of the supramental, means always a struggle of forces and the success depends on (1) the strength and persistency of the force put out, (2) the receptivity of the subject, (3) the sanction of the Unmentionable—I beg your pardon, I meant the Unnameable, Ineffable, Unknowable. X's physical consciousness is rather obstinate, as you have noticed, and therefore not too receptive. It may feel the Mother inside it, but to obey her will or force is less habitual for it." (CWSA 35: 499)

3.

"When a higher force comes down into a lower plane, it is diminished and modified by the inferior substance, lesser power and more mixed movements of that lower plane. Thus, if the Overmind Power works through the illumined mind, only part only as can get through this less receptive consciousness. And even what gets through is less true, mixed with other matter, less overmental, more easily modified into something that is part truth, part error. When this diminished indirect Force descends farther down into the mind and vital, it has still something of the Overmind creative Truth in it, but gets very badly mixed with mental and vital formations that disfigure it and make it half

effective only, sometimes ineffective.” (CWSA 30: 447–448)

4.

“The Higher descends when you have a receptive quietude in the various planes of your being prepared to receive it. In either case whether in aspiring upward to rise to the Higher or in remaining passive and open to receive the Higher, an entire calmness in the different parts of the being is the true condition. If you do not have the necessary force in the quiet aspiration or will and if you find that a certain amount of effort will help you in rising upward, you may go on using it as a temporary means until there is the natural openness in which a silent call or simple effortless will is sufficient to induce the action of the Higher Shakti.” (CWSA 36: 301)

5.

“Mother, when you speak we try to understand with the mind, but when you communicate something in silence, on what part of the being should we concentrate?”

It is always better, for meditation—you see, we use the word ‘meditation’, but it does not necessarily mean ‘moving ideas around in the head’, quite the contrary—it is always better to try to concentrate in a centre, the centre of aspiration, one might say, the place where the flame of

aspiration burns, to gather in all the energies there, at the solar plexus centre and, if possible, to obtain an attentive silence as though one wanted to listen to something extremely subtle, something that demands a complete attention, a complete concentration and total silence. And then not to move at all. Not to think, not to stir, and make that movement of opening so as to receive all that can be received, but taking good care not to try to know what is happening while it is happening, for if one wants to understand or even to observe actively, it keeps up a sort of cerebral activity which is unfavourable to the fullness of the receptivity—to be silent, as totally silent as possible, in an attentive concentration, and then be still.” (CWM 9: 115)

6.

“When you send the Force, is there a time limit for its functioning or does it work itself out in the long run or get washed off after a while, finding the ādhāra unreceptive?”

There is no time limit. I have known cases in which I put a Force for getting a thing done and it seemed to fail damnably at the moment; but after two years everything carried itself out in exact detail and order just as I had arranged it, although I was thinking no more at all of the matter. You ought to know but I suppose you don’t that ‘Psychic’ Research in Europe has proved that all so-called

'psychic' communications can sink into the consciousness without being noticed and turn up long afterwards. It is like that with the communication of Force also." (CWSA 27: 573)

7.

"The force that comes down into one who is doing Yoga and helps him in his transformation, acts along many different lines and its results vary according to the nature that receives it and the work to be done. First of all, it hastens the transformation of all in the being that is ready to be transformed. If he is open and receptive in his mind, the mind, touched by the power of Yoga, begins to change and progress swiftly. There may be the same rapidity of change in the vital consciousness if that is ready, or even in the body. But in the body the transforming power of Yoga is operative only to a certain degree; for the receptivity of the body is limited. The most material plane of the universe is still in a condition in which receptivity is mixed with a large amount of resistance. But rapid progress in one part of the being which is not followed by an equivalent progress in other parts produces a disharmony in the nature, a dislocation somewhere; and wherever or whenever this dislocation occurs, it can translate itself into an illness." (CWM 3: 85–86)

8.

"For me, for what I am trying to do, action in silence is *always* much more important.... The force which is at work is not limited by words, and this gives it an infinitely greater strength, and it expresses itself in each consciousness in accordance with its own particular mode, which makes it infinitely more effective. A certain vibration is given out in silence, with a special purpose, to obtain a definite result, but according to the mental receptivity of each person it is expressed in each individual consciousness exactly in the form which can be the most effective, the most active, the most immediately useful for each individual; while if it is formulated in words, this formula has to be received by each person in its fixity—the fixity of the words given to it—and it loses much of its strength and fullness of action because, first, the words are not always understood as they are said and then they are not always adapted to the understanding of each one." (CWM 9: 114)

9.

Admission to the Ashram in 1927 – 1943

"It is best for him to put away all family and worldly cares if he wishes to succeed in the sadhana.

As for staying here, things have changed since he was here. I no longer take direct charge of people's sadhana; all is in the hands of Sri Mira Devi and the force acting here is much more direct, powerful and insistent

than it was then. It needs a certain strength and a strong receptivity to bear and answer to it, especially a great sincerity in all the being and a preparation is sometimes necessary before it can do its work.

The best would be perhaps for him to have an experimental stay for some time.” 23 March 1927 (CWSA 35: 562)

10.

“Buddha said with reason that as long as you have in you a vibration of desire, this vibration will spread in the world and all those who are ready to receive it will receive it. In the same way, if you have in you the least receptivity to a vibration of desire, you will be open to all the vibrations of desire which circulate constantly in the world. And that is why he concluded: Get out of this illusion, withdraw entirely and you will be free.” (CWM 4: 381–382)

XXX—Sattwic Receptivity Taught in Ancient India

1.

“It follows that the more we can by Brahmacharya increase the store of *tapas* [*heat*], *tejas* [*light of energy*], *vidyut* [*electricity*] and *ojas* [*essential energy*], the more we shall fill ourselves with utter energy for the works of the body, heart, mind and spirit.

This view of the human soul was not the whole of the knowledge on which ancient Hinduism based its educational discipline. In addition it had the view that all knowledge is within and has to be evoked by education rather than instilled from outside. ... *Sattva* is an illumination which reveals the hidden knowledge and brings it to the surface where the observation can grasp and the memory record it. This conception of the constitution of the knowing faculty made the removal of *tamas*, the disciplining of *rajas* and the awakening of *sattva* the main problem of the teacher. He had to train the student to be receptive of illumination from within. The disciplining of *rajas* was effected by a strict moral discipline which induced a calm, clear, receptive state of mind free from intellectual self-will and pride and the obscuration of passion,—the famous discipline of the *brahmacārin* [*one who practises brahmacharya, complete sex purity*] which was the foundation of Aryan culture and Aryan morals; and the interference of wrong ideas was sought to be removed

by strict mental submission to the teacher during the receptive period, when the body of ascertained knowledge or right ideas already in man's possession was explained to him and committed to memory. ... The awakening of illumination was actively effected by the triple method of repetition, meditation and discussion. *Āvṛtti* or repetition was meant to fill the recording part of the mind with the *śabda* or word, so that the *artha* or meaning might of itself rise from within. Needless to say, a mechanical repetition was not likely to produce this effect. There must be that clear still receptivity and that waiting upon the word or thing with the contemplative part of the mind which is what the ancient Indians meant by *dhyāna* or meditation." (CWSA 1: 373–374)

2.

A System of National Education

"The first qualities of the mind that have to be developed are those which can be grouped under observation. We notice some things, ignore others. Even of what we notice, we observe very little. A general perception of an object is all we usually carry away from a cursory half-attentive glance. A closer attention fixes its place, form, nature as distinct from its surroundings. Full concentration of the faculty of observation gives us all the knowledge that the three chief senses can gather about the object, or if we touch or taste, we may gather all that the five senses can

tell of its nature and properties. Those who make use of the sixth sense, the poet, the painter, the Yogin, can also gather much that is hidden from the ordinary observer. The scientist by investigation ascertains other facts open to a minuter observation. These are the components of the faculty of observation, and it is obvious that its basis is attention, which may be only close or close and minute. We may gather much even from a passing glance at an object, if we have the habit of concentrating the attention and the habit of sattwic receptivity. The first thing the teacher has to do is to accustom the pupil to concentrate attention.” (CWSA 1: 404)

3.

“It [*how the body receives the higher dynamism*] depends on the condition of the body or rather of the physical and the most material consciousness. In one condition it is tamasic, inert, unopen and cannot bear or cannot receive or cannot contain the force; in another rajas predominates and tries to seize on the dynamism, but wastes and spills and loses it; in another there is receptivity, harmony, balance and the result is a harmonious action without strain or effort.” (CWSA 31: 380) (CWSA 30: 495)

4.

“But the Indian artist has been taught by his philosophy and the spiritual discipline of his forefathers that the

imagination is only a channel and an instrument of some source of knowledge and inspiration that is greater and higher; by meditation or by Yoga he seeks within himself that ultimate centre of knowledge where there is direct and utter vision of the thing that lies hidden in the forms of man, animal, tree, river, mountain. It is this *samyag jñāna* [*integral knowledge*], this *sākṣād darśana* [*seeing something before one's eyes*], the utter, revealing and apocalyptic vision [*momentous vision*], that he seeks, and when he has found it, whether by patient receptivity or sudden inspiration, his whole aim is to express it utterly and revealingly in line and colour. Form is only a means of expressing the spirit, and the one thought of the artist should be how best to render the spiritual vision." (CWSA 1: 464–465)

5.

"The sattwic mind that seeks always for a right harmony and right knowledge is the governing instrument of the sattwic man and moves all the rest of the machine. An egoistic will of desire supported by the desire-soul is the dominant instrument of the rajasic worker. An ignorant instinct or the unenlightened impulsion of the physical mind and the crude vital nature is the chief instrumental force of the tamasic doer of action. The instrument of the liberated man is a greater spiritual light and power, far higher than the highest sattwic intelligence, and it works in

him by an enveloping descent from a supraphysical centre and uses as a clear channel of its force a purified and receptive mind, life and body.” (CWSA 19: 500–501)

6.

OUR KNOWLEDGE IS A DEAD THING FOR WANT OF SHAKTI.

“Is it knowledge that is wanting? We Indians born and bred in a country where Jnana has been stored and accumulated since the race began, bear about in us the inherited gains of many thousands of years. Great giants of knowledge rise among us even today to add to the store. Our capacity has not shrunk, the edge of our intellect has not been dulled or blunted, its receptivity and flexibility are as varied [wide-ranging] as of old. But it is a dead knowledge, a burden under which we are bowed, a poison which is corroding us rather than as it should be a staff to support our feet, and a weapon in our hands; for this is the nature of all great things that when they are not used or are ill used, they turn upon the bearer and destroy him.” (CWSA 6: 81)

7.

