WORK
IS INDISPENSABLE
IN SADHANA OF
INTEGRAL YOGA

Second Edition

The Compilation from the work of

Sri Aurobindo and the Mother

Compiled by Jamshed M Mavalwalla



Work Is Indispensable in Sadhana of Integral Yoga

Second Edition

Compiled by Jamshed M Mavalwalla

A Compilation from the Works of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother

Sri Aurobindo Society
AUROPUBLICATIONS
POWERFUL THOUGHTS, INSPIRING VISION

Work Is Indispensable in Sadhana of Integral Yoga

Second Edition

First Edition: 2021
Second Edition: 2026

© All writings of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother
are copyright of Sri Aurobindo Ashram Trust
and have been reproduced here with their kind permission.

©2026 AuroPublications, Sri Aurobindo Society, Puducherry
www.aurosociety.org

The idea for the comprehensive compilation: Vijay bhai
Compiler: Jamshed M. Mavalwalla
Proofreading: Archana Udaykumar and Jayeeta Sen
Cover: Bharath and Uttam Mondal
E-book: Uttam Mondal
Help in preparing the second edition: Uttam Mondal

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

As part of a series of comprehensive compilations, this book, *Work Is Indispensable in Sadhana of Integral Yoga*, presents the importance and role of 'work' in Integral Yoga. It is the second book in the series on the topic of work.

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 about the importance and role of work in the Integral Yoga. 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

Contents

I—Why Work Is Indispensable in Integral Yoga 1

II—Sri Aurobindo's Integral Yoga Is Best Done in Work 11

III—Members of Sri Aurobindo Ashram Are Expected to Work 13

IV—The Mother Gave Work Because That Was the Best Means to Advance on the Path of Yoga 17

V—For Each Work Given in the Ashram, the Strength and Grace Are Also Given 21

VI—Time to Be Given to Work for Ashramites 23

VII—Work Is a Field of Inner Training: Learn Equality, Desirelessness, and Dedication 30

VIII—Work Is a Way to Express Oneself, to Develop One's Capacities and Possibilities 34

IX—All Ashram Work Is the Mother's Work 35

X—Those Who Work for the Mother Are Prepared by the Work 44

XI—Work for the Divine Till You Are Aware of the Mother in All Your Actions 46

XII—Offer All Your Work to the Mother 48

XIII—Self-Consecration of Work Is the Means to Unite with the Mother 54

XIV—Remembering the Mother in Work 59

XV—Do Work Without Any Desire for the Fruit, *niṣkāma karma* 60

XVI—The Seeker of the Way of Works Has to Learn to Act Without Desire 64

XVII—Call for the Mother's Force to Support You in Work 71

XVIII—The Higher Force Can Transform the Instrument to Get Intuitive Knowledge 80

XIX—Be Receptive to the Force When You Work 84

XX—In a Perfect Instrument the Work Will Be Done by the Mother's Force 87

XXI—Action Can Come Out of the Inner Being in Union with the Mother 93

XXII—Consciousness Can Come by Turning to the Mother 95

XXIII—Find the Mother in Work and Action 96

XXIV—Feel the Mother's Force behind You and Open to Her Guidance 98

XXV—To Know Whether the Impulse for Work Comes from the Mother or Not 100

XXVI—Openness Brings the Mother's Energy in Work 104

XXVII—The Inexhaustible Energy Is Backing the Work of the Ashram 105

XXVIII—Regard Your Life as Given to You Only for the Divine Work 107

XXIX—In Works, Aspiration Towards Perfection Is True Spirituality 109

XXX—Experience of True Attitude in Work 112

XXXI—Spiritual Effectiveness of Work 113

XXXII—To Have Active Surrender Do Some Useful Work 116

XXXIII—Inspiration in Work 121

XXXIV—If Our Nature Is Imperfect, the Work Also Will Be Imperfect 122

XXXV—Without Work the Nature Does Not Change 124

XXXVI—The Work of Works of Human Beings 125

XXXVII—The Ashram Was Started So That One Need Not Engage in Earning and Can Concentrate on Inner Aspiration 126

XXXVIII—In the Ashram There Is the Difficulty of Keeping the Inner Attitude Unmixed in Activity 130

XXXIX—The Consciousness Awakens Under the Stress of Difficulties 133

XL—Overcome Ego the Motive in the Work for the Divine 140

XLI—The True Service and the True Yoga Are to Do What the Mother Wants and Not What You Want 142

XLII—Go On Doing Ashram Work Without Getting Disturbed or Troubled 144

XLIII—A Strong Interest in Work Can Quiet the Gloominess and Dullness 146

XLIV—Continue to Work Even If One Feels Lazy 147

XLV—How Fatigue Does Not Arise in Work 151

XLVI—The Mother Does Not Give Positions to the Sadhaks; She Gives Them Work 152

XLVII—When You Are Not Working, Aspire 154

XLVIII—Work and Meditation Both Prepare for Spiritual Life and Are Also Means of Realisation 155

XLIX—If One Cannot Get Anything from Meditation, Then Work with the Right Spirit Is One's Only Resource 158

L—Time Given to Work and Meditation 159

LI—The Poise and Peace of Meditation Can Continue to Flow in Work 161

LII—The Master and Mover of Our Works 163

LIII—Our Works Are Part of an Indivisible Cosmic Action 164

LIV—In Manifestation the Consciousness Part Translates into Executive Force, which Is Incomplete Without a Worker and a Work 167

LV—Giving Up Work Due to Defects in Nature Is Not a Remedy . 168

LVI—If You Do not Work Your Sadhana Will Lose All Hold of Realities 171

LVII—Those Who Do Not Work or Do Little Work for the Mother Do Not Get Transformed 174

LVIII—The Feeling That You Have Worked Enough in Life 176

LIX—Wrong Ideas of Work 179

LX—Problems of Complete Cessation of Work 184

LXI—Advice to the Heads of Departments 188

LXII—Advice to Those Working Under Heads of Departments 195

LXIII—Without Collaboration the Right Inspiration Will Not Be Effective 207

LXIV—To Improve the Relation between the Employer and the Employee 208

LXV—Paid Workers in the Ashram 209

LXVI—The Tendency of Harmony and Affection with Those with Whom You Work Comes from the Psychic Being 216

LXVII—Special Relationship with the Mother and the Ashram Workers 218

LXVIII—The Mother's Readiness to Take All Employees of the Ashram into Her Fold 221

LXIX—The Path of Works 225

LXX—Yoga of Works Is an Indispensable and Important Element of an Integral Yoga 228

LXXI—After a Karmayogi Has Identified with the Divine, He Will Be in the World and He Works 234

LXXII—Works in the Yoga of Knowledge 237

LXXIII—Works in the Yoga of Devotion 244

LXXIV—Salvation Through Works 253

LXXV—The Works of Rites and Ceremonies, Vedic, Puranic or Tantric Do Not Bring Salvation 258

LXXVI—Works Done with Desire, Without Knowledge, and Not Devoted to God, Cannot Lead to Salvation 259

LXXVII—In All Work the Jivanmukta Feels Perfectly Free 261

LXXVIII—In the Integral Yoga, the Yoga of Knowledge, Devotion, Works and Self-perfection Culminates in the Yoga of Supramental Realisation 264

LXXIX—The Justification of Works in the Isha Upanishad 270

LXXX—Perfect Action on a Gnostic Basis 283

LXXXI—Mahasaraswati Is the Mother's Power of Work 285

Other Comprehensive Compilations by Jamshed M. Mavalwalla .. 289

I—Why Work Is Indispensable in Integral Yoga

1.

"The purpose of the old [*Yogas*] is to get away from life to the Divine—so, obviously, let us drop karma. The purpose of the new [*Sri Aurobindo's Yoga*] is to reach the Divine and bring the fullness of what is gained into life—for that, Yoga by works is indispensable. It seems to me that there is no mystery about that or anything to perplex anybody—it is rational and inevitable. Only you say that the thing is impossible; but that is what is said about everything before it is done." (CWSA 29: 219)

2.

"The including of the outer consciousness in the transformation is of supreme importance in this Yoga—meditation cannot do it. Meditation can deal only with the inner being. So work is of primary importance—only it must be done with the right attitude and in the right consciousness, then it is as fruitful as any meditation can be." (CWSA 29: 221)

3.

"The Mother had spoken to *X*, after receiving your letter, for arranging for the increase of your work. But now as you say you do not want the work and have given it up, there is nothing to be done. It is indeed unprofitable to do any

work in this spirit of vital demand and unrest and impatience. I may add that the frown in Mother's eyes and her serious face existed only in the imagination of your restless and excited vital mind; the Mother's eyes and face could not have expressed something quite absent from her feelings or intention.

It is because you showed an intention of doing the sadhana in full earnest that we considered it necessary to point out to you that it could not be done without work or by mere solitary meditation, for that is the nature of this sadhana. We did not impose any work on you, but left it to you to choose. You yourself suggested the kitchen work and afterwards asked for an increase of it.

It is not possible to get peace of mind if you indulge in vital ego and the turbulent play of the vital mind, revolt, demand and impatience. Abhiman, revolt, violent insistence on the satisfaction of claims and wishes are foreign to the spirit of the Yoga, they can only bring disturbance and trouble. If you want peace of mind and true sadhana, the first thing you have to do is to cease regarding all these things as justified or justifiable or insisting on them." (CWSA 29: 238–239)

4.