“Indian religion is Indian spiritual philosophy put into action and experience. Whatever in the religious thought and practice of that vast, rich, thousand-sided, infinitely pliable, yet very firmly structured system we call Hinduism, does not in intention come under this description,—whatever its

practice,—is either social framework or projection of ritual buttresses or survival of old supports and additions. Or else it is an excrescence and growth of corruption, a degradation of its truth and meaning in the vulgar mind, part of the debased mixtures that overtake all religious thinking and practice. Or, in some instances, it is dead habit contracted in periods of fossilisation or ill-assimilated extraneous matter gathered into this giant body. The inner principle of Hinduism, the most tolerant and receptive of religious systems, is not sharply exclusive like the religious spirit of Christianity or Islam; as far as that could be without loss of its own powerful idiosyncrasy and law of being, it has been synthetic, acquisitive, inclusive.” (CWSA 20: 133)

XXXI—Receptivity from the Guru

1.

"There are ... conditions for a disciple for profiting fully from his relation to a spiritual guide.

... He must make himself open and receptive to the Guru for even more than what the Guru teaches to the mind of the disciple, it is what he spiritually is, the spiritual consciousness, the knowledge, the light, the power, the Divinity in him that helps the disciple to grow by his receiving that into himself and its being used within himself for the growth of his consciousness and nature into its own divine possibility." (CWSA 29: 190–191)

2.

"I believe the guru is always ready to give what can be given, if the disciple can receive, or it may be when he is ready to receive. If he refuses to receive or behaves inwardly or outwardly in such a way as to make reception impossible or if he is not sincere or takes up the wrong attitude, then things become difficult. But if one is sincere and faithful and has the right attitude and if the guru is a true guru, then, after whatever time, *it [the contact with the Divine] will come.*" (CWSA 29: 199)

3.

"As to personal instructions, he knows I suppose that I see nobody—Mother also is unable to see people freely—the

personal element comes in not so much through verbal instruction as through a spiritual influence and reception between the Guru and disciple.” (CWSA 35: 808)

4.

“Influence is more important than example. Influence is not the outward authority of the Teacher over his disciple, but the power of his contact, of his presence, of the nearness of his soul to the soul of another, infusing into it, even though in silence, that which he himself is and possesses. This is the supreme sign of the Master. For the greatest Master is much less a Teacher than a Presence pouring the divine consciousness and its constituting light and power and purity and bliss into all who are receptive around him.” (CWSA 23: 67)

XXXII—Areas Where Receptivity Helps

1. In prayers

- a. Unselfish prayer opens you to the higher Power
- b. The result of a prayer depends on whether they are open or receptive, or whether something in them can respond to any Force the prayer brings down

“As for the prayers, the fact of praying and the attitude it brings, especially unselfish prayer for others, itself opens you to the higher Power, even if there is no corresponding result in the person prayed for. Nothing can be positively said about that, for the result must necessarily depend on the persons, whether they are open or receptive or something in them can respond to any Force the prayer brings down.” (CWSA 29: 367)

2. Realisations

- a. Realisations are the reception in the consciousness and the establishment there of the fundamental truths of the Divine, of the Higher or Divine Nature

“There are two classes of things that happen in Yoga—realisations and experiences. Realisations are the reception in the consciousness and the establishment there of the fundamental truths of the Divine, of the Higher or Divine Nature, of the world-consciousness and the play of its forces, of one’s own self and real nature and the inner

nature of things, the power of these things growing in one till they are a part of one's inner life and existence,—as for instance, the realisation of the Divine Presence, the descent and settling of the higher Peace, Light, Force, Ananda in the consciousness, their workings there, the realisation of the divine or spiritual love, the perception of one's own psychic being, the discovery of one's own true mental being, true vital being, true physical being, the realisation of the overmind or the supramental consciousness, the clear perception of the relation of all these things to our present inferior nature and their action on it to change that lower nature." (CWSA 30: 38)

3. In spiritual experience

- a. In order to obtain the full value and full effect of the experience, you must maintain yourself in a state of inner receptivity, and to do that, it is indispensable for you to go within each day

"So the first question is: 'How to have the experience?'

To go within yourself, that is the first step.

And then, once you have succeeded in going within yourself deeply enough to feel the reality of that which is within, to widen yourself progressively, systematically, to become as vast as the universe and lose the sense of limitation.

These are the first two preparatory movements.

And these two things must be done in the greatest possible calm, peace and tranquillity. This peace, this tranquillity brings about silence in the mind and stillness in the vital.

This effort, this attempt must be renewed very regularly, persistently. And after a certain lapse of time, which may be longer or shorter, you begin to perceive a reality that is different from the reality perceived in the ordinary, external consciousness.

Naturally, by the action of Grace, the veil may suddenly be rent from within, and at once you can enter the true truth; but even when that happens, in order to obtain the full value and full effect of the experience, you must maintain yourself in a state of inner receptivity, and to do that, it is indispensable for you to go within each day.”(CWM 10: 19–20)

4. In meditation

- a. The quiet mind is entirely necessary in meditation; otherwise, the mind goes on with its activities on its own lines and cannot be receptive to the Mother’s movement

“It is now clear that all along during meditation and pranam I have approached the Mother with a wrong consciousness. My approach was not passive, but always fully active—I pulled from above and below as intensely as I could. The

result was that the centres were active, especially the eye-brow centre and the muladhara.

All that is in place in ordinary meditation, so long as there is not the complete silence of the mind and the automatic action in the silence. But the quiet mind is entirely necessary if you meditate with the Mother. Otherwise the mind goes on with its activities on its own lines and cannot be conscious of or receptive to the Mother's movement." (CWSA 32: 529–530)

5. To express only the highest truth in each movement
 - a. To act truly at each moment and express only the highest truth, one must be always full of an enlightened receptivity

"There is only one way of acting truly, it is to try at each moment, each second, in each movement to express only the highest truth one can perceive, and at the same time know that this perception has to be progressive and that what seems to you the most true now will no longer be so tomorrow, and that a higher truth will have to be expressed more and more through you. This leaves no room any longer for sleeping in a comfortable *tamas*; one must be always awake—I am not speaking of physical sleep—one must be always awake, always conscious and always full of an enlightened receptivity and of goodwill. To want always the best, always the best, always the best

and never tell oneself, 'Oh! It is tiring! Let me rest, let me relax! Ah, I am going to stop making an effort'; then one is sure to fall into a hole immediately and make a big stupid blunder!

The rest must not be one which goes down into the inconscience and *tamas*. The rest must be an ascent into the Light, into perfect Peace, total Silence, a rest which rises up out of the darkness. Then it is true rest, a rest which is an ascent." (CWM 7: 282–283)

6. In remembering dreams

- a. To remember one's dreams, while getting up, remain in the state of receptive immobility; then one can get a conscious memory of the dream

"It [remembering one's dreams] is useful if one wants to have a great control over his sleep. But this also one must know how to do. To remember one's dreams ... you must not wake up just at the moment when you must get out of bed; you must have some time in hand and must take good care, must make a formation before going to sleep, and take good care when waking up not to make any abrupt movement, because if you make an abrupt movement, automatically the memory of your dreams vanishes. You must remain with the head absolutely motionless on the pillow, without stirring, until you can quietly recall to yourself the consciousness which went out, and recall it as one pulls at something, very gently, without any knocking

and without haste, in a state of attention and concentration. And then, as the consciousness comes back to you, ... if you remain quite motionless, very quiet, and do not begin once again to think of all kinds of things, it will bring back first an impression and then the memory, sometimes a fragmentary memory. But if you remain in that same state of receptive immobility, then it can become more and more a conscious memory. But for this you must have time. If there is the least feeling that you have to hurry, it is finished, you can do nothing at all. You must not even ask yourself, when waking up, 'What is the time?' It is absolutely finished. If you do that, everything vanishes." (CWM 7: 67)

XXXIII—Receptivity on Earth When a Soul Wants to Take Birth

“Now, it [psychic being] is about to leave the body in which it had authority, power, activity, the body it has used for its growth; it says: ‘Next time I shall take birth in a neutral environment, neither low nor high, where it will not be necessary (how to put it?) to have a highly external life, where one will have neither great power nor great misery—altogether neutral, as you know, the life in between.’ It chooses that. It returns to its own psychic world for the necessary rest, for assimilation of the experience gained, for preparation of the future experience. It naturally remembers its choice and, before coming down once more, when it has finished its assimilation, when it is time to return, to come down upon earth, it cannot, from that domain, see material things as we see them, you know: they appear to it in another form. But still the differences can be foreseen: the differences of environment, differences of activity in the environment are clearly seen, quite perceptible. It can have a vision that is total or global. It can choose. At times it chooses the country; when it wants a certain kind of education, civilisation, influence, it can choose its country beforehand. Sometimes it can’t, sometimes it chooses only its environment and the kind of life it will lead. And then from up there, before it comes down, it looks for the kind of vibrations it wants; it sees

them very clearly. It is as though it was aiming at the place where it is going to drop. But it is an approximation because of the fact that another condition is necessary: not only its choice but also a receptivity from below and an aspiration. There must be someone in the environment it has chosen, generally the mother (sometimes both the parents, but the most indispensable is the mother), she must have an aspiration or a receptivity, something sufficiently passive and open or a conscious aspiration towards something higher. And that kindles for the psychic being a little light. In the mass representing for it the environment in which it wants to be born, if under the influence of its own projected will a small light is kindled, then it knows that it is there it must go.

It is necessary, it is this that makes the difference in months or days, perhaps, not so much perhaps in years; however, this creates an uncertainty, and that is why it cannot foretell the exact date: 'On that date, that day, at that hour I shall take birth.' It needs to find someone receptive. When it sees that, it rushes down. But what happens is something like an image: it is not exactly that, but something very similar. It throws itself down into an unconsciousness, because the physical world, even human consciousness whatever it may be, is very unconscious in comparison with the psychic consciousness. So it rushes into an unconsciousness. It is as though it fell on its head. That stuns it. And so generally, apart from some very very

XXXIII—Receptivity on Earth When a Soul Wants to Take Birth
rare exceptions, for a long time it does not know. It does not know any longer where it is nor what it is doing nor why it is there, nothing at all. It finds a great difficulty in expressing itself, especially through a baby that has no brain, naturally; it is only the embryo of a brain which is hardly formed and it does not have the elements for manifesting itself. So it is very rare for a child to manifest immediately the exceptional being it contains....” (CWM 5: 214–215)

XXXIV—The Brain's Receptivity to Understanding Sri Aurobindo's Writings

1.

"To read what Sri Aurobindo writes is more difficult because the expression is highly intellectual and the language far more literary and philosophic. The brain needs a preparation to really be able to understand and generally this preparation takes time, unless one is specially gifted with an innate intuitive faculty.

In any case, I always advise reading *a little* at a time, keeping the mind as quiet as one can, without making an effort to understand, but keeping the head as silent as possible and letting *the force* contained in what one reads *enter deep inside*. This force, received in calm and silence, will do its work of illumining and will create in the brain, if necessary, the cells required for understanding. Thus, when one re-reads the same thing some months later, one finds that the thought expressed has become much clearer and closer and even at times quite familiar.

It is preferable to read regularly, a little every day and at a fixed hour if possible; this facilitates the brain's receptivity." (CWM 16: 231) (CWM 12: 203)

2.

"*Sweet Mother,*

A young man who has finished the Higher Course came to see me a few days ago and said he wanted to

study The Life Divine with me. As I have not read the book except in bits and pieces, I told him that I could not help him. But he was very insistent and I had eventually to agree to his request.

He asks me questions, some of them quite difficult, from the book. And though I do not know the answers, I give them as they come to me. Both of us have found out the answers are correct, and quite often the language of my answers is very nearly the same as Sri Aurobindo's own in the book.

I wish to know: (1) Is this intuition? (2) Is there a plane where all knowledge exists, and if one can open to that plane, he can get whatever knowledge he needs? (3) If teaching is my vocation, what should I do to develop the receptivity?

You are in conscious connection with Sri Aurobindo's teaching, which is universal and immortal, in the higher mental world.

The more you are silently attentive, the more clearly you will receive it.

Blessings.(CWM 15: 243)

3.

"For, the same words are used [*in literature*] and the purpose for which they are used is so different from the purpose for which Sri Aurobindo has made use of them,

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the manner in which they have been put together to express things is so different from Sri Aurobindo's that these words tend to put one off from the light which Sri Aurobindo wants to convey to us through them. To get to Sri Aurobindo's light we must empty our minds of all that literature has said and done. We must go inward and stay in a receptive silence and turn it upward. Then alone we get something in the right way. At the worst, I have seen that the study of literature makes one silly and perverse enough to sit in judgment on Sri Aurobindo's English and find fault with his grammar!" (CWM 12: 145)

XXXV—Receptivity and Supermind

1.

“He is using the word supermind too easily. What he describes as supermind is a higher illumined consciousness; a modified supramental light may touch it, but not the full power of the supermind; and, in any case, it is not the supermind. He speaks of a supramental part which is unreceptive,—that is impossible, the supramental cannot be unreceptive. The supermind is the Truth-consciousness itself; it already possesses the Truth and does not even need to receive it. The word *vijñāna* is sometimes used for the higher illumined Intelligence in communication with the Truth, and this must be the part in himself which he felt—but this is not the supermind. One can enter into supermind only at the very end of the sadhana, when all difficulties have disappeared and there is no obstacle any longer in the way of the realisation.” [The excerpt of this letter is under the section - ‘Premature Claims of Possession of the Supermind’] (CWSA 28: 303–304)

2.

“In what does the supermind take interest?”

It takes interest in the transformation of the world—in the descent of forces in the material world and its

transformation, in its preparation so that it may be able to receive the supramental forces. And it is conscious of the difference between the world as it is and the world as it ought to be. Every moment it sees the gulf between what is and what should be, between the truth and the falsehood that is expressed. And constantly it keeps this vision of the Truth which broods over the world, so that as soon as there is a little opening, it may descend and manifest itself. And what to the ordinary awareness seems quite natural is for it usually a play of obscure, ignorant, altogether unconscious forces. And it does not find that at all natural. It finds that a detestable accident and tries with all its strength to remedy it. It seeks, looks, and if there is any receptivity anywhere, it intensifies its action. It does not see men in their outward appearance but as vibrations more or less receptive and more or less dark or luminous, and wherever it sees a light it projects its force so that it may have its full effect. And instead of treating each being like a pawn on a chess-board, a small, well-defined person, it sees how forces enter, go out, stir, move and make all things move, how vibrations act.” (CWM 5: 300–301)

3.

“It is on the *same* plane as the one where the adverse forces are ruling that one must have a greater power than theirs, a power which can conquer them totally *in that very domain*. To put it otherwise, a spiritual force which would

be capable of transforming both the consciousness and the material world. This force is the supramental force. What is necessary is to be receptive to its action on the physical plane, and not to run away into a distant Nirvana leaving the enemy with full power over what one abandons.” (CWM 9: 5)

4.

“Since the supramental consciousness is at work on earth, won’t these miserable conditions change in spite of everything?”

Naturally, the first effect will be a change of consciousness, first among the most receptive, and then in a greater number of people.

A change in the general conditions of collective life can only come later, perhaps long after individual reactions have been transformed. The first noticeable result is a heightening of the general confusion, because the old principles have lost their authority, and men (except for a very few) are not ready to obey the Divine Command, because they are incapable of perceiving it.” (CWM 10: 314)

5.

“And so, now, for our special case, I shall tell you what I am trying to do.... It will soon be a year since, one Wednesday, we had the manifestation of the supramental

force. Since then, it has been working very actively, even while very few people are aware of it! but still I thought the time had come for—how to put it?—for us to help it a little in its work by making an effort of receptivity.

Of course, it does not work only in the Ashram, it is working in the whole world and in all places where there is some receptivity this Force is at work, and I must say the Ashram hasn't an exclusive receptivity in the world, the monopoly of receptivity. But since it so happens that all of us here more or less know what has taken place, well, I hope that individually each person is doing his best to benefit by the occasion; but collectively we can do something, that is, try to unify a ground, to produce a particularly fertile soil to obtain collectively the maximum receptivity and to have as little wastage as possible of time and energies.

So now, you have been told in a general way what we want to try to do and you have only to... to do it." (CWM 9: 39–40)

6.

"Still, unless from the supreme heights the supramental consciousness and force and light manifest directly in the world, as it happened a year and a half ago, this Supermind which in *principle* is at the very bedrock of the material world as it is, would never have any possibility of manifesting itself. Its awakening and appearance below

will be the response to a touch from above which will bring out the corresponding element hidden in the depths of matter as it is now.... And this is precisely what is happening at present. But as I told you two weeks ago, this material world as it actually, visibly is, is so powerful, so absolutely real for the ordinary consciousness, that it has engulfed, as it were, this supramental force and consciousness when it manifested, and a long preparation is necessary before its presence can be even glimpsed, felt, perceived in some way or other. And this is the work it is doing now.

How long it will take is difficult to foresee. It will depend a great deal on the goodwill and the receptivity of a certain number of people, for the individual always advances faster than the collectivity, and by its very nature, humanity is destined to manifest the Supermind before the rest of creation." 24 July 1957 (CWM 9: 158–159)

7.

"You have written: 'They [wars] may serve to destroy a past which refuses to disappear although its time is over, and they make room for new things.' Now that the Supermind has descended upon earth will war be necessary to change the present state of the world?"

All will depend on the receptivity of nations. If they open widely and quickly to the influence of the new forces and if they change rapidly enough in their conceptions and actions, war may be avoided. But it is always threatening and always in abeyance; every error, every darkening of the consciousness increases this threat.

And yet in the last analysis everything really depends on the Divine Grace and we should look towards the future with confidence and serenity, at the same time progressing as fast as we can." (CWM 10: 53)

XXXVI—Receptivity and Inner Being

1.

“No—it is only if it [*turning inwards during work*] is an inner absorption that it would come in the way. But what I mean is a sort of stepping backward into something silent and observant within which is not involved in the action, yet sees and can shed its light upon it. There are then two parts of the being, one inner looking at and witnessing and knowing, the other executive and instrumental and doing. This gives not only freedom but power—and in this inner being one can get into touch with the Divine not through mental activity but through the substance of the being, by a certain inward touch, perception, reception, receiving also the right inspiration or intuition of the work.” (CWSA 29: 256)

2.

“It is an undoubted fact proved by hundreds of instances that for many the exact statement of their difficulties to us is the best and often, though not always, an immediate, even an instantaneous means of release. This has often been seen by sadhaks not only here, but far away, and not only for inner difficulties, but for illness and outer pressure of unfavourable circumstances. But for that a certain attitude is necessary—either a strong faith in the mind and vital or a habit of reception and response in the inner

being. Where this habit has been established, I have seen it to be almost unfailingly effective, even when the faith was uncertain or the outer expression in the mind vague, ignorant or in its form mistaken or inaccurate. Moreover, this method succeeds most when the writer can write as a witness of his own movements and state them with an exact and almost impartial precision as a phenomenon of his nature or the movement of a force affecting him from which he seeks release.” (CWSA 31: 703) (CWSA 35: 451)

3.

“For example, if my being constantly supported the Mother’s work, there would hardly be any halt in sadhana due to the tamas in me; the tamasic inertia would get transformed into peace without rising up and darkening the other parts of the being.

Yes, that is how it should happen—but it is difficult so long as the inner being is not conscious and receptive at all times and in all conditions—and it is difficult and takes time to establish such a condition.” (CWSA 32: 202–203)

4.

“Just as people are not conscious of the material waves, so it is and still more with these mental or vital waves; but if the subtle mind and senses become active on the surface—and that is what takes place in Yoga—then the consciousness becomes aware in its reception of them and

records accurately and automatically their vibrations.”
(CWSA 31: 336–337)

XXXVII—Receptivity and Transformation

1.

“The starting-point of ... transformation is receptivity, we have already spoken about it. That is the indispensable condition for obtaining the transformation. Then comes the change of consciousness.” (CWM 4: 18)

2.

“To be *sthitaprajñā* merely means to have one’s thinking mind settled in the spiritual consciousness in the realisation of Self. That does not necessarily transform the other parts of the nature. The bringing down of the Force and Light of the higher consciousness, the opening of the psychic and the centres of the mind, vital and physical, the consent and receptive opening of the nature to the workings of the psychic and the higher consciousness, finally the opening to the supramental are the conditions of transformation.” (CWSA 30: 331)

3.

“Yes, certainly, that is what I am insisting on—the bringing of realisation into this inert physical part which has made itself prominent. When any part of the being becomes prominent like this showing all its defects and limitations—here inertia or incapacity (*apravṛtti*), obscurity or forgetfulness (*aprakāśa*), it is in order to get set right,—it

has come up for a first or preliminary transformation. Peace and light in the mind, love and sympathy in the heart, calm and power in the vital, a settled receptivity and response (*prakāśa*, *pravṛtti*) in the physical are the necessary change.” (CWSA 31: 366)

4.

“But when these different parts are all under the control of the psychic and turned by it towards the reception of the higher consciousness, then there begins the harmonisation of all the parts and their progressive recasting into moulds of the higher consciousness growing in peace, light, force, love, knowledge, Ananda which is what we call the transformation.” (CWSA 30: 355)

5.

“Mother, here it is written: ‘In our Yoga our aim is to be united [with the Divine] in the physical consciousness and on the supramental plane’; then, when the physical consciousness is united with the Divine, does transformation follow?”

Yes, ‘follow’, but not instantaneously. It takes time. Only if the Divine descends into the physical consciousness—or rather, to put it more precisely, if the physical consciousness is totally receptive to the Divine—the transformation follows naturally. But transformation does

not come about by waving a magic wand. It takes time and is done progressively.” (CWM 6: 109)

6.

“Is the will for progress enough to prevent the deterioration that comes with time? How can the physical being prevent this deterioration?”

That is precisely what the transformation of the body is: the physical cells not only become conscious, but receptive to the true Consciousness-Force; that is, they allow the working of this higher Consciousness. That is the work of transformation.” (CWM 12: 344)

7.