"To keep up work helps to keep up the balance between the internal experience and the external development; otherwise one-sidedness and want of measure and balance

may develop. Moreover, it is necessary to keep the sadhana of work for the Divine, because in the end that enables the sadhak to bring out the inner progress into the external nature and life and helps the integrality of the sadhana." (CWSA 29: 240)

5.

"The growth out of the ordinary mind into the spiritual consciousness can be effected either by meditation, dedicated work or bhakti for the Divine. In our Yoga, which seeks not only a static peace or absorption but a dynamic spiritual action, work is indispensable. As for the Supramental Truth, that is a different matter; it depends only on the descent of the Divine and the action of the Supreme Force and is not bound by any method or rule." (CWSA 29: 209–210)

6.

Broad Lines of the Sadhana

"The basis of life here is wholly spiritual. An inner discipline is given, but it is on broad lines allowing each individual the necessary freedom for his nature and temperament to grow and change spontaneously. Broadly, the sadhana consists of a progressive surrender of oneself—inward and based upon it the outward also—to the Guru, to the Divine; meditation, concentration, work, service—all these are

means for a self-gathering in all one's movements with the sole aim of delivering oneself into the hands of a Higher Power for being worked on and led towards the Goal. The Mother guides, helps each according to his nature and need, and, where necessary, herself intervenes with her Power enabling the sadhak to withstand the rigours and demands of the Path. She has placed herself—with all the Love, Peace, Knowledge and Consciousness that she is—at the disposal of every aspiring soul that looks for help." (CWSA 32: 332)

7.

"Yes, obviously, that is one great utility of work that it tests the nature and puts the sadhak in front of the defects of his outer being which might otherwise escape him." (CWSA 29: 241)

8.

"It will be better to do the work as a sadhana for getting rid of the defects rather than accept the defects as a reason for not doing the work. Instead of accepting these reactions as if they were an unchangeable law of your nature, you should make up your mind that they must come no longer—calling down the aid of the Mother's force to purify the vital and eliminate them altogether. If you believe that the trouble in the body must come, naturally it will come; rather fix in your mind the idea and will that

it must not come and will not come. If it tries to come reject it and throw it away from you." (CWSA 29: 241)

9.

"To go entirely inside in order to have experiences and to neglect the work, the external consciousness, is to be unbalanced, one sided in the sadhana—for our Yoga is integral; so also to throw oneself outward and live in the external being alone is to be unbalanced, one-sided in the sadhana. One must have the same consciousness in inner experience and outward action and make both full of the Mother." (CWSA 32: 245–247)

10.

"I may point out that Karmayoga is not a new but a very old Yoga: the Gita was not written yesterday and Karmayoga existed before the Gita. Your idea that the only justification in the Gita for works is that it is an unavoidable nuisance, so better make the best of it, is rather summary and crude. If that were all, the Gita would be the production of an imbecile and I would hardly have been justified in writing two volumes on it or the world in admiring it as one of the greatest scriptures, especially for its treatment of the problem of the place of works in spiritual endeavour. There is surely more in it than that. Anyhow your doubt whether works can lead to realisation or rather your flat and sweeping denial of the possibility

contradicts the experience of those who have achieved this supposed impossibility. You say that work lowers the consciousness, brings you out of the inner into the outer—yes, if you consent to externalise yourself in it instead of doing works from within; but that is just what one has to learn not to do. Thought and feeling can also externalise one in the same way; but it is a question of linking thought, feeling and act firmly to the inner consciousness by living there and making the rest an instrument. Difficult? Even bhakti is not easy and Nirvana is for most men more difficult than all." (CWSA 29: 219–220)

11.

"Well, but Ramakrishna spent the last years of his life in talking about the Divine and receiving disciples—that was not action, not work? ... Did he get far away from God and so begin a work? Or had he reached a condition in which he was bound neither to rajasic work and mental prattling nor to inactivity and silence, but could do from the divine realisation the divine work and speak from the inner consciousness the divine word? If the last, perhaps in spite of his dictum, his example at least is rather in my favour.

I do not know why you drag in humanitarianism, activism, philanthropical *sevā* etc. None of these are part of my Yoga or in harmony with my definition of works, so they don't touch me. I never thought that politics or feeding the poor or writing beautiful poems would lead

straight to Vaikuntha or the Absolute. If it were so, Romesh Dutt on one side and Baudelaire on the other would be the first to attain the Highest and welcome us there. It is not the form of the work itself or mere activity but the consciousness and Godward will behind it that are the essence of Karmayoga; the work is only the necessary instrumentation for the union with the Master of works, the transit to the pure Will and power of Light from the will and power of the Ignorance.

Finally, why suppose that I am against meditation or bhakti? I have not the slightest objection to your taking either or both as the means of approach to the Divine. Only I saw no reason why anyone should fall foul of works and deny the truth of those who have reached, as the Gita says, through works perfect realisation and oneness of nature with the Divine, *saṁsiddhim, sādharmyam*, as did 'Janaka and others', simply because he himself cannot find or has not yet found their deeper secret— hence my defence of works." (CWSA 29: 220–221)

12.

"To all those who want to live for the future:

A physical work is as indispensable to the balance of the body as food.

To eat without working causes a serious imbalance." (CWM 13: 205)

13.

"It is the old methods of yoga which demand silence and solitude.

The yoga of tomorrow is to find the Divine in work and in relation with the world." (CWM 14: 49)

14.

"Retirement in the sense of all meditation without work is not suitable to this sadhana—it is one-sided and those who resort to it, unless they are very strong, often lose their balance." (CWSA 31: 341)

15.

"To say that one enters the stream of sadhana through work only is to say too much. One can enter it through meditation or bhakti also, but work is necessary to get into full stream and not drift away to one side and go circling there. Of course all work helps provided it is done in the right spirit." (CWSA 29: 218)

16.

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

17.

"Your object is precisely to lead a higher life away from the ordinary world, only it is not solitary; there is a collective side to it and a side, not only of meditation, but of work, action and creation. There is nothing in this that is impossible." (CWSA 28: 272)

18.

"It [*work*] is a training ground for those who have to pass through the difficult and complex way of this Yoga and none other. All work here must be done in a spirit of acceptance, discipline and surrender, not with personal demands and conditions, but with a vigilant conscious submission to control and guidance. Work done in any other spirit only results in an unspiritual disorder, confusion and disturbance of the atmosphere. In it too difficulties, errors, stumblings are frequent, because in this Yoga people have to be led patiently and with some field for their own effort, by experience, out of the ignorance natural to Mind and Life to a wider spirit and a luminous knowledge. But the danger of an unguided wandering in the regions across the border is that the very basis of the Yoga may be contradicted and the conditions under which alone the work can be done may be lost altogether. The transition through this intermediate zone [*a passage between the physical and the true spiritual realms*]—not obligatory, for many pass by a narrower but surer way—is a crucial

passage; what comes out of it is likely to be a very wide or rich creation; but when one founders there, recovery is difficult, painful, assured only after a long struggle and endeavour.” (CWSA 30: 302–303)

II—Sri Aurobindo's Integral Yoga Is Best Done in Work

1.

"The more I go, the more I know that it is in work that Sri Aurobindo's integral yoga is *best done*." (CWM 14: 35) (CWM 14: 318)

2.

"The Mother does not think that it is good to give up all work and only read and meditate. Work is part of the Yoga and it gives the best opportunity for calling down the Presence, the Light and the Power into the vital and its activities; it increases also the field and the opportunity of surrender." (CWSA 32: 247–248)

3.

"Action is the first power of life. Nature begins with force and its works which, once conscious in man, become will and its achievements; therefore it is that by turning his action Godwards the life of man best and most surely begins to become divine. It is the door of first access, the starting-point of the initiation. When the will in him is made one with the divine will and the whole action of the being proceeds from the Divine and is directed towards the Divine, the union in works is perfectly accomplished. But works fulfil themselves in knowledge; all the totality of

works, says the Gita, finds its rounded culmination in knowledge, *sarvam karmākhilaṁ jñāne parisamāpyate*. By union in will and works we become one in the omnipresent conscious being from whom all our will and works have their rise and draw their power and in whom they fulfil the round of their energies. And the crown of this union is love; for love is the delight of conscious union with the Being in whom we live, act and move, by whom we exist, for whom alone we learn in the end to act and to be. That is the trinity of our powers, the union of all three in God to which we arrive when we start from works as our way of access and our line of contact." (CWSA 24: 545)

4.

"It is good that you have decided to concentrate on the true object of your coming here, but while absorption in mental work and social contacts is not favourable for Yoga, excessive seclusion has also its spiritual disadvantage. An inner concentration supported by a limitation of external contacts is sufficient. Some kind of activity and service to the Divine is also a very necessary element in the integral spiritual life." (CWSA 29: 380)

III—Members of Sri Aurobindo Ashram Are Expected to Work

1.

"This is not an Asram like others—the members are not Sannyasis; it is not *mokṣa* that is the sole aim of the Yoga here. What is being done here is a preparation for a work—a work which will be founded on Yogic consciousness and Yoga-Shakti, and can have no other foundation. Meanwhile every member here is expected to do some work in the Asram as part of his spiritual preparation." (CWSA 29: 232) (CWSA 35: 590)

2.