“And to know also how to determine for one’s body, exactly, the amount of physical effort, of material activity, of expenditure and recuperation of energy, the proportion between what is received and what is given, the utilisation of energies to re-establish a state of equilibrium which has been broken, to make the cells which are lagging behind progress, to build conditions for the possibility of higher progress, etc... it is a formidable task. And yet, it is that which must be done if one hopes to transform one’s body. First it must be put completely in harmony with the inner consciousness. And to do that, it is a work in each cell, so to say, in each little activity, in every movement of the

organs. With this alone one could be busy day and night without having to do anything else.... One does not keep up the effort and, above all, the concentration, nor the inner vision.

I have put to you quite a superficial question: it seems astonishing to you that one can know the exact amount of what one should eat, and what should be eaten at a certain time, and at what time one should take one's meal, and when one is ready for another! Well, that is an altogether superficial part of the problem, yet if you enter into the combination of the cells and the inner organisation in order that all this may be ready to respond to the descending Force... First, are you conscious of your physical cells and their different characteristics, their activity, the degree of their receptivity, of what is in a healthy condition and what is not? Can you say with certainty when you are tired, why you are tired? When there's something wrong somewhere, can you say, "It is because of this that I am suffering"?... Why do people rush to the doctor? Because they are under the illusion that the doctor knows better than they how to look inside their body and find out what's going on there—which is not very reasonable, but still that's the habit! But for oneself, who can look inside himself quite positively and precisely and know exactly what is out of order, why it is disturbed, how it has been disturbed? And all this is simply a work of

observation; afterwards one must do what is necessary to put it back into order again, and that is still more difficult.

Well, this is the A B C of the transformation of the body.” (CWM 6: 37)

8.

“We come now to the most terrible battle [*in the methods of conquering death*] of all, the physical battle which is fought in the body; for it goes on without respite or truce. It begins at birth and can end only with the defeat of one of the two combatants: the force of transformation and the force of disintegration. I say at birth, for in fact the two movements are in conflict from the very moment one comes into the world, although the conflict becomes conscious and deliberate only much later. For every indisposition, every illness, every malformation, even accidents, are the result of the action of the force of disintegration, just as growth, harmonious development, resistance to attack, recovery from illness, every return to the normal functioning, every progressive improvement, are due to the action of the force of transformation. Later on, with the development of the consciousness, when the fight becomes deliberate, it changes into a frantic race between the two opposite and rival movements, a race to see which one will reach its goal first, transformation or death. This means a ceaseless effort, a constant concentration to call down the regenerating force and to

increase the receptivity of the cells to this force, to fight step by step, from point to point against the devastating action of the forces of destruction and decline, to tear out of its grasp everything that is capable of responding to the ascending urge, to enlighten, purify and stabilise. It is an obscure and obstinate struggle, most often without any apparent result or any external sign of the partial victories that have been won and are ever uncertain—for the work that has been done always seems to need to be redone; each step forward is most often made at the cost of a setback elsewhere and what has been done one day can be undone the next. Indeed, the victory can be sure and lasting only when it is total. And all that takes time, much time, and the years pass by inexorably, increasing the strength of the adverse forces.” (CWM 12: 86–87)

9.

“We want an integral transformation, the transformation of the body and all its activities. But there is an absolutely indispensable first step that must be accomplished before anything else can be undertaken: the transformation of the consciousness. The starting-point is of course the aspiration for this transformation and the will to realise it; without that nothing can be done. But if in addition to the aspiration there is an inner opening, a kind of receptivity, then one can enter into this transformed consciousness at a single stroke and maintain oneself there. This change of

consciousness is abrupt, so to say; when it occurs, it occurs all of a sudden, although the preparation for it may have been long and slow. I am not speaking here of a mere change in mental outlook, but of a change in the consciousness itself. It is a complete and absolute change, a revolution in the basic poise; the movement is like turning a ball inside out. To the transformed consciousness everything appears not only new and different, but almost the reverse of what it seemed to the ordinary consciousness. In the ordinary consciousness you advance slowly, by successive experiences, from ignorance to a very distant and often doubtful knowledge. In the transformed consciousness your starting-point is knowledge and you proceed from knowledge to knowledge.” (CWM 12: 80)

XXXVIII—Receptivity and Evolution

1.

"... the first universal Avatar who, gradually, has assumed more and more conscious bodies and finally manifested in a kind of recognised line of Beings who have descended *directly* from the Supreme to perfect this work of preparing the universe so that, through a continuous progression, it may become ready to receive and manifest the supramental Light in its entirety.

In every country, every tradition, the event has been presented in a special way, with different limitations, different details, particular features, but truly speaking, the origin of all these stories is the same, and that is what we could call a direct, conscious intervention of the Supreme in the darkest matter, without going through all the intermediaries, in order to awaken this Matter to the receptivity of the Divine Forces.

The intervals separating these various incarnations seem to become shorter and shorter, as if, to the extent that Matter became more and more ready, the action could accelerate and become more and more rapid in its movement, more and more conscious too, more and more effective and decisive.

And it will go on multiplying and intensifying until the entire universe becomes the total Avatar of the Supreme." (CWM 9: 333–334)

2.

"It has here to be emphasised, in order to obviate a natural misconception which can easily arise when the superior power of the higher forces is first perceived or experienced, that these higher forces are not in their descent immediately all-powerful as they would naturally be in their own plane of action and in their own medium. In the evolution in Matter they have to enter into a foreign and inferior medium and work upon it; they encounter there the incapacities of our mind and life and body, meet with the unreceptiveness or blind refusal of the Ignorance, experience the negation and obstruction of the Inconscience." (CWSA 22: 976)

3.

"One Divine Consciousness is here working through all these beings, preparing its way through all these manifestations. At this day it is here at work upon earth more powerfully than it has ever been before. There are some who receive its touch in some way, or to some degree; but what they receive they distort, they make their own thing out of it. Others feel the touch but cannot bear the force and go mad under the pressure. But some have the capacity to receive and the strength to bear, and it is they who will become the vessels of the full knowledge, the chosen instruments and agents." (CWM 3: 80)

4.

"Below the human level there is, ordinarily, hardly any individual formation—there is only this presence, more or less. But when, by the growth of the body round the spark of Divine Consciousness, humanity began upon the earth, certain human organisms became in the course of this progressive growth sufficiently perfected, and by their opening and receptivity allowed a junction with certain beings descending from above. This gave rise to a kind of divine humanity, what may be called a race of the *élite*. If only they had remained by themselves, these people would have continued as a race unique and superhuman. Indeed many races have made claims to be that: the Aryan, the Semitic and the Japanese have all in turn considered themselves the chosen race. But in fact there has been a general levelling of humanity, a lot of intermixture." (CWM 3: 150)

5.

"For a time the new growth and impulse may seem to take possession of a whole community as in Athens or in old Aryan India. But these early dawns cannot endure in their purity, so long as the race is not ready. There is a crystallisation, a lessening of the first impetus, a new growth of infrarational forms in which the thought or the spirituality is overgrown with inferior accretions or it is imbedded in the form and may even die in it, while the

tradition of the living knowledge, the loftier life and activity remains the property of the higher classes or a highest class. The multitude remains infrarational in its habit of mind, though perhaps it may still keep in capacity an enlivened intelligence or a profound or subtle spiritual receptiveness as its gain from the past. So long as the hour of the rational age has not arrived, the irrational period of society cannot be left behind; and that arrival can only be when not a class or a few but the multitude has learned to think, to exercise its intelligence actively—it matters not at first however imperfectly—upon their life, their needs, their rights, their duties, their aspirations as human beings. Until then we have as the highest possible development a mixed society, infrarational in the mass, but saved for civilisation by a higher class whose business it is to seek after the reason and the spirit, to keep the gains of mankind in these fields, to add to them, to enlighten and raise with them as much as possible the life of the whole.” (CWSA 25: 188–189)

6.

“Each time that something of the Divine Truth and the Divine Force comes down to manifest upon earth, some change is effected in the earth’s atmosphere. In the descent, those who are receptive are awakened to some inspiration from it, some touch, some beginning of sight. If they were capable of holding and expressing rightly what they receive, they would say, ‘A great force has come

down; I am in contact with it and what I understand of it, I will tell you.' But most of them are not capable of that, because they have small minds. They get illumined, possessed, as it were, and cry, 'I have the Divine Truth, I possess it whole and entire.' There are now upon earth at least two dozen Christs, if not as many Buddhas; India alone can supply any number of Avatars, not to speak of minor manifestations." (CWM 3: 79)

7.

"The ideas of the Upanishads can be rediscovered in much of the thought of Pythagoras and Plato and form the profoundest part of Neo-platonism and Gnosticism with all their considerable consequences to the philosophical thinking of the West, and Sufism only repeats them in another religious language. The larger part of German metaphysics is little more in substance than an intellectual development of great realities more spiritually seen in this ancient teaching, and modern thought is rapidly absorbing them with a closer, more living and intense receptiveness which promises a revolution both in philosophical and in religious thinking; here they are filtering in through many indirect influences, there slowly pouring through direct and open channels. There is hardly a main philosophical idea which cannot find an authority or a seed or indication in these antique writings—the speculations, according to a certain view, of thinkers who had no better past or

background to their thought than a crude, barbaric, naturalistic and animistic ignorance. And even the larger generalisations of Science are constantly found to apply to the truth of physical Nature formulas already discovered by the Indian sages in their original, their largest meaning in the deeper truth of the spirit.” (CWSA 20: 330–331)

8.

“If this higher buddhi could act pure of the interference of these lower members, it would give pure forms of the truth; observation would be dominated or replaced by a vision which could see without subservient dependence on the testimony of the sense-mind and senses; imagination would give place to the self-assured inspiration of the truth, reasoning to the spontaneous discernment of relations and conclusion from reasoning to an intuition containing in itself those relations and not building laboriously upon them, judgment to a thought-vision in whose light the truth would stand revealed without the mask which it now wears and which our intellectual judgment has to penetrate; while memory too would take upon itself that larger sense given to it in Greek thought and be no longer a paltry selection from the store gained by the individual in his present life, but rather the all-recording knowledge which secretly holds and constantly gives from itself everything that we now seem painfully to acquire but really in this sense remember, a knowledge

which includes the future no less than the past. Certainly, we are intended to grow in our receptivity to this higher faculty of truth-conscious knowledge, but its full and unveiled use is as yet the privilege of the gods and beyond our present human stature.” (CWSA 23: 311–312)

9.

“Man is not the cause of external Nature, nor external Nature the cause of man, but both depend on the same one thing that is behind them and greater, and both are part of a perpetual and progressive movement of the material world to express it.

Now if there is awakened somewhere upon earth a receptivity and openness sufficient to bring down in its purity something of the Divine Consciousness, this descent and manifestation in matter can change not only the inner life, but the material conditions also, the physical expression in man and Nature. This descent does not depend for its possibility upon the condition of humanity as a whole. If we had to wait for the mass of humanity to reach a state of harmony, unity and aspiration, strong enough to bring down the Light and change the material conditions and the movement of Nature, there would be little hope. But there is a possibility that an individual or a small group or limited number may achieve the descent. It is not quantity or extension that matters. One drop of the

Divine Consciousness entering into the consciousness of the earth could change everything here.” (CWM 3: 38)

10.