"That is the most important thing to get over—ego, anger, personal dislikes, self-regarding sensitiveness etc. Work is not only for work's sake, but as a field of sadhana, for getting rid of the lower personality and its reactions and acquiring a full surrender to the Divine. As for the work itself it must be done according to the organisation arranged or sanctioned by the Mother. You must always remember that it is her work and not personally yours." (CWSA 29: 239) (CWSA 32: 419)

3.

"In India the Guru gives a mantra as soon as he accepts a disciple and tells him to go ahead with it. We have no mantra except the Mother's name. But usually we give

work, tell them to aspire, reject, open to the Mother. I don't know whether you call that the practical course." (CWSA 32: 139)

4.

"You allowed yourself to be surprised by the old movement of unreasoning jealousy and it brought back the old unreasoned thoughts and feelings—for you are no more than others here as a mere worker, you are here as the Mother's child and the work is there only because it is a part of the sadhana. Also this feeling of jealousy and other doubts and difficulties are not peculiar to you alone, they are common to human nature and most here have them or have had them and found it difficult to be free." (CWSA 32: 386)

5.

"I have told you already that people in the Asram—it is true even of those who have inner experiences and some opening—are not yet free in their outer selves from ego and wrong ideas and wrong movements. It is no use getting distressed or depressed by that. What you must do is to be turned only to the Mother and relying on her go forward quietly with your work and sadhana until the time when the sadhaks are sufficiently awakened and changed to feel the need of greater harmony and union with each other. Let only your spiritual change and progress matter

for you and for that trust wholly in the Mother's force and her grace which is with you—do not let things or people disturb you,—for compared with the truth within and the journey to the full Light of the Mother's Consciousness these things have no importance." (CWSA 32: 397)

6.

"Work here and work done in the world are of course not the same thing. The work there is not in any way a divine work in special—it is ordinary work in the world. But still one must take it as a training and do it in the spirit of karmayoga— what matters there is not the nature of the work in itself but the spirit in which it is done. It must be in the spirit of the Gita, without desire, with detachment, without repulsion, but doing it as perfectly as possible, not for the sake of the family or promotion or to please the superiors, but simply because it is the thing that has been given in the hand to do." (CWSA 29: 240–241)

7.

"... not to speak of the innumerable people who work only to earn money, but in this case their activity is altogether rotten, naturally. That was my very first basis in forming the Ashram: that the work done here be an offering to the Divine." (CWM 4: 93)

8.

"As for the work, the inner development, psychic and spiritual, is surely of the first importance and work merely as work is something quite minor. But work done as an offering to the Mother becomes itself a part of the sadhana and a means and part of the inner development. That you will see more as the psychic grows within you. Apart from that the work is important because necessary to the maintenance of the Asram, which is the frame of the Mother's action here." (CWSA 32: 438)

IV—The Mother Gave Work Because That Was the Best Means to Advance on the Path of Yoga

1.

"When I give work to someone it is not only for the sake of the work but also as the best means to advance on the path of Yoga. When I gave you this work, I was quite aware of your difficulties and shortcomings, but at the same time I knew that if you opened yourself to my help and force you would be able to surmount these obstacles and at the same time to increase your consciousness and open yourself to the Divine's Grace.

Now it is time for you to make a real progress and to check your outbursts of temper whenever your will is contradicted. If you want to please me—and I have no doubt of that—you will sincerely try to collaborate with X and to carry on with him the work.

I do not want anyone of you two to be the boss of the other—I want you both to feel as brothers, children of the same Mother, working sincerely and courageously for the sake of her love.

I hope you will agree to this and I assure you that my love and blessings will always be with you in this endeavour." (CWM 13: 159–160)

2.

"Now times are difficult for everybody. There is war and everybody suffers.

Those who have the immense privilege of being here quiet and in safety must at least show their gratitude by discarding all petty quarrels and silly grievances.

Everyone must do his or her work conscientiously and earnestly, and overcome all obscure selfish movements." (CWM 13: 157)

3.

"The aim must be the Divine and the work can only be a means." (CWSA 35: 743)

4.

"The work here is not intended for showing one's capacity or having a position or as a means of physical nearness to the Mother, but as a field and an opportunity for the Karmayoga part of the integral Yoga—for learning to work in the true Yogic way—dedication through service, practical selflessness, obedience, scrupulousness, discipline, setting the Divine and the Divine's work first and oneself last, harmony, patience, forbearance etc. When the workers learn these things and cease to be egocentric, as most of you now are, then will come the time for work in which capacity can really be shown — although even then the showing of capacity will be an incident and can never be the main consideration or the object of divine work." (CWSA 35: 750)

5.

"... the Ashram is a condensation of dynamic and active peace, so much so that all those who come from outside feel as if they were in another world. It is indeed something of another world, a world in which the inner life governs the outer, a world where things get done, where work is carried out not for a personal end but in a selfless way for the realisation of an ideal. The life we lead here is as far from ascetic abstinence as from an enervating comfort; simplicity is the rule here, but a simplicity full of variety—a variety of occupations, of activities, of tastes, tendencies, natures; each one is free to organise his life as he pleases, the discipline is reduced to the minimum that is indispensable to organise the existence of 110 to 120 people and to avoid movements that would be detrimental to the achievement of our yogic aim." (CWM 16: 7–8)

6.

"But to the Yogin action is chiefly important not for its own sake, but rather as a means for the growth of the soul Godward. Therefore what Indian spiritual writings lay stress upon is not so much the quality of the action to be done as the quality of the soul from which the action flows, upon its truth, fearlessness, purity, love, compassion, benevolence, absence of the will to hurt, and upon the actions as their outflowings." (CWSA 24: 564–565)

7.

"In the Ashram, negligence in work is treachery." (CWM 13: 163)

V—For Each Work Given in the Ashram, the Strength and Grace Are Also Given

1.

"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 14: 316) (CWM 17: 207)

2.

"Be sincere in the work you have undertaken and the Grace will always be there to help you." (CWM 14: 317)

3.

"Unless you work hard you do not get energy, because in that case you do not need it and do not deserve it. You get energy only when you make use of it." (CWM 14: 317)

4.

"There is something a little too personal in your attitude—I mean the insistence on personal strength or weakness as the determining factor. After all, for the greatest as for the smallest of us our strength is not our own but given to us for the game that has to be played, the work that we have

to do. The strength may be formed in us, but its present formation is not final,—neither formation of power nor formation of weakness. At any moment the formation may change—at any moment one sees, especially under the pressure of Yoga, weakness changing into power, the incapable becoming capable, suddenly or slowly the instrumental consciousness rising to a new stature or developing its latent powers. Above us, within us, around us is the All Strength and it is that that we have to rely on for our work, our development, our transforming change. If we proceed with the faith in the work, in our instrumentality for the work, in the Power that missions us, then in the very act of trial, of facing and surmounting difficulties and failures, the strength will come and we shall find our capacity to contain as much as we need of the All-Strength of which we grow more and more perfect vessels." (CWSA 31: 454)

5.

"But a full confidence in the Mother and acceptance of her decisions and her guidance is necessary; if you have and keep that, then you can recover your strength and capacity for work and progress in Yoga." (CWSA 32: 369)

VI—Time to Be Given to Work for Ashramites

1.

"The usual sadhanas have for aim the union with the Supreme Consciousness (Sat-chit-ananda). And those who reach there are satisfied with their own liberation and leave the world to its unhappy plight. On the contrary, Sri Aurobindo's sadhana starts where the others end. Once the union with the Supreme is realised one must bring down that realisation to the exterior world and change the conditions of life upon the earth until a total transformation is accomplished. In accordance with this aim, the sadhaks of the integral yoga do not retire from the world to lead a life of contemplation and meditation. Each one must devote at least one third of his time to a useful work. All activities are represented in the Ashram and each one chooses the work most congenial to his nature, but must do it in a spirit of service and unselfishness, keeping always in view the aim of integral transformation.

To make this purpose possible, the Ashram is organised so that all its inmates find their reasonable needs satisfied and have not to worry about their subsistence." (CWM 14: 33–34) (CWM 13: 107–108)

2.

"You see, my child, the unfortunate thing is that you are too busy with yourself. At your age I was exclusively occupied with my studies—informing myself, learning,

understanding, knowing. That was my interest, even my passion. My mother, who loved us—my brother and myself—very much, never allowed us to be bad-tempered or dissatisfied or lazy. If we went and complained to her about something or other and told her that we were not satisfied, she would laugh at us and scold us and say to us, 'What is this foolishness? Don't be ridiculous, off you go and work, and don't take any notice of your good or bad moods! That is not interesting at all.'

My mother was perfectly right and I have always been very grateful to her for having taught me discipline and the necessity of self-forgetfulness in concentration on what one is doing.

I have told you this because the anxiety you speak of comes from the fact that you are far too busy with yourself. It would be far better for you to attend more to what you are doing (painting or music), to develop your mind which is still very uncultivated and to learn the elements of knowledge which are indispensable to a man if he does not want to be ignorant and uncultured.

If you worked regularly eight to nine hours a day, you would be hungry and you would eat well and sleep peacefully, and you would have no time to wonder whether you are in a good or a bad mood.

I am telling you these things with all my affection, and I hope that you will understand them.

Your mother who loves you." (CWM 12: 130)

3.

"*My dear Mother, please give me Your blessings for this month of my birth.*

Yes, my blessings are with you.

And I also wanted to ask you something. You know that we are going to put up a new building, using the most modern methods. A great many workers are needed to supervise the work. I thought the time had come for you to take an active part in the overall work. Of course this will imply regularity, steadiness and a great sincerity. You would have to work eight hours a day *regularly* except Sundays. The architect, who is arriving from Japan in a few days, will give you all the instructions required for the work. Tell me what you think of it, and whether I can put your name on the list of workers.

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.

I would like to talk to You about the work in general. A free exchange of ideas and opinions between the man in charge

and the supervisors; not a blind work, but a work of knowledge.

What you speak of cannot be done in an arbitrary way, nor through any conversation; it demands a change of consciousness, and only yoga can bring about that change." (CWM 17: 162–163)

4.

"*Yes, I was wrong to ask You if I could start studying mathematics. I want to go back to the attitude of doing only what You want me to do; eight hours of work in the Building Service, that is Your will. Besides this work, what would you like me to do?*

It seems to me that apart from the work at the Building Service, if you feel like studying, it would be better to read Sri Aurobindo's books seriously and carefully, without hurrying. This will help you more than anything else for your sadhana." (CWM 17: 170–171)

5.

(*A sadhak did not want to work more than two hours a day. His supervisor wrote to Mother:)*

I told him that I was not demanding anything; I work as much as I can, for it is in the service of my dear Mother.

I cannot insist on anyone else doing the same; only I am informing Mother about what we do.

You replied very well, but obviously it is difficult to give conscientiousness to someone who has none and to put heart into someone who is lazy." (CWM 13: 155)

6.

"It is not that there is a dearth of people without work in the Ashram; but those who are without work are certainly so because they do not like to work; and for that disease it is very difficult to find a remedy—it is called laziness..." (CWM 13: 156) (CWN 16: 180)

7.

"When human passions guide the work, I can only stand apart as a witness. I am politely informed of what is decided—never asked for what is to be done.

I cannot give orders because if orders were disobeyed, it would automatically lead to a catastrophe.

So there is nothing else to do than to wait patiently for the passions to cool down and... hope for the best.

Perhaps some people may wake up to the necessity of working hard." (CWM 13: 156) (CWM 17: 297)

8.

"*Sweet Mother,*

As I told you before, X has no desire at all to work. You asked him to work eight hours a day, but he promised only to work four hours. Gradually he has reduced his hours, and now he has given up almost all work. But we cannot do without him unless we have someone to replace him. Meanwhile, I hope that by Your Grace he will feel that he should work with more sincerity.

It is more difficult to give sincerity to someone who has none than to cure a dying man.

Blessings." (CWM 17: 341)

9.

"*Sweet Mother,*

As I told You a few days ago, X does not want to work any more. He has already dropped almost all his work and deals only with a small part of the accounts, and even in that work he makes a lot of mistakes. Sweet Mother, may I humbly ask you to tell him to work six hours and not leave in the morning when I go upstairs?

It is strange: instead of throwing themselves headlong into Your work, people are holding themselves back more and more. The work of the departments goes on increasing and there is disorder everywhere. Only Your Grace can overcome the forces of laziness and insincerity in us and bring order out of this disorder. I pray for the intervention of Your Grace!

Insincerity seems to be an incurable defect which nullifies the working of the Grace in a being. It is certainly insincerity which has necessitated the violent intervention of Kali in the world.

I cannot possibly give orders to an insincere person because he will respond hypocritically, and that increases even further the darkness he is engulfed in.

One must either have nothing to do with insincere people or else take them as they are.

Blessings." (CWM 17: 343)

VII—Work Is a Field of Inner Training: Learn Equality, Desirelessness, and Dedication

1.

"It is a field of inner training, nothing more. One has to learn in it three things, equality, desirelessness, dedication. It is not the work as a thing for its own sake, but one's doing of it and one's way of doing it that one has to dedicate to the Divine. Done in that spirit it does not matter what the work is. If one trains one self spiritually like that, then one will be ready to do in the true way whatever special work directly for the Divine (such as the Asram work) one may any day be given to do." (CWSA 29: 240–241)

2.

"I am glad of your resolution. The greater the difficulties that rise in the work the more one can profit by them in deepening the equality, if one takes it in the right spirit. You must also keep yourself open to receive the help towards that, for the help will always be coming from the Mother for the change of the nature." (CWSA 32: 420)

3.

"It is very good that you have had this experience; for this kind of consciousness full of equality (samata) is just the thing that has to be acquired and the very basis on which

a sound Yogic consciousness full of the Mother can be built up. If it can be fixed, then most of the trouble and difficulty of sadhana disappears—all necessary changes can proceed quietly without these disturbances and upsettings which break and hamper the progress. Also in it there can grow a right and clear understanding of people and things and how to deal with them without friction which can make work and action much more easy. Once this consciousness has come, it is bound to return and increase." (CWSA 29: 134–135)

4.

"Helpless acceptance [*of difficulties*] is no part of the Yoga of works—what is necessary is a calm equanimity in the face both of helpful and adverse, fortunate or unfortunate happenings, good or evil fortune, success or failure of effort. One must learn to bear without flinching and disturbance, without rajasic joy or grief, doing all that is necessary, but not dejected if difficulties or failure come—one still goes on doing what can be done, not sinking under the burden of life." (CWSA 29: 243)

5.

"The increase of samata is only a first condition [*for attacks by adverse forces to become impossible in one's work*]. It is when on the basis of samata an understanding Force can

be used to make their attacks nugatory that the attacks will become impossible." (CWSA 29: 244)

6.

"No path of Yoga is easy and to imagine that by leaving the world and plunging inside oneself one automatically shuffles off the vital and external nature is an illusion. If I ask you to develop equanimity and egolessness by work done with opening to the Divine, it is because it is so that I did it and it is so that it can best be done and not by retiring into oneself and shutting oneself away from all that can disturb equanimity and excite the ego." (CWSA 35: 262)

7.

"The spirit and attitude you express in your letter are the right spirit and attitude, but you must keep to it always. Work done for the Mother without claim or desire alone has a spiritual value—you must not bring your ego into it." (CWSA 32: 418)

8.

"But the seeker who has advanced far on the way of works has passed beyond this intermediate stage in which desire is a helpful engine. Its push is no longer indispensable for his action, but is rather a terrible hindrance and source of stumbling, inefficiency and failure. Others are obliged to

obey a personal choice or motive, but he has to learn to act with an impersonal or a universal mind or as a part or an instrument of an infinite Person." (CWSA 23: 266)

VIII—Work Is a Way to Express Oneself, to Develop One's Capacities and Possibilities

1.

"There should be somewhere on earth a place which no nation could claim as its own, where all human beings of goodwill who have a sincere aspiration could live freely as citizens of the world and obey one single authority, that of the supreme truth; a place of peace, concord and harmony where all the fighting instincts of man would be used exclusively to conquer the causes of his sufferings and miseries, to surmount his weaknesses and ignorance, to triumph over his limitations and incapacities; a place where the needs of the spirit and the concern for progress would take precedence over the satisfaction of desires and passions, the search for pleasure and material enjoyment. ... There, work would not be a way to earn one's living but a way to express oneself and to develop one's capacities and possibilities while being of service to the community as a whole, which, for its own part, would provide for each individual's subsistence and sphere of action. In short, it would be a place where human relationships, which are normally based almost exclusively on competition and strife, would be replaced by relationships of emulation in doing well, of collaboration and real brotherhood." (CWM 12: 93–94)

IX—All Ashram Work Is the Mother's Work

1.

"All work in the Asram is the Mother's." (CWSA 32: 409)

2.

"Whose work is it if it is not the Mother's work? All that you do, you have to do as the Mother's work. All the work done in the Asram is the Mother's.

All those works, meditation, reading *Conversations*, studying English etc. are good. You can do any of them dedicating them to the Mother.

Meditation means opening yourself to the Mother, concentrating on aspiration and calling in her force to work and transform you." (CWSA 32: 409)

3.

"I must remind you that all the work in the Asram is the Mother's work and no part of it is the personal property of any sadhak. The Mother can do with it whatever she thinks right. This is too easily forgotten by yourself and others." (CWSA 32: 410)

4.

"What you write in the beginning of your letter seems to indicate an excessive attachment to a particular work, that of the D.R. [*Dining Room*]. All work is the Mother's and

there should be no attachment to this or that to which you are accustomed or to the things or circumstances or people related to it; for that would indicate a sense of possession or clinging in the vital. The vital should be perfectly free and ready to work or not to work, to remain in one field or to go to another, to do in one way or to do in another according to the will of the Mother." (CWSA 32: 409–410)

5.

"If people could stop speaking of the work as *their* work it would put an end to a lot of trouble. Here, all work is the Divine's." (CWM 14: 314)

6.