“Sweet Mother,

In the New Year message, are you referring to the physical transformation when you say 'The world is preparing for a big change'? And how can we help?

It is the advent of the being that will succeed man, the being that will be to man what man is to the animal, that is being prepared. And the work has already begun with the action of a new consciousness which came on the first of January 1969 and is at work in all who are ready. The action of this consciousness has intensified and is becoming more and more material. It is up to us to be receptive if we want to hasten the outcome of its action.

Blessings.” (CWM 17: 360)

11.

TWENTY-FIRST SEMINAR: 21 November 1970

“The solution of the world’s problems lies in a change of consciousness. What is your conception of this change and how to bring it about?

The consciousness that has to be manifested is already in the earth atmosphere. It is now only a question of receptivity.” (CWM 12: 312)

12.

“Is not perfection the fulfilment of the Divine in all the parts of the being?”

No, what you are thinking of is again a rung in progress and not perfection.

Now we are going to try to find a definition which can fit all instances, that is, the individual, the collectivity, the earth and the universe.

We may say that perfection will be attained in the individual, the collectivity, on the earth and in the universe, when, *at every moment*, the receptivity will be equal in quality and quantity to the Force which wants to manifest.

That is the supreme equilibrium.

Hence, there must be a perfect equilibrium between what comes from above and what answers from below, and when the two meet, that is perfect equilibrium, which is the Realisation—a realisation in constant progress.” (CWM 4: 16)

13.

“After all, in spite of all appearances, humanity progresses; it has progressed particularly in the mind. There are things that no longer need to be said.... Or else one must go to

countries that are at a very primitive stage, and even so... ideas have spread everywhere, the mental light has spread everywhere and in the most unexpected places one finds instances of receptivity and understanding.

One really has the impression that during the last century a light came and spread upon the earth with the result that certain ideas, which were once idea-forces, new ideas with the power to stir up the consciousness in men, have lost their relevance, they are now old. A new light is at work.

In practice, the progress is not very great, even in some respects perhaps there has been a retrogression, but in the mind, in the understanding, in the intellectual vision of things, there has truly been a great change.” (CWM 3: 272–273)

14.

“Now, quite recently, they have found something else and I consider it wonderful. They have discovered that for every disease there is a microbe that cures it (call it a microbe if you like, anyway, some sort of germ). But what is so extraordinary is that this ‘microbe’ is extremely contagious, even more contagious than the microbe of the disease. And it generally develops under two conditions: in those who have a sort of natural good humour and energy and in those who have a strong will to get well! Suddenly they catch the ‘microbe’ and are cured. And what is wonderful is that if there is one who is cured in an

epidemic, three more recover immediately. And this 'microbe' is found in all who are cured.

But I am going to tell you something: what people take to be a microbe is simply the materialisation of a vibration or a will from another world. When I learned of these medical discoveries, I said to myself, 'Truly, science is making progress.' One might almost say with greater reason, 'Matter is progressing,' it is becoming more and more receptive to a higher will. And what is translated in their science as 'microbes' will be perceived, if one goes to the root of things, as simply a vibratory mode; and this vibratory mode is the material translation of a higher will. If you can bring this force or this will, this power, this vibration (call it what you will) into certain given circumstances, not only will it act in you, but also through contagion around you." (CWM 4: 210)

15.

"Insofar as the activities of the physical organism are egocentric, it is both legitimate and necessary to separate the consciousness from it and to regard the body as a servant to be directed, guided and made obedient. As the terrestrial being grows more receptive to the divine forces and manifests them in its illumined activities, one can identify oneself with it once more and cease to distinguish between the instrument and the Doer. But since, by the very necessity of preservation, these two modes of activity

inevitably coexist, both these points of view, both these ways of feeling must also coexist.” (CWM 2: 119)

16.

“But we must limit to these indispensable hints our description of the superman, and push no further our attempt to picture him, as we are convinced that any endeavour to be more precise would prove not only vain but useless. For it is not a number of imaginings, more or less exact, which can help us in the formation of the future type. It is by holding firm in our heart and mind the dynamism, the irresistible impetus given by a sincere and ardent aspiration, by maintaining in ourselves a certain state of enlightened receptivity towards the supreme Idea of the new race which wills to be manifested on earth, that we can take a decisive step in the formation of the sons of the future, and make ourselves fit to serve as intermediaries for the creation of those who shall save Humanity.” (CWM 2: 168)

17.

To a sadhak of the Sri Aurobindo Ashram

“We are at a moment of transition in the history of the earth. It is merely a moment in eternal time, but this moment is long compared to human life. Matter is changing in order to prepare itself for the new manifestation, but the human body is not plastic enough and offers resistance; this is why the number of incomprehensible disorders and

even diseases is increasing and becoming a problem for medical science.

The remedy lies in union with the divine forces that are at work and a receptivity full of trust and peace which makes the task easier.” (CWM 16: 423)

18.

“What seems to me of more importance is to try to explain how things are worked out here. Indeed very few are the people who understand it and still fewer those who realise it.

There has never been, at any time, a mental plan, a fixed programme or an organisation decided beforehand. The whole thing has taken birth, grown and developed as a living being by a movement of consciousness (Chit-tapas) constantly maintained, increased and fortified. As the Conscious Force descends in matter and radiates, it seeks for fit instruments to express and manifest it. It goes without saying that the more the instrument is open, receptive and plastic, the better are the results.” (CWSA 35: 676–677)

19.

“And when the day comes for the manifestation of supreme love, for the crystallised, concentrated descent of supreme love, that will truly be the hour of transformation. For nothing will be able to resist That.

But since it is all-powerful, some receptivity must be prepared on earth so that the effects are not shattering. Sri Aurobindo has explained this in one of his letters. Someone asked him, 'Why does it not come immediately?' He answered something like this: if divine love were to manifest in its essence upon earth, it would be like a bombshell; because the earth is neither supple nor receptive enough to be able to widen itself to the dimensions of this love. It not only needs to open, but to widen itself and to become more supple—Matter is still too rigid. And even the substance of the physical consciousness—not only the most material Matter, but the substance of the physical consciousness—is too rigid." (CWM 10: 74)

20.

[This talk is based upon Chapter 6 of The Mother by Sri Aurobindo.]

'There are other great Personalities of the Divine Mother, but they were more difficult to bring down and have not stood out in front with so much prominence in the evolution of the earth-spirit. There are among them Presences indispensable for the supramental realisation,—most of all one who is her Personality of that mysterious and powerful ecstasy and Ananda which flows from a supreme divine Love, the Ananda that alone can heal the gulf between the highest heights of the supramental spirit

and the lowest abysses of Matter, the Ananda that holds the key of a wonderful divinest Life and even now supports from its secrecies the work of all the other Powers of the universe.' (CWSA 32: 23–24)

Sweet Mother, what Personality is this and when will she manifest?

'She has come, bringing with her a splendour of power and love, an intensity of divine joy unknown to the earth so far.

The physical atmosphere was completely changed by it, saturated with new and marvellous possibilities.

But for her to be able to settle and act down here, she needed to meet with at least a minimum of receptivity, to find at least one human being having the requisite qualities in the vital and physical nature, a kind of super-Parsifal endowed with a spontaneous and integral purity, but at the same time having a strong and balanced body in order to bear the intensity of the Ananda she had brought without giving way.

Till now she has not obtained what was necessary. Men obstinately remain men and do not want to or cannot become supermen. They can only receive and express a love cut to their measure—a human love! And the marvellous joy of the divine Ananda escapes their perception.

So, at times, she thinks of withdrawing, finding that the world is not ready to receive her. And this would be a cruel loss.” (CWM 6: 291–292)

21.

“I have not said that she has gone away. I said that she thinks of going away, sometimes, from time to time.

But, Mother, she came down because she must have seen some possibility!

Eh?

She came down because there was a possibility, because things had come to a certain stage and the time had come when she could descend.

In fact she came down because I thought it was possible that... she could succeed. (*Silence*) There are always possibilities, only... they must materialise. You see, a proof of what I told you is that it happened at a given moment and during... for two or three weeks, the atmosphere, not only of the Ashram but of the earth, was surcharged with such power, precisely, with so intense a divine joy, which creates so wonderful a power that things which were difficult to do before could be done almost instantaneously! There were repercussions in the whole world. I don't think there was one among you who was aware of it. You couldn't even tell me when it happened, could you?

...

All I know is that it happened before Sri Aurobindo left the body, that he had been told beforehand and recognised the fact...

(Silence)

There was a terrible fight with the inconscient; for, as I saw that the receptivity was not what it ought to be, I put the responsibility for it on the inconscient and it was there that I tried to give battle. I don't say that this had no result, but between the result obtained and the result hoped for, there was a great difference.

But I tell you this, you see... you are all so close, you bathe in the atmosphere, but... who was aware of anything? You continued to live your little life as usual, didn't you?" (CWM 6: 293–294)

22.

"I thought someone would ask me, 'Why doesn't she stay because of you, since she has come at your call; why doesn't she stay because of you?' But I have not been asked this.

Tell us, Mother!

For her this body is only one instrument among so many others in the eternity of times to come, not having for her

any other importance than what is given to it by the earth and men and the measure in which it can serve as an intermediary to help in her manifestation and in her diffusion.

If I am surrounded by people who cannot receive her, I am useless—for her. This is very clear. So it is not that which will make her stay; and it is certainly not for any selfish reason that I can ask her to stay. And then, all those aspects, all those personalities constantly manifest, but never manifest for personal reasons. Not a single one among them has ever thought of helping my body and I do not ask them, for they do not come for that. But it is obvious that if I had around me receptivity and they could constantly manifest because there were people capable of receiving, this would help my body enormously. For, you see, all the vibrations would go through my body, and that would help it. But she has no opportunity to manifest, she has no chance. She only meets people who don't even feel that she is here, they are not even aware of it. It makes no difference at all to them! So, how could she manifest?" (CWM 6: 302–303)

XXXIX—Receptivity and Inspiration

1.

"What does 'inspired' mean?"

It means receiving something which is beyond you, which was not within you; to open yourself to an influence which is outside your individual conscious being.

...

Fundamentally it is a moment of openness to something which was not within your personal consciousness, which comes from outside and rushes into you and makes you do something. This is the widest formula that can be given.

Now, generally, when people say: 'Oh! he is an inspired poet', it means he has received something from high above and expressed it in a remarkable manner. But one should rather say that his inspiration is of a high quality." (CWM 5: 206–207)

2.

"Does it [inspiration] not come, Mother, whenever one wants it?"

Whenever one wants it? Generally not, for one does not know the mechanism of one's being and cannot open the doors at will.

It is a thing that can be done. It is one of the earliest things that you are taught to do in Yoga: to open the door whenever one wants. It is the result of meditation or concentration or aspiration: all these processes are followed to open the door somewhere.

And generally you try to open it precisely towards the highest thing, not towards anything whatever. For the other kind of receptivity people unfortunately always have.” (CWM 5: 207)

3.