"The Mother and I [Sri Aurobindo] are one and equal. Also she is supreme here and has the right to arrange the work as she thinks best for the work, no one has any right or claim or proprietorship over any work that may be given him. The Asram is the Mother's creation and would not have existed but for her, the work she does is her creation and has not been given to her and cannot be taken from her. Try to understand this elementary truth, if you want to have any right relation or attitude towards the Mother." (CWSA 32: 82–83)

7.

"The work here is the Mother's and she has the right to give her orders in whatever way she pleases and they must

be obeyed. No one can be allowed to flout her orders, however conveyed, or insist on his own ideas, will or fancies. If you are prepared to respect and obey her orders without making conditions, you can be allowed to continue the work, otherwise you must discontinue.

Secondly, all violence must stop. If you want to remain in the Asram, this kind of conduct must cease." (CWSA 32: 411)

8.

"You have promised that you would obey the orders of the Mother in the work. Mother has sent you herself the typed instructions for the work with her signature and statement that it was in accordance with her orders. You have returned them to *X* after cutting off the Mother's statement and signature with a note saying that you do not want this literature. This is a direct act of defiance and disobedience to the Mother. You have either to respect or obey the orders of the Mother or you cannot be allowed to continue the work." (CWSA 32: 411)

9.

"All the work here is for the Mother and there is no difference between her personal work and the rest of the work for the Asram and all can be done with an equal joy. It is the mind that makes the distinction. This does not mean that all work done in the world is the Mother's work—

only that which is consciously done for her." (CWSA 32: 411)

10.

"(1) ... Even a proposal drawn up by someone else becomes her [*the Mother*] order as soon as it is accepted, approved and signed by her and must be so regarded. As a matter of fact even if not signed by her, departmental orders should be regarded as hers and obeyed, because they pass through her scrutiny and approval or a remade under her general sanction.

(2) You have done good work which has been appreciated by the Mother, but that does not authorise you to claim an independent action in your work free from control. There is and must be a departmental control over all sections of the work and that control, through whomever exercised, is the Mother's. No one in immediate charge of a section of the work has the right to choose which order he shall or shall not obey, or to say that he will not obey orders at all unless they come direct from the Mother.

(3) All arrangements for the work made by the Mother must be accepted by the workers. The Mother has informed you that the arrangement for Golconde in Raymond's absence, agreed on between him and the Mother, is that *X* shall carry on control and supervision and direction of all the work for the Mother under her sanction

or orders. Nobody has a right to question this arrangement or act so as to make its execution difficult or impossible.

As for the pressure you complain of, it is you yourself who have made it necessary by recent refusals to obey orders and the increasing violence of your reactions. The Mother has the responsibility and supreme and total control of all the work and she cannot allow it to be made impossible or ineffective on the plea that her orders are not hers because they are not given directly by her." (CWSA 32: 412)

11.

"Is it beneath your dignity to do work for the sadhaks? It is an entirely egoistic attitude and improper for a sadhak. All the people in the D.R., in the Building Service, in the Stores, in the carpentry department, in the Atelier and Smithy, are all the time doing work for the sadhaks, the Mother herself is doing work for the sadhaks all day; in writing this answer I am spending my time doing work for a sadhak. Would you think it proper for the D.R. and Kitchen workers to say, "We are not going to cook for sadhaks or serve them; it is beneath our dignity. We will consent only to cook food for the Mother alone." Do you want me to stop writing answers to your letters on the ground that I am doing work for a sadhak and I will write only letters to the Mother and nobody else?

What was *X* doing in the kitchen so many years if not preparing the food of the sadhaks? And what was Y doing in the granary if not work for the sadhaks? All these ideas are perfectly idiotic. All work given by the Mother is work for the Mother." (CWSA 32: 415)

12.

"The work given to him in the stores is the Mother's work and not Y's; he must do it with that idea, as the Mother's work, and no other.

(4)Y is at the head of the stores, garden, granary and receives his directions from the Mother or reports his arrangements to her for approval—just as *Z* in the B.D. [*Building Department*] or *A* in the Dining Room or *B* or *C* in their departments. Others in these departments are supposed to receive their directions from the head and act in accordance. But this is because it is necessary for the discipline and good order of the work; it does not mean that the work is Y's or the building work is *Z*'s or the dining room work is *A*'s—all is the Mother's work and must be done by each, by the head as by the others, for her. It would not be possible to get the work done if each and every worker insisted on being independent and directly responsible to her or on doing things in his own way; there is too much of this spirit and it is the cause of much confusion and disorder. The Mother cannot see to the whole work herself physically and give orders direct to each

worker; therefore the arrangement made is indispensable. On the other hand, the head of a department is also supposed to act according to the Mother's directions—or in their spirit where he is left free—and not otherwise; if he does according to his mere fancy or obeys his own personal likes and dislikes or misuses his trust for his personal satisfaction or convenience, he is answerable for any failure in the work that may result or wrong spirit or clash or confusion or false atmosphere.

(5) Any work done personally for *Y* or another (not for the Asram) is not part of the Mother's work and the Mother has nothing to do with that; if such work is asked, *X* may do it if he likes or not do it if he thinks it is improper.

(6) *X* has been given one work at least by the Mother direct —that is the cleaning of the kitchen vessels. Let him do it according to the Mother's directions and with scrupulousness and perfection; it will be an opportunity for him to show what he can do and the rest can be seen to hereafter.

(7) He is not bound to accept food from *D* and *Y* or presents etc.; if he does not like it, why does he receive these things? He is perfectly free to refuse. His staying here and everything else does not depend on *Y*, but on the Mother alone—so he has no reason to fear.

(8) Finally, he should clear his vital of restlessness and desires—for that in him as in everybody is the root cause of depression, and, if he were elsewhere and under

other circumstances, the depression would still come because the root cause would still be there. Here if he turns entirely to the Mother, opens to her and works and lives turning towards her, he will get release and happiness and grow into light and peace and become in all his being a child of the Divine." (CWSA 32: 421–422)

13.

"Is it the atmosphere of the Dispensary that raises these things? Your letter marks the beginning of the same attitude towards *X* as *Y*'s was before it became acute, the idea that you alone are medically great and competent (which was his), a big 'I' sprawling egoistically all over the pages, the sense of being in charge = a masterful possession of the Dispensary, the disposition to arrange and command everything imperiously and imperially in that kingdom. Please stop all that before it grows. The work is the Mother's and has to be carried out in harmony and the big 'I' has to draw in its horns and become small, even if it cannot disappear altogether.

The Mother has given charge of the Dispensary not to you, but to you and *X* together (she does not want to renew a one man rule there, after what has happened). She accepted the arrangement suggested by both of you, because you were working in harmony and it seemed the one possible arrangement. She expects you to continue

working in harmony—otherwise the running of the Dispensary will become impossible." (CWSA 32: 425)

X—Those Who Work for the Mother Are Prepared by the Work

1.

"Those who do work for the Mother in all sincerity, are prepared by the work itself for the right consciousness even if they do not sit down for meditation or follow any particular practice of Yoga. It is not necessary to tell you how to meditate; whatever is needful will come of itself if in your work and at all times you are sincere and keep yourself open to the Mother." (CWSA 32: 247)

2.

"All attachment and self-indulgence are dangerous—attachment and self-indulgence in subjective experiences and remote 'meditations', pushing aside the Truth in objective life is as dangerous as any other. Draw back from these errors and get back into the true balance of the sadhana. If you want the psychic in the physical, you cannot get it by merely sitting in meditation and having abstract experiences; you can get it only by seeking it in physical life and action, by work for the Mother, obedience and surrender in work to the Mother who is present in her own body here." (CWSA 32: 249–250)

3.

"*I pray that I may feel the Mother's protection while working. I feel happy to work. I am not able to meditate*

every day, but as long as I am working I feel that the work itself is sadhana.

Work for the Mother done with the right concentration on her is as much a sadhana as meditation and inner experiences." (CWSA 32: 252)

4.

"Painting or any other activity has to be made here a part of Yoga and cannot be pursued for its own sake. If it stands insuperably in the way, then it has to be given up; but there is no reason why it should if it be pursued in the proper spirit, as a field or aid for spiritual growth, or as a work done for the Mother." (CWSA 29: 293)

XI—Work for the Divine Till You Are Aware of the Mother in All Your Actions

1.

"The Truth for you is to feel the Divine in you, open to the Mother and work for the Divine till you are aware of her in all your actions. The physical presence here is not enough; there must be this consciousness of the divine presence in your heart and the divine guidance in your acts. This the psychic being can easily, swiftly, deeply feel if it is fully awake; once the psychic has felt it, it can spread to the mental and vital also." (CWSA 32: 153)

2.

"It is for most people not easy to feel the Mother's presence with the work—they feel as if they are doing the work, the mind getting busy and not having the right passivity or quietude." (CWSA 32: 189)

3.

"The Ashram is the central consciousness, Auroville is one of the outward expressions. In both places equally the work is done for the Divine.

The people who live in the Ashram have their own work and most of them are too busy to give time to Auroville.

Each one must be busy with his own work; this is essential for a proper organisation." (CWM 13: 205)

4.

"It is only when work and action are done in that way, without insistence on one's personal ideas and personal feelings but only for the Divine's sake without thought of self that work becomes fully a sadhana and the internal and the external nature can arrive at a harmony. It makes it more possible for the inner being to take up and enlighten the outer action and grow conscious of the Mother's force behind it guiding it in its works." (CWSA 32: 245)

XII—Offer All Your Work to the Mother

1.