“Several questions concern a practical point: ‘How to develop the capacity for inspiration?’; ‘What are the conditions needed to receive inspiration and is it possible to have it constantly?’

I have already replied to this. When one opens oneself to the supramental regions, one puts oneself in the right state for receiving constant inspirations. Until then, the best method is to silence the mind as much as possible, to turn it upwards and to remain in a state of silent and attentive receptivity. The more one is able to establish a silent, perfect calm in the mind, the more one becomes capable of receiving inspirations.

It was also asked whether inspirations are of different qualities.

In their origin, no. They always come down from the regions of pure Knowledge and penetrate whatever part of the human being is most receptive, best adapted to receive

them—but these inspirations may apply to different domains of action. They can be inspirations of pure knowledge, they can also be inspirations that contribute to one's effort to progress, and they can also be inspirations for action which help in the practical and outer realisation. But the question here is the use one makes of the inspiration, rather than of the quality of the inspiration—the inspiration is always like a drop of light and truth which succeeds in penetrating the human consciousness." (CWM 10: 6)

4.

"You have spoken of the original inspiration becoming 'mentalised'. Could you tell me how it gets mentalised?"

This mentalisation is a subtle process which takes place unobserved. The inspiration, as soon as it strikes the mental layer (where it first becomes visible) is met by a less intense receptivity of the mind which passes the inspired substance through but substitutes its own expression, an expression stressed by the force of inspiration into a special felicity but not reproducing or transmitting the inspired beat itself." (CWSA 27: 581)

5.

"The intuitive mind ... makes itself a receiver of the light and allows the truth to manifest in it and organise its own

constructions. But so long as there is a mixed action and the mental constructions and imaginations are allowed to operate, this passivity of the intuitive mind to the higher light, the truth light, cannot be complete or securely dominate and there cannot therefore be a firm organisation of the triple time knowledge. ...

All this which is indispensable to our thought and action in mind, has to be excluded or transformed before the intuitive knowledge can have a chance of organising itself on a sound basis. A transformation is possible because the intuitive mind has to do the same work and cover the same field, but with a different handling of the materials and another light upon their significance. An exclusion is possible because all is really contained in the truth consciousness above and a silencing of the mind of ignorance and a pregnant receptivity is not beyond our compass in which the intuitions descending from the truth consciousness can be received with a subtle or strong exactitude and all the materials of the knowledge seen in their right place and true proportion. As a matter of practice it will be found that both methods are used alternatively or together to effect the transition from the one kind of mentality to the other.” (CWSA 24: 898–900)

XL—Receptivity and Ananda

1.

“Your poem expresses very beautifully an aspect of beauty as it is circumstanced in this world. The lines of Keats also give one aspect only which it tries to generalise. In fact, Beauty is Ananda thrown into form—if it casts a shadow of pain, it is because the Divine Bliss which we mean by Ananda is watered down in the dullness of terrestrial consciousness into mere joy or pleasure and also because even that does not last for long and can easily have its opposite as a companion or a reaction. But if the consciousness of earth could be so deepened and strengthened and made so intensively receptive as not only to feel but hold the true Ananda, then the lines of Keats would be altogether true. But for that it would have to acquire first a complete liberation and an abiding peace.”
(CWSA 27: 700)

2.

“The Ananda comes by the inrush of a larger Might and Delight, *āveśā*; there is the thrill of being possessed and used by a superpersonal Power, the exultation and exaltation of the uplifting of the consciousness, the joy of its illumination and its greatened and heightened action and the joy of the beauty, power or perfection that is being created. How far, how intensely one feels these things,

depends on the condition of the consciousness at the time, the temperament, the activity of the vital, the mind's receptivity and response. The Yogi (or even certain strong and calm minds) is not carried away, as the mind and the vital often are, by the Ananda,—he holds and watches it and there is no mere excitement mixed with the divine flow of it through the conscious instrument and the body. There is a greater Ananda of *samarpana*, of spiritual realisation or divine love, but in the spiritual consciousness and life the Ananda of creation has its place." (CWSA 29: 270)

3.

"It is quite impossible to ascend to the real Ananda *plane* (except in a profound trance), until after the supramental consciousness has been entered, realised and possessed; but it is quite possible and normal to feel some form of Ananda *consciousness* on any level. This consciousness wherever it is felt is a derivation from the Ananda plane, but it is very much diminished in power and modified to suit the lesser power of receptivity of the inferior levels." (CWSA 28: 299)

XLI—Receptivity in Dealing with People

1.

"When one deals with people there can be always a projection of consciousness to them or a reception of them into the consciousness, but that does not amount to an attachment—something more is needed, a grip of the vital on the person or a grip of the person on one's vital etc." (CWSA 31: 317)

2.

"But, you see, in a smaller measure and less perfectly one is making formations all the time. When, for instance, one thinks of somebody quite powerfully, there is a small emanation of mental substance which, instantaneously, goes to this person, you understand, a vibration of your thought which goes and touches his; and if he is receptive, he sees you. He sees you and tells you, 'You came last night to see me!' That's because you made a small formation and this formation went and did its work, which was to put you into contact with this person or else to carry a message if you had something special to tell him; and that was done. This happens constantly, but as it is quite a constant and spontaneous phenomenon and done in ignorance, one is not even aware that one does this, one does it automatically." (CWM 6: 278)

3.

"My little X,

It is impossible to meditate with another person without *receiving something of the vibrations emanating from him*, just as one cannot enter a place without breathing the air that is there.

When someone has a harmful atmosphere and a bad influence (I warned you of this), one must be careful, while meditating, not to put oneself into a state of receptivity with that atmosphere!

It is not wrong, but it is an act of ignorance. And needless to say, it cannot prevent you from being my little X or stop my arms from surrounding and protecting you." (CWM 17: 195)

4.

"X *is* a remarkable medium, but he is more successful with people outside than with the sadhaks—(not that he has not succeeded with many of them also). For this there are two reasons. People outside are impressed by his apparently miraculous cure and believe implicitly and follow his treatment—the sadhaks question and dispute it; this mental opposition has a reaction upon the result of the treatment (e.g. X told me there had been a great improvement in Y's illness, Y denied that there had been any visible or undoubted improvement, yet today Dr. Z told the Mother that he was amazed by the improvement, he

had not thought such a thing possible, but now he knew because he had seen it.) The other reason is that sadhaks ought not to need an intermediary between themselves and the Mother—their bodies as well as their minds ought by this time to have become sufficiently receptive for that—outside people do need a medium, for they cannot be expected to have the same receptivity.” (CWSA 35: 507–508)

5.

“The Communicant need not be an all-round many-sided Encyclopaedia in order to communicate the Force for various purposes. If we want to help a lawyer to succeed in a case, we need not be perfect lawyers ourselves knowing all law, Roman, English or Indian and supply him all his arguments, questions, etc., doing consciously and mentally through him his whole examinations, cross-examinations and pleading. Such a process would be absurdly cumbrous, incompetent and wasteful. The prearrangement of the eventual result and the capacity for making him work his instruments in the right way and for arranging events also so as to aid towards the result are put into the Force when it goes to him, they are therefore inherent in its action and the rest is a question of his own receptivity, experience etc. Naturally the best instrument even is imperfect (unless he is a perfected Adhar) and mistakes may be committed, other suggestions accepted

etc. etc., but if the instrument is sufficiently open, the Force can set the thing to rights and the result still comes.” (CWSA 35: 491–492)

6.

“X told me that Mother requires one person to do exactly as she wants him to, but it is difficult to find anyone. I do not see how the complete obedience of one person would be sufficient for your work or affect the general atmosphere. I can understand that if there were complete obedience and peace and light in many people, it would hasten the progress of the work. Perhaps even one person would be a good example for many to follow, but I wonder how many would do so. Anyway, there is some mystery in this ‘one man required’.

Such ideas are rather a mental way of emphasising the desirability of something—here, of such persons existing, or of such a consummation being reached even in one person—than true in the form in which it is put. What can be said as true behind the statement is that each person arriving to a certain perfection of the Yogic state becomes a force for the expansion of the same Yogic force, a *point d’appui* for it to work. How far that working through him can go depends on the person and on the receptivity of those with whom he comes into inner contact. Men like X, Y or Z for instance who have the push and communicating

faculty do have an effect on others, even as it is, though it cannot be said that they have reached anything near perfect perfection in obedience and peace and light, only an approach towards it. Naturally, the persons they affect are those who are capable of the contact.” (CWSA 32: 423–424)

7.

“There is a love in which the emotion is turned towards the Divine in an increasing receptivity and growing union. What it receives from the Divine it pours out on others, but truly without demanding a return. If you are capable of that, then that is the highest and most satisfying way to love.” (CWM 14: 122)

8.

“But *if*, for example, one has the very bad habit of exchanging vital forces with one’s fellowmen, then one loses the capacity altogether [to receive and accumulate the universal vital forces]. So unless one is in relation with someone, one receives nothing at all. But naturally if you receive forces through others, you receive at the same time all the difficulties of the other person, perhaps sometimes his qualities also, but these are less contagious. This indeed is something that shuts you up most.” (CWM 7: 72–73)

XLII—What Prevents Receptivity

1.

“For instance, when the guru tells you to do something, if you begin to ask, ‘Why should I do it? What is the necessity of doing it? Explain to me what I must do. Why do I have to do it?’ This is called questioning.

To resist means to try to evade the order and not accomplish it. So naturally this increases the difficulties very much. There is the explanation later. Sri Aurobindo says that this was the reason why an absolute unquestioning surrender was demanded; no argument was allowed in those days. You were told, ‘Do this’; it had to be done. You were told, ‘Don’t do it’; it had not to be done, and nobody had the right to ask why. If one didn’t understand, so much the worse for him.

It’s not like that here. You have the right to ask all that you want. Only, it is true that there are times when it doesn’t help. If one begins to argue in his mind, ‘Why have we been told to do this? Why are we told not to do that?’ and so on, this does not help. It increases difficulties very much, it hardens the consciousness, it puts a thick shell over it and so prevents it from being receptive. It is as though you were putting a varnish upon something to prevent its being touched.” (CWM 7: 8)

2.

"I would explain his progressing so far not entirely by his own superiority in the sense of a general fitness for Yoga but by the quickness and completeness with which he has taken inwardly the attitude of the Bhakta and the disciple. That is a rare achievement for a modern mind, be he European or 'educated' Indian; for the modern mind is analytic, dubitative, instinctively 'independent' even when it wants to be otherwise; it holds itself back and hesitates in front of the Light and Influence that comes to it; it does not plunge into it with a simple directness, crying, 'Here I am, ready to throw from me all that was myself or seemed to be, if so I can enter into Thee; remake my consciousness into the Truth in thy way, the way of the Divine.' There is something in us that is ready for it, but there is this element that intervenes and makes a curtain of non-receptivity; I know by my own experience with myself and others how long it can make a road that could never perhaps, for us who seek the entire truth, have been short and easy, but still we might have been spared many wanderings and stand-stills and recoils and detours." (CWSA 29: 201)

3.

"You have said that on the material plane 'receptivity is mixed with a large amount of resistance.' What is this resistance?"

You have resistances in your body, haven't you? When you want to do an exercise, can you do with your body

whatever you want? And when you try to be in good health, does your body always obey? And when you want to learn your lesson, does your brain follow it without difficulty?... That is the resistance, it is all that refuses to progress. And I believe that unfortunately the amount of resistance is much greater than the amount of receptivity. One must work very hard to become receptive.

...

And there is such a resistance in you that if something succeeds in entering, three quarters of what enters is thrown out violently because you are not able to contain it.... I do not speak of this usually, but since we are talking about the subject, I am telling you. And perhaps one day I shall give you examples of it. It is something unbelievable. For example, just take the consciousness of the Forces, like the force of love, the force of understanding or the force of creation (for everything, it is the same: the force of protection, the force of growth, all that, and the power for progress, for everything); take Consciousness, simply this Consciousness which surrounds everything, enters into everything, which is everywhere, which is in everything....Well, it is almost felt as a violence which seeks to impose itself upon the being that is unable to receive or bear it. And I am speaking of the very best; but in everyone there is a part more or less big, more or less important which does not yet have the goodwill, which is just on the border-line of bad will and does not want at any

cost and rejects what is there. But if one were open and simply breathed in—nothing more, if one did that only—one would breathe in the Consciousness, the Light, the Understanding, the Force, the Love and all the rest. And all that is wasted upon Earth because the Earth is not ready to take it.” (CWM 5: 269–270)

4.

(The disciple sent to the Mother the letter of a worker who complained that he lacked the strength to do his work and could not feel her Grace. The Mother replied:)

Here, for each work given, the full strength and Grace are always given at the same time to do the work as it has to be done. If you do not feel the strength and the Grace it proves that there is some mistake in your attitude. The faith is lacking or you have fallen back on old tracks and old creeds and thus you lose all receptivity.” (CWM 17: 206–207) (CWM 14: 316)

5.

“By revolt the doors of receptivity are closed.” (CWM 14: 147)

6.

“You do the yoga according to your capacity. You have been told: ‘Open yourself, you will receive the Force.’ You have been told: ‘Have faith, be of goodwill and you will be protected.’ And indeed you are bathed in the

Consciousness, bathed in the Force, bathed in the Protection and to the extent you have faith and open yourself, you receive all that, and it helps you in keeping fit and in rejecting the little inner disturbances and re-establishing order when these come, in protecting yourself against small attacks or accidents which might have happened. 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. Well, just a little lack of receptivity somewhere, something that is unable to receive the Force, that is completely shut up (when one looks at it, it becomes as it were a little dark spot somewhere, a tiny thing hard as a stone: the Force cannot enter into it, it refuses to receive it—either it cannot or it will not) and immediately that produces a great imbalance; and this thing that was moving upward, that was blooming so wonderfully, finds itself sick, and sometimes just when you were in the normal equilibrium; you were in good health, everything was going on well, you had nothing to complain about. One day when you grasped a new idea, received a new impulse, when you had a great aspiration and received a great force and had

a marvellous experience, a beautiful experience opening to you inner doors, giving you a knowledge you did not have before; then you were sure that everything was going to be all right.... The next day, you are taken ill. So you say: 'Still that? It is impossible! That should not happen.' But it was quite simply what I have just said: a grain of sand. There was something that could not receive; immediately it brings about a disequilibrium. Even though very small it is enough, and you fall ill." (CWM 5: 175–176)

7.

"Now as to the tension and stiffness. I may say in passing that consciousness and receptivity are not the same thing; one may be receptive, yet externally unaware of how things are being done and of what is being done. But for such an external unconsciousness there must be a reason,—and in you it was the stiffness created by a tension and a straining which made the consciousness thus rigid and closed it up. Not that it closed you to the Force or that it took away the inner receptivity, but it did close you to the surface consciousness of what is being done. When that happens, the Force works, as I have repeatedly written, behind the veil; the results remain packed behind and come out afterwards, often slowly, little by little, until there is so much pressure that it breaks through somehow and forces open the external nature. There lies the difference between a mental and vital straining and pulling

and a spontaneous psychic openness, and it is not at all the first time that we have spoken of the difference. It is not really a question of the right or the wrong key, but of putting the key in the lock in the right or the wrong way, whether because of some difficulty you try to force the lock turning the key this way and that with violence or confidently and quietly give it the right turn—and the door opens.” (CWSA 31: 191–192) (CWSA 32: 222)

8.

“I do not know about this Commentary [*on the Taittiriya Upanishad*], but most commentaries on the Upanishads are written out of the reasoning and speculating intellect. They may be of use to people who are trying to find out intellectually the meaning of the Upanishads—but they can be of no help to you as a sadhak who are seeking experience; it is likely rather to confuse the mind by taking it off the true basis and throwing it out from the road of experience and spiritual receptivity into the tangle of intellectual debate.” (CWSA 31: 73)

XLIII—Receptivity and the Mind

1.

"A receptive silence of the mind, an effacement of the mental ego and the reduction of the mental being to the position of a witness, a close contact with the Divine Power and an openness of the being to that one Influence and no other are the conditions for becoming an instrument of the Divine, moved by that and that only."(CWSA 29: 266)

2.

"There are also of course the usual vices of the intellect,—its leaning towards sterile doubt instead of luminous reception and calm enlightened discrimination; its arrogance claiming to judge things that are beyond it, unknown to it, too deep for it by standards drawn from its own limited experience; its attempts to explain the supraphysical by the physical or its demand for the proof of higher and occult things by the criteria proper to Matter and to mind in Matter; others also too many to enumerate here. Always it is substituting its own representations and constructions and opinions for the true knowledge. But if the intellect is surrendered, open, quiet, receptive, there is no reason why it should not be a means of reception of the light or an aid to the experience of spiritual states and to the fullness of an inner change." (CWSA 31: 14)

3.

"The animal is a vital and sensational being; man, it is said, is distinguished from the animal by the possession of reason. But that is a very summary, a very imperfect and misleading account of the matter. For reason is only a particular and limited utilitarian and instrumental activity that proceeds from something much greater than itself, from a power that dwells in an ether more luminous, wider, illimitable. The true and ultimate, as distinguished from the immediate or intermediate importance of our observing, reasoning, inquiring, judging intelligence is that it prepares the human being for the right reception and right action of a Light from above which must progressively replace in him the obscure light from below that guides the animal." (CWSA 23: 79–80)

4.

"A true mental education, which will prepare man for a higher life, has five principal phases. ... These five phases, in brief, are:

- (1) Development of the power of concentration, ...
- (2) Development of the capacities of expansion, widening, ...
- (3) Organisation of one's ideas around a central idea, ...
- (4) Thought-control, rejection of undesirable thoughts, ...

(5) Development of mental silence, perfect calm and a more And more total receptivity to inspirations coming from the higher regions of the being.” (CWM 12: 2425)

5.

“It should be remembered that a similar difficulty was experienced in England in connection with the Workmen’s Institutes which sprang up all over the country in response to Dr George Birkbeck’s suggestions. The object was to provide the mechanic with lectures on his own trade; but the attempt at first largely failed from the incapacity of the working man to learn anything from the lectures. Lectures and exhibitions bear fruit only when the people have received sufficient general education to make them mentally receptive and deft in adaptation and invention. When that goal is reached, such exhibitions may most usefully be turned into local museums, and if possible a syllabus of instruction attached to the exhibits. On the other hand, there is yet another function which exhibitions perform and which is equally useful, and that is their influence as general education among the classes whose intelligence is already aroused, and who go away with a new sense of what there is to learn.” (CWSA 1: 717—718)

XLIV—Other Quotations

1.

"In Yoga one uses the inner will and compels the vital to submit itself to tapasya so that it may become calm, strong, obedient—or else one calls down the calm from above obliging the vital to renounce desire and become quiet and receptive. The vital is a good instrument but a bad master. If you allow it to follow its likes and dislikes, its fancies, its desires, its bad habits, it becomes your master and peace and happiness are no longer possible. It becomes not your instrument or the instrument of the Divine Shakti, but of any force of the Ignorance or even any hostile force that is able to seize and use it." (CWSA 31: 105–106)

2.

"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)

3.

"It is only through your Divine help and the Mother's blessings that it is possible to diagnose correctly and give the right treatment. Kindly therefore press the action of the Force home without considering for a moment that the happy change in the patient is owing to medicinal action.

I see. The previous unreceptivity had led me to think that it was the medicine which made the difference. I will go on with the pressure of the Force. But it needs an unwavering, strong pressure to produce appreciable results in this respect and it is not easy to keep it up. If I had nothing else to do, it would be easy, but my day is full with all kinds of things. However I will try to keep up the continuity—don't want this fellow to peter out on our hands." (CWSA 35: 507–508)

4.

"The surface memory itself is a fragmentary and ineffective action pulling out details from an inner subliminal memory which receives and records all our world-experience, receives and records even what the mind has not observed, understood or noticed. Our surface imagination is a selection from a vaster more creative and effective subliminal image-building power of consciousness. A mind with immeasurably wider and more subtle perceptions, a life-energy with a greater dynamism, a subtle-physical

substance with a larger and finer receptivity are building out of themselves our surface evolution. A psychic entity is there behind these occult activities which is the true support of our individualisation; the ego is only an outward false substitute: for it is this secret soul that supports and holds together our self-experience and world-experience; the mental, vital, physical, external ego is a superficial construction of Nature. It is only when we have seen both our self and our nature as a whole, in the depths as well as on the surface, that we can acquire a true basis of knowledge.” (CWSA 21: 541–542)

5.

“The Gita, however, goes much farther. It speaks clearly of the Lord himself being born; Krishna speaks of his many births that are past and makes it clear by his language that it is not merely the receptive human being but the Divine of whom he makes this affirmation, because he uses the very language of the Creator, the same language which he will employ when he has to describe his creation of the world.” (CWSA 19: 163–164)

6.

ATHLETICS COMPETITION 1959

“Behind the appearances that the physical eyes can see, there is a reality much more concrete and lasting. It is in this reality that I am with you today and will be during all

the athletic season. The force, the power, the light and the consciousness will be in your midst constantly to give to each one, according to his receptivity, the success in his endeavour and the progress which is the crowning result of all sincere effort." (CWM 12: 273)

7.

"The lack of receptivity of the earth and men is mostly responsible for the decision Sri Aurobindo has taken regarding his body. But one thing is certain: what has happened on the physical plane affects in no way the truth of his teaching. All that he has said is perfectly true and remains so. Time and the course of events will prove it abundantly." (CWM 13: 7)

8.

(Significance of the twelve underground rooms which will radiate from the Matrimandir foundation)

"Sincerity, Humility, Gratitude, Perseverance, Aspiration, Receptivity, Progress, Courage, Goodness, Generosity, Equality, Peace." July 1972 (CWM 13: 226)

9.

"Beloved Mother,

In the practical contact with the 'outside' world I am often confronted with the decision how far I can comply

with their forms and conditions and how strictly I should insist on the total newness of our attempts in Auroville.