"There should be not only a general attitude, but each work should be offered to the Mother so as to keep the attitude a living one all the time. There should be at the time of work no meditation, for that would withdraw the attention from the work, but there should be the constant memory of the One to whom you offer it. This is only a first process; for when you can have constantly the feeling of a calm being within concentrated in the sense of the Divine Presence while the surface mind does the work, or when you can begin to feel always that it is the Mother's force that is doing the work and you are only a channel or an instrument, then in place of memory there will have begun the automatic constant realisation of Yoga, divine union, in works." (CWSA 32: 247)

2.

"The work given by the Mother is always meant as a field for that self-consecration; it has to be done as an offering to her so that through the self-offering one may come to feel her Force acting and her presence." (CWSA 35: 548)

3.

"Meditation is not enough; think of the Mother and offer your work and action to her, that will help you better." (CWSA 32: 304)

4.

"*There are two ways of making an offering to the Mother: one is to offer an act at her feet as one might offer a flower; the other is to withdraw one's personality and feel as though she were doing all the actions. Which of these ways is better for the sadhana?*

There is no need to ask which is the better as they are not mutually exclusive. It is the mind that regards them as opposites. The psychic being can offer the act while the nature is passive to the Force (the ego being expunged or having withdrawn) and feels the Mother's Force doing the act and her Presence in it." (CWSA 32: 246)

5.

"You have painting and music in you and if you apply yourself they will develop in you. Only it is best to do it as an instrument of the Mother and as an offering to her, and not allow any personal desire for fame or appreciation by others or any personal pride to be the motives—for it is that that gives trouble. All work done as an offering is a great help and does not give trouble." (CWSA 29: 293)

6.

"He should carry on his work and do all things else in the right consciousness, offering all he does to the Mother and keeping in inner touch with her. All work done in that spirit

and with that consciousness becomes Karmayoga and can be regarded as part of his sadhana." (CWSA 32: 254)

7.

"Whatever work you do, take it as the Mother's and offer it to the Mother." (CWSA 32: 260)

8.

"*After finishing any activity, even eating and drinking, I make an offering of it to the Mother, saying, 'I offer this work done by me to Thee.' But now a sense is growing in me that all works are done by the Mother's Power of Nature through the individual nature. Accordingly, can I substitute the wording in this way, 'All the work that is done by the (or my) individual nature is wholeheartedly offered to Thee'? Or what to say?*

All that is done in me by Nature, I offer wholeheartedly for transformation to Thee, O Mother." (CWSA 32: 260)

9.

"*I have read in many places that we should refer all our actions to the Mother. But I don't know how to refer them and get her answer as to whether the actions should be done or not.*

There is no question of getting an answer. It is simply to offer the actions to the Mother and call her Force to guide or do what is necessary." (CWSA 32: 260)

10.

"It is not from disgust for life and people that one must come to yoga.

It is not to run away from difficulties that one must come here.

It is not even to find the sweetness of love and protection, for the Divine's love and protection can be enjoyed everywhere if one takes the right attitude.

When one wants to give oneself totally in service to the Divine, to consecrate oneself totally to the Divine's work, simply for the joy of giving oneself and of serving, without asking for anything in exchange, except the possibility of consecration and service, then one is ready to come here and will find the doors wide open." (CWM 13: 111)

11.

"What I meant in my letter was that the Mother does not usually think about these things herself, take the initiative and direct each one in each instance what they shall do or how, unless there is some special occasion for doing so. This she does not do, in fact, in any department of work. She keeps her eye generally on the work, sanctions or

corrects or refuses sanction, intervenes when she thinks necessary. It is only a few matters in which she takes the initiative, plans and designs, gives special and detailed orders. In the line of embroidery, X refers to her anything necessary or any of the workers undertakes something and informs the Mother that she would like to do something for her, handkerchief, apron, cover or sari. The Mother approves or disapproves what is suggested or suggests something herself or changes what is proposed. Work done in this way is as much work done according to the Mother's will as anything initiated, thought of and planned in whole and detail by her alone. I do not quite understand why you should consider that this way of work implies an absence of unity with the Mother's will or of surrender on your part. It is the offering within you that is important and brings in time the full completeness of surrender." (CWSA 32: 426–427)

12.

"And the fruit also of the sacrifice of works varies according to the work, according to the intention in the work and according to the spirit that is behind the intention. But all other sacrifices are partial, egoistic, mixed, temporal, incomplete,— even those offered to the highest Powers and Principles keep this character: the result too is partial, limited, temporal, mixed in its reactions, effective only for a minor or intermediate purpose. The one entirely

acceptable sacrifice is a last and highest and uttermost self-giving,—it is that surrender made face to face, with devotion and knowledge, freely and without any reserve to One who is at once our immanent Self, the environing constituent All, the Supreme Reality beyond this or any manifestation and, secretly, all these together, concealed everywhere, the immanent Transcendence. For to the soul that wholly gives itself to him, God also gives himself altogether. Only the one who offers his whole nature, finds the Self. Only the one who can give everything, enjoys the Divine All everywhere. Only a supreme self-abandonment attains to the Supreme. Only the sublimation by sacrifice of all that we are, can enable us to embody the Highest and live here in the immanent consciousness of the transcendent Spirit." (CWSA 23: 110)

13.

"Our very inspiration and respiration, our very heart-beats can and must be made conscious in us as the living rhythm of the universal sacrifice." (CWSA 23: 111)

XIII—Self-Consecration of Work Is the Means to Unite with the Mother

1.

"It is self-dedication from within that is the means. It is with the consciousness of the Mother that you must unite, a sincere self-consecration in the mind and heart and the Will is the means for it. The work given by the Mother is always meant as field for that self-consecration, it has to be done as an offering to her so that through the self-offering one may come to feel her force acting and her presence." (CWSA 29: 246)

2.

"*What is the exact meaning of the word 'consecration?'*

'Consecration' generally has a more mystical sense but this is not absolute. A total consecration signifies a total giving of one's self; hence it is the equivalent of the word 'surrender', not of the word *soumission* which always gives the impression that one 'accepts' passively. You feel a flame in the word 'consecration', a flame even greater than in the word 'offering'. To consecrate oneself is 'to give oneself to an action'; hence, in the yogic sense, it is to give oneself to some divine work with the idea of accomplishing the divine work." (CWM 4: 132)

3.

"*X* has to learn to consecrate his work and feel the Mother's power working through it. A purely sedentary subjective realisation is only a half realisation." (CWSA 29: 232)

4.

"You need not mind *X*'s quick temper. Remind yourself always it is Mother's work you are doing and if you do it as well as you can, remembering her, the Mother's Grace will be with you. That is the right spirit for the worker, and if you do it in that spirit, a calm consecration will come." (CWSA 32: 433)

5.

"The ease and peace are felt very deep and far within because they are in the psychic and the psychic is very deep within us, covered over by the mind and vital. When you meditate you open to the psychic, become aware of your psychic consciousness deep within and feel these things. In order that this ease and peace and happiness may become strong and stable and felt in all the being and in the body, you have to go still deeper within and bring out the full force of the psychic into the physical. This can most easily be done by regular concentration and meditation with the aspiration for this true consciousness. It can be done by work also, by dedication, by doing the work for the Divine only without thought of self and

keeping the idea of consecration to the Mother always in the heart. But this is not easy to do perfectly." (CWSA 29: 299)

6.

"The complete consecration is undoubtedly not an easy matter, and it might take an almost indefinitely long time if you had to do it all by yourself, by your own independent effort. But when the Divine's Grace is with you it is not exactly like that. With a little push from the Divine now and then, a little push in this direction and in that, the work becomes comparatively quite easy. Of course the length of time depends on each individual, but it can be very much shortened if you make a really firm resolve." (CWM 3: 127)

7.

"Much more than any physical condition it is faithfulness to the ideal and consecration to the work that make the true disciple." (CWM 13: 112)

8.

"The indispensable basis of our Yoga is sincerity, honesty, unselfishness, disinterested consecration to the work to be done, nobility of character and straightforwardness. They who do not practise these elementary virtues are not Sri Aurobindo's disciples and have no place in the Ashram." (CWM 13: 123)

9.

"Your work is your sadhana, and it is by doing your work in a spirit of consecration that you can make most progress." (CWM 14: 297)

10.

"With consecration the work can be done much more easily and happily. But nobody must be asked a greater effort than what he can do." (CWM 14: 315)

11.

"*I have faith in my strength and believe I am capable of doing all the work.*

It is not in *your* own strength that you should have faith. It is in *the* divine force, which works in all who are consecrated to the Divine and sustains them in their action.

I have faith that I am capable of doing all the work. I like the work a lot; so if you don't mind, I would like to continue.

I repeat: having faith in yourself cannot take you very far and it is certain that sooner or later you will feel a reaction and be obliged to stop.

First establish the true attitude, which is to find your base, your support and your help in *the Divine alone*—then

all possibility of fatigue will disappear. Until then it is better to let the servant do at least part of the work, which you can supervise if you like." (CWM 17: 11–12)

12.

"*Today You gave me a flower meaning "Disinterested work". So I must find the interest that lies hidden behind every kind of work.*

The flower means precisely: all work that is done, in all sincerity, in consecration to the Divine." (CWM 17: 145)

XIV—Remembering the Mother in Work

1.

"*How to remember the Mother during work? I have tried to follow a mental rule, without success. Perhaps it is the inner consciousness that remembers while the outer is busy?*

One starts by a mental effort—afterwards it is an inner consciousness that is formed which need not be always *thinking* of the Mother because it is always conscious of her." (CWSA 32: 258)

2.

"It is only by an inner development that you can remember in the midst of work. Meanwhile offer all your work inwardly to the Mother." (CWSA 32: 258)

3.

"*During mental activities my outer being never remembers the Mother. Please show me the way to remain conscious of her in the midst of intellectual pursuits*.

It can be done when you become the witness detached from the mental actions and not involved in them, not absorbed in them as the mental doer or thinker." (CWSA 32: 259)

XV—Do Work Without Any Desire for the Fruit, *niṣkāma karma*

1.

"In the field of action desire takes many forms, but the most powerful of all is the vital self's craving or seeking after the fruit of our works. The fruit we covet may be a reward of internal pleasure; it may be the accomplishment of some preferred idea or some cherished will or the satisfaction of the egoistic emotions, or else the pride of success of our highest hopes and ambitions. Or it may be an external reward, a recompense entirely material,—wealth, position, honour, victory, good fortune or any other fulfilment of vital or physical desire. But all alike are lures by which egoism holds us. Always these satisfactions delude us with the sense of mastery and the idea of freedom, while really we are harnessed and guided or ridden and whipped by some gross or subtle, some noble or ignoble, figure of the blind Desire that drives the world. Therefore the first rule of action laid down by the Gita is to do the work that should be done without any desire for the fruit, *niṣkāma karma*." (CWSA 23: 102)

2.

"Whoever sincerely enters the path of works, must leave behind him the stage in which need and desire are the first law of our acts. For whatever desires still trouble his being,

he must, if he accepts the high aim of Yoga, put them away from him into the hands of the Lord within us. The supreme Power will deal with them for the good of the sadhaka and for the good of all. In effect, we find that once this surrender is done,—always provided the rejection is sincere,—egoistic indulgence of desire may for some time recur under the continued impulse of past nature but only in order to exhaust its acquired momentum and to teach the embodied being in his most unteachable part, his nervous, vital, emotional nature, by the reactions of desire, by its grief and unrest bitterly contrasted with calm periods of the higher peace or marvellous movements of divine Ananda, that egoistic desire is not a law for the soul that seeks liberation or aspires to its own original god-nature." (CWSA 23: 209–210)

3.

"The essential of the sacrifice of works must be there and the essential is the surrender of all desire for the fruit of our works, the renunciation of all attachment to the result for which yet we labour. For so long as we work with attachment to the result, the sacrifice is offered not to the Divine, but to our ego. (CWSA 23: 221)

4.

"The renunciation of attachment to the work and its fruit is the beginning of a wide movement towards an absolute equality in the mind and soul which must become all-

enveloping if we are to be perfect in the spirit. For the worship of the Master of works demands a clear recognition and glad acknowledgment of him in ourselves, in all things and in all happenings. Equality is the sign of this adoration; it is the soul's ground on which true sacrifice and worship can be done. The Lord is there equally in all beings, we have to make no essential distinctions between ourselves and others, the wise and the ignorant, friend and enemy, man and animal, the saint and the sinner. We must hate none, despise none, be repelled by none; for in all we have to see the One disguised or manifested at his pleasure. He is a little revealed in one or more revealed in another or concealed and wholly distorted in others according to his will and his knowledge of what is best for that which he intends to become in form in them and to do in works in their nature." (CWSA 23: 223)

5.

"Afterwards even as we have renounced attachment to the fruit, we must renounce attachment to the work also; at any moment we must be prepared to change one work, one course or one field of action for another or abandon all works if that is the clear command of the Master. Otherwise we do the act not for his sake but for our satisfaction and pleasure in the work, from the kinetic nature's need of action or for the fulfilment of our

propensities; but these are all stations and refuges of the ego." (CWSA 23: 222)

6.

"In the end, as the attachment to the fruit of the work and to the work itself has been excised from the heart, so also the last clinging attachment to the idea and sense of ourselves as the doer has to be relinquished; the Divine Shakti must be known and felt above and within us as the true and sole worker." (CWSA 23: 222–223)

7.

"But for one who follows the path of action it is much more difficult, and consequently for him the first step is to do what is said here in the passage of *The Synthesis of Yoga* which we have just read: to create in himself this complete detachment from the fruit of action, to act because this is what must be done, to do it in the best possible way, and not to be anxious about the consequences, to leave the consequences to a Will higher than his own." (CWM 8: 324)

XVI—The Seeker of the Way of Works Has to Learn to Act Without Desire

1.

"It is a common error to suppose that action is impossible or at least meaningless without desire. If desire ceases, we are told, action also must cease. But this, like other too simply comprehensive generalisations, is more attractive to the cutting and defining mind than true. The major part of the work done in the universe is accomplished without any interference of desire; it proceeds by the calm necessity and spontaneous law of Nature. Even man constantly does work of various kinds by a spontaneous impulse, intuition, instinct or acts in obedience to a natural necessity and law of forces without either mental planning or the urge of a conscious vital volition or emotional desire. Often enough his act is contrary to his intention or his desire; it proceeds out of him in subjection to a need or compulsion, in submission to an impulse, in obedience to a force in him that pushes for self-expression or in conscious pursuance of a higher principle. Desire is an additional lure to which Nature has given a great part in the life of animated beings in order to produce a certain kind of rajasic action necessary for her intermediate ends; but it is not her sole or even her chief engine. It has its great use while it endures: it helps us to rise out of inertia, it contradicts many tamasic forces which would otherwise inhibit action.

But the seeker who has advanced far on the way of works has passed beyond this intermediate stage in which desire is a helpful engine. Its push is no longer indispensable for his action, but is rather a terrible hindrance and source of stumbling, inefficiency and failure. Others are obliged to obey a personal choice or motive, but he has to learn to act with an impersonal or a universal mind or as a part or an instrument of an infinite Person. A calm indifference, a joyful impartiality or a blissful response to a divine Force, whatever its dictate, is the condition of his doing any effective work or undertaking any worth-while action. Not desire, not attachment must drive him, but a Will that stirs in a divine peace, a Knowledge that moves from the transcendent Light, a glad Impulse that is a force from the supreme Ananda." (CWSA 23: 266–267)

2.

"But how then shall we continue to act at all? For ordinarily the human being acts because he has a desire or feels a mental, vital or physical want or need; he is driven by the necessities of the body, by the lust of riches, honours or fame, or by a craving for the personal satisfactions of the mind or the heart or a craving for power or pleasure. Or he is seized and pushed about by a moral need or, at least, the need or the desire of making his ideas or his ideals or his will or his party or his country or his gods prevail in the world. If none of these desires nor any other must be the

spring of our action, it would seem as if all incentive or motive power had been removed and action itself must necessarily cease. The Gita replies with its third great secret of the divine life. All action must be done in a more and more Godward and finally a God-possessed consciousness; our works must be a sacrifice to the Divine and in the end a surrender of all our being, mind, will, heart, sense, life and body to the One must make God-love and God-service our only motive. This transformation of the motive force and very character of works is indeed its master idea; it is the foundation of its unique synthesis of works, love and knowledge. In the end not desire, but the consciously felt will of the Eternal remains as the sole driver of our action and the sole originator of its initiative.

Equality, renunciation of all desire for the fruit of our works, action done as a sacrifice to the supreme Lord of our nature and of all nature,—these are the three first Godward approaches in the Gita's way of Karmayoga." (CWSA 23: 104–105)

3.

"Afterwards the element of desire in those impulsions will be thrown away or persistently eliminated by a constant denying and transforming pressure. Only the pure force of action in them *(pravṛtti*) justified by an equal delight in all work and result that is inspired or imposed from above will be preserved in the happy harmony of a final perfection.

To act, to enjoy is the normal law and right of the nervous being; but to choose by personal desire its action and enjoyment is only its ignorant will, not its right. Alone the supreme and universal Will must choose; action must change into a dynamic movement of that Will; enjoyment must be replaced by the play of a pure spiritual Ananda. All personal will is either a temporary delegation from on high or a usurpation by the ignorant Asura." (CWSA 23: 210)

4.

"In an advanced stage of the Yoga it is indifferent to the seeker, in the sense of any personal preference, what action he shall do or not do; even whether he shall act or not, is not decided by his personal choice or pleasure. Always he is moved to do whatever is in consonance with the Truth or whatever the Divine demands through his nature. ... To insist on any particular end or to work for some great mundane object is to fall into the illusion of works; it is to entertain the error that terrestrial life has an intelligible intention and contains objects worthy of pursuit. The great theory of Illusion, which is a practical denial of the Divine in the world, even when in idea it acknowledges the Presence, is once more before us. But the Divine is here in the world,— not only in status but in dynamis, not only as a spiritual self and presence but as power, force,

energy,— and therefore a divine work in the world is possible." (CWSA 23: 267)

5.