A word from you would bring more light into my engagement with the world outside of Auroville.

At the service of the Divine in full receptivity and sincerity.
Blessings.” (CWM 13: 235)

10.

LOVE FOR THE DIVINE

“Greed, greed, always greed... is the response of material nature.

In whatever way the Divine manifests there, it becomes at once an object of covetousness. A rush to appropriate, an endeavour to rob, exploit, squeeze, swallow and in the end crush down the Divine, this is the receptivity of matter to the divine touch.” (CWM 14: 128)

11.

“The psychic is always there, and it is strong.

It is the receptivity that is weak.” (CWM 14: 335)

12.

“My dear child,

Let your receptivity increase this year, to the extent of giving you the power to fully utilise the force that is at work for restoring perfect good health in you.

With my love and blessings.”(CWM 15: 153)

13.

“One often has the experience of struggling more or less successfully with a defect or a wrong movement, but just when one gives up expecting a total victory, the thing is removed as if from outside. Why is that?”

... In such a case, you may suddenly become receptive, and in this state of receptivity you receive the help that is needed to remove the defect and the help becomes effective.” (CWM 15: 296)

14.

“I can tell you this to finish with the subject, that from the roof I concentrated the power on the bullocks ordering them to yield and obey and I found them *quite receptive*. To use a *quiet, steady, unwavering conscious will*, that is the way, the only true way *really effective* and worthy of an aspirant for Divine Life.” (CWM 16: 107)

15.

“The inner development is the most important thing, for through that we receive Your love and peace, not through any outer thing. The joy that comes through outer things, through Your outer actions, is not of divine or spiritual

origin. The proof of this is that when Your actions change we feel upset.

Absurd!!!!

You are mixing up two different things. I can assure you that my action, whether inner or outer, *is always of divine origin*. The disturbance you feel is not proof of a lack of divinity in the action, but of a lack of plasticity and receptivity in your mind, your vital and your physical.” (CWM 17: 81)

16.

“Mother,

I can't say why I feel too dull to call you; that is for you to reply. Such dull periods come after the bright periods when everything seems to call you and be dedicated to you. In these dull periods, nothing but tamas seems to rule. Generally they pass after a few days.

This is a proof that your whole being is not unified around the central psychic Presence.

This is a personal task that each individual must do for himself. The help is always there but the effectivity of its action is in measure of the receptivity and the conscious appeal.

After all, it is a question of patience in the endeavour. With love and blessings.” (CWM 17: 311–312)

17.

“Mother,

Several times you have told me about ‘a fall in my faith’. Truly I do not understand it. Sincerely I do not know whether I have or do not have faith. It matters little whether my leg improves or not; but let me have some faith.

To say the truth I do not care much about your having or not believing you have faith, what I want is that you should be all right and do your work happily. With you, concerning your body, I was accustomed to a very remarkable receptivity and a rapid cure—that is the cause of my remark.” (CWM 17: 316–317)

18.

“In silence lies the greatest aspiration.

We pray that the greatest receptivity may also be there.” (CWM 17: 373)

19.

“From the vital point of view, take the case of a great musician who has worked all his life to make his external being a good instrument for music; he has organised this vital power in his body for playing music; well then, his hands, for instance, are so individualised in their ability to play, that they can persist subtly even after death, with

their form, a form analogous to the old physical form. They float in the vital world and are attracted by people who have similar capacities; they try to become identified with them. A person who is sensitive enough, receptive enough, can become identified with these hands and execute wonderful things, profit by all the individualisation of the past life of these hands." (CWM 4: 195)

20.

"After death, does the inner being continue to progress?"

That depends altogether upon the person. For everyone it is different. There are people—for example, writers, musicians, artists—people who have lived on intellectual heights, who feel that they still have something further to do, that they have not finished what they had undertaken to do, have not reached the goal they had fixed for themselves, so they are ready to remain in the earth atmosphere as long as they can, with as much cohesiveness as possible and they try to manifest themselves and continue their progress in other human bodies. I have seen many such cases, I have seen the very interesting case of a musician who was a pianist (a pianist of great worth), who had hands which were a marvel of skill, accuracy, precision, force, rapidity of movement, indeed, it was absolutely remarkable. This man died relatively young with the feeling that if he had continued

to live he would have continued to progress in his musical expression. And such was the intensity of his aspiration that his subtle hands maintained their form without being dissolved, and each time he met anyone a little receptive and passive and a good musician, his hands would enter the hands of those who were playing—the person who was playing at the time could play well but in an ordinary way; but at that moment he became not merely a virtuoso but a wonderful artist during the time he played. It was the hands of the other that were making use of his. This is a phenomenon I know. I have seen the same thing in the case of a painter: it was also a matter of hands. The same thing with regard to some writers, and here it was the brain that kept quite a precise form and entered the brain of someone who was sufficiently receptive and suddenly made him write extraordinary things, infinitely more beautiful than anything he had written before. I saw that taking hold of someone. It was in the case of a composer of music—not one of those who execute, but who compose, like Beethoven, like Bach, like *César* Franck (but *César* Franck executed also). The composition of music is an extremely cerebral activity. Well, here also the brain of a great musician came in contact with one who was engaged in writing an opera and made him compose wonderful things and arranged on paper all the parts. He was busy writing an opera and it is extremely complex for the performers who have to bring out in the music the

thought of the person who has composed; and that man (I knew him) when he received this formation had a blank paper before him and then he started writing; I saw him writing, putting lines, then some figures, on a big, very big page and when he reached the bottom, the orchestration of the Overture (for example, of a certain act) was completed (orchestration means the distribution of certain lines of music to each one of the instruments)." (CWM 5: 260–261)

21.

"The fact is that like all the other parts of the human being, the mind too needs rest and it will not have this rest unless we know how to provide it. The art of resting one's mind is something to be acquired. Changing one's mental activity is certainly one way of resting; but the greatest possible rest is silence. And as far as the mental faculties are concerned a few minutes passed in the calm of silence are a more effective rest than hours of sleep.

When one has learned to silence the mind at will and to concentrate it in receptive silence, then there will be no problem that cannot be solved, no mental difficulty whose solution cannot be found. When it is agitated, thought becomes confused and impotent; in an attentive tranquillity, the light can manifest itself and open up new horizons to man's capacity." (CWM 12: 29)

22.

“Consciousness?

Be receptive—it is there.

Love and blessings.” (CWM 14: 147)

23.

“To allow the free working of the New Consciousness that descended last year, what should a sadhak do?

1) Be receptive

and

2) Be plastic.” 1970

(CWM 15: 107)

24.

“It [the supermind] moves therefore primarily among the eternal, the essential and the universal truths of self and being and consciousness and infinite power and delight of being (not excluding all that seems to our present consciousness non-being), and all its particular thinking originates from and depends upon the power of these eternal verities; but in the second place it is at home too with infinite aspects and applications, sequences and harmonies of the truths of being of the Eternal. It [the supermind] lives therefore at its heights in all that which the action of the pure ideative mind is an effort to reach and discover, and even on its lower ranges these things

are to its luminous receptivity present, near or easily grasped and available.” (CWSA 24: 844)

25.

“The supramental sense can act in its own power and is independent of the body and the physical life and outer mind and it is above too the inner mind and its experiences. ... It [the supramental sense] can in the waking state of the physical consciousness present to us the things concealed from the limited receptivity or beyond the range of the physical organs, distant forms, scenes and happenings, things that have passed out of physical existence or that are not yet in physical existence, scenes, forms, happenings, symbols of the vital, psychical, mental, supramental, spiritual worlds and all these in their real or significant truth as well as their appearance.” (CWSA 24: 867)

26.

“The Divine always brings with it perfect calm and peace. A certain class of Bhaktas, it is true, present generally a very different picture; they jump about and cry and laugh and sing, in a fit of devotion, as they say. But in reality such people do not live in the Divine. They live largely in the vital world.

You say that even Ramakrishna had periods of emotional excitement and would go about with hands

uplifted, singing and dancing? The truth of the matter is this. The movement in the inner being may be perfect; but it puts you in a certain condition of receptivity to forces that fill you with intense emotional excitement, if your external being is weak or untransformed. Where the external being offers resistance to the inner being or cannot hold the entirety of the Ananda, there is this confusion and anarchy in expression.” (CWM 3: 10–11)

27.

(Durga Puja 1953, Victory Day)

“Today was truly a day of victory, victory over all that yet remained human in the physical consciousness.

O Nature, I bring to thee force and light, truth and power; it is for thee to receive and utilise them. It is thou who wilt be receptive in the fruit of thy creation, man, and open the doors of his understanding; it is thou who wilt give him the energy of progress and the will of transformation; and, above all, it is thou who wilt make him accept the Presence and aspire for Realisation.” (CWM 15: 193–194)

28.

(About difficulty in writing)

“Be receptive and it will be all right.” (CWM 15: 242)

29.

"`Every moment all the unforeseen, the unexpected, the unknown is before us.' What is the remedy?"

Be plastic and vigilant, attentive and alert—receptive."
(CWM 16: 18)

30.

"I know that each of you has a very small and limited consciousness compared with mine, but within its limits, I have the illusion that its *nature* is similar to mine, and that is why there are many things I do not say, because to me they are *so obvious* that it would be utterly pointless to mention them. It is here that on your side a freedom of movement and speech arising from an affectionate confidence must come in: if there is something you are unsure of, you must ask me about it; if you do not *very clearly see my intention*, you must enquire about it; if you do not grasp my formation in a very precise way, you must ask me to explain it to you. When I do not do so, it is because I think you are receptive enough for the formation to act and fulfil itself without my needing to speak about it, and in fact this often happens—it is only when the mind and vital get in the way, for one reason or another, that the working becomes defective.

Read this carefully, study it, and when you come today I will ask you to read it from the place I have marked

with a red cross, for I think it may be useful to everyone there. I shall probably ask you to translate it into English, to make sure that you have fully understood.

May Peace be with you—I bless you.” (CWM 16: 41–42)

31.

“But any transformation in the being, on any plane, always has some repercussion on the lower planes. There is always an effect; even things which seem to be purely intellectual certainly have some repercussion on the structure of the brain.

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

32.

"I feel that in solitude I could remain more open and receptive.

If by solitude you mean not seeing people any more than is indispensable and not speaking with them unless it is absolutely necessary, then we are agreed." (CWM 17: 100)

33.

"I think that this is the reason I am not aware of Your love. Surely, if instead of thinking about the love that I am giving you or that you would like me to give you, you thought about the love that you would like to feel for me, you would be more open and receptive." (CWM 17: 148)

34.

"Z's letter is enclosed regarding his wife. He hopes to receive a token of Thy Grace to take for her.

Let her purify the outer being, and abolish the ego, by a complete and perfect consecration to the Supreme Divine, and the obstacle will be removed.

The adverse forces are allowed to act only in order to compel us to make ourselves pure and receptive enough for the descent and the union.

With love and blessings." (CWM 17: 400–401)

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