"There is no narrow principle, no field of cabined action that can be imposed on the Karmayogin as his rule or his province. This much is true that every kind of works, whether small to man's imagination or great, petty in scope or wide, can be equally used in the progress towards liberation or for self discipline. This much is also true that after liberation a man may dwell in any sphere of life and in any kind of action and fulfil there his existence in the Divine. ... But it may too be called to a work which will not only alter the forms and sphere of its own external life but, leaving nothing around it unchanged or unaffected, create a new world or a new order." (CWSA 23: 268)

6.

"That work cannot be fixed by any mind-made rule or human standard; for his consciousness has moved away from human law and limits and passed into the divine liberty, away from government by the external and transient into the self-rule of the inner and eternal, away from the binding forms of the finite into the free self-determination of the Infinite. ... He is not governed by the judgments of men or the laws laid down by the ignorant; he obeys an inner voice and is moved by an unseen Power.

His real life is within and this is its description that he lives, moves and acts in God, in the Divine, in the Infinite." (CWSA 23: 271)

7.

"But if we accept rather the view that the world is a divinely guided movement of Nature emerging in man towards God and that this is the work in which the Lord of the Gita declares that he is ever occupied although he himself has nothing ungained that he has yet to win, then a deep and true sense will appear for this great injunction. To participate in that divine work, to live for God in the world will be the rule of the Karmayogin; to live for God in the world and therefore so to act that the Divine may more and more manifest himself and the world go forward by whatever way of its obscure pilgrimage and move nearer to the divine ideal." (CWSA 23: 272)

8.

"How he shall do this, in what particular way, can be decided by no general rule. It must develop or define itself from within; the decision lies between God and our self, the Supreme Self and the individual self that is the instrument of the work; even before liberation, it is from the inner self, as soon as we become conscious of it, that there rises the sanction, the spiritually determined choice. It is altogether from within that must come the knowledge

of the work that has to be done. There is no particular work, no law or form or outwardly fixed or invariable way of works which can be said to be that of the liberated being. ... The action of the liberated doer of works must be even such an outflowing from the soul; it must come to him or out of him as a natural result of his spiritual union with the Divine and not be formed by an edifying construction of the mental thought and will, the practical reason or the social sense. ... But in the last state of the soul's infinity and freedom all outward standards are replaced or laid aside and there is left only a spontaneous and integral obedience to the Divine with whom we are in union and an action spontaneously fulfilling the integral spiritual truth of our being and nature." (CWSA 23: 272–273)

XVII—Call for the Mother's Force to Support You in Work

1.

"*What should I do so that my work becomes an offering? What should I do so that I can always be with the Mother?*

What you should do is to have confidence and try to remain always confident and cheerful. If you feel depressed call for the Mother's Force to remove the depression. If you fall ill, call the Mother's Force to cure you. When you work call the Mother's Force to support you and do the work through you." (CWSA 32: 217)

2.

"*Mother,*

I have worked in the Dining Room for 30 years now. If you think it would be better to have younger people for the pressing needs of the future, I shall willingly step aside—I mean it.

In my work I did not plan at all. I left it to you and you never failed me. Let this experience grow.

For the sake of the work, it is better if you continue because you can call and feel me, rather than a youngster perhaps full of unused energy but who believes that he is doing the work. There may be some other good reasons

for you to continue the work, like honesty and sincerity, etc. but that need not be mentioned.

With love and blessings." (CWM 17: 315)

3.

"It is true that my force is always with him to help him to do his work; but my force is essentially a force for perfection, and to be able to allow it to work fully, one must have a constant will for progress in the work." (CWM 14: 304)

4.

"For the work simply aspire for the Force to use you, put yourself inwardly in relation with the Mother when doing it and make it your aim to be the instrument for the expression of beauty without regard to personal fame or the praise and blame of others." (CWSA 31: 62)

5.

"You have only to aspire, to keep yourself open to the Mother, to reject all that is contrary to her will and to let her work in you—doing also all your work for her and in the faith that it is through her force that you can do it. If you remain open in this way the knowledge and realisation will come to you in due course." (CWSA 32: 154)

6.

"The essence of surrender is not to ask the Mother before doing anything—but to accept whole-heartedly the influence and the guidance, when the joy and peace come down to accept them without question or cavil and let them grow, when the Force is felt at work to let it work without opposition, when the Knowledge is given to receive and follow it, when the Will is revealed to make oneself its instrument." (CWSA 32: 143–144)

7.

"*During work, the consciousness, however high it was before, falls at once into inertia. Is this condition never to change?*

It is not necessary to fall into inertia, but one always comes into a less intensity of consciousness during work unless one has established in work the conscious contact with the Mother's Force and is aware of that during the work or unless one has developed a double consciousness, the inner concentrated, the outer doing the work." (CWSA 32: 244–245)

"*You seem to have written to X that there is a special force for the work and, if it is brought down, its action need not remain a separate thing from meditation. What is this special force for work?*

It is the Mother's force, naturally." (CWSA 32: 245)

8.

"*Should one try to put out the Mother's Force during work, if one is conscious of it?*

It is the Mother's Force that has to work through the sadhak, not the sadhak who has to work through the Mother's Force.

If one is not yet conscious of her Force, should one put out one's inner energy in work? How is the inner energy related to the outer energy?

The first stage is when one works with the outer energy, but there is an inner consciousness supporting it which relies wholly on the Mother. The second is when there is an inner consciousness and force which uses the outer instruments—the outer energy being quiescent or else a part only of the inner—while this inner consciousness knows that the force is the Mother's or feels the Mother's presence in it: there are different experiences in this respect. The third is when all is the Mother's Force working." (CWSA 32: 245–246)

9.

"Efface the stamp of ego from the heart and let the love of the Mother take its place. Cast from the mind all insistence

on your personal ideas and judgments, then you will have the wisdom to understand her. Let there be no obsession of self-will, ego-drive in the action, love of personal authority, attachment to personal preference, then the Mother's force will be able to act clearly in you and you will get the inexhaustible energy for which you ask and your service will be perfect." (CWSA 32: 246)

10.

"Even the most purely physical and mechanical work cannot be properly done if one accepts incapacity, inertia and passivity. The remedy is not to confine yourself to mechanical work, but to reject and throw off incapacity, passivity and inertia and open yourself to the Mother's force. If vanity, ambition and self-conceit stand in your way, cast them from you. You will not get rid of these things by merely waiting for them to disappear. If you merely wait for things to happen, there is no reason why they should happen at all. If it is incapacity and weakness that oppose, still, as one opens oneself truly and more and more to the Mother's force, the strength and capacity necessary for the work will be given and will grow in the adhar." (CWSA 32: 257)

11.

"It is owing to the good psychic condition in which you are that this lightness and power of work comes into you; for

then you are open to the Mother's Force and it is that that works in you, so that there is no fatigue. You felt the fatigue formerly *after* the work was over because your vital was open and the vital energy was the instrument of the work, but the body consciousness was not quite open and had some strain. This time the physical seems to have opened also." (CWSA 32: 257)

12.

"In the ordinary condition of the body if you oblige the body to do too much work, it can do with the support of vital force. But as soon as the work is done, the vital force withdraws and then the body feels fatigue. If this is done too much and for too long a time, there may be a breakdown of health and strength under the overstrain. Rest is then needed for recovery.

If however the mind and the vital get the habit of opening to the Mother's Force, they are then supported by the Force and may even be fully filled with it—the Force does the work and the body feels no strain or fatigue before or after. But even then, unless the body itself is open and can absorb and keep the Force, sufficient rest in between the work is absolutely necessary. Otherwise although the body may go on for a very long time, yet in the end there can be a danger of a collapse.

The body can be sustained for a long time when there is the full influence and there is a single-minded faith

and call in the mind and the vital; but if the mind or the vital is disturbed by other influences or opens itself to forces which are not the Mother's, then there will be a mixed condition and there will be sometimes strength, sometimes fatigue, exhaustion or illness or a mixture of the two at the same time.

Finally, if not only the mind and the vital, but the body also is open and can absorb the Force, it can do extraordinary things in the way of work without breaking down. Still, even then rest is necessary. That is why we insist on those who have the impulse of work keeping a proper balance between rest and labour.

A complete freedom from fatigue is possible, but that comes only when there is a complete transformation of the law of the body by the full descent of a supramental Force into the earth-nature." (CWSA 32: 257–258)

13.

"*Since yesterday I have always been in touch with the Mother during work. Not only do I remember her but the connection with her remains during work. Her Force constantly flows into the Adhar and the work is done automatically, but swiftly, perfectly, unhesitatingly—without personal anxieties and responsibilities; instead, there is confidence, sureness, strength, calmness. I feel that if I can do work in this attitude, it will be perfect,*

flawless, the work of the Mother's child, not of an egoistic man. Kindly let me know if I am correct.

Yes, it is a very good progress and the first step towards the right use of the Power for action." (CWSA 32: 259)

14.

"*Could a vision of the Mother or seeing her in dream or in waking be called a realisation?*

That would be an experience rather than a realisation. A realisation would be of the Mother's presence within, her force doing the work—or of the Peace or Silence everywhere, of universal Love, universal Beauty or Ananda etc. etc. Visions come under the head of experiences, unless they fix themselves and are accompanied by a realisation of which they are as it were the support—e.g. the vision of the Mother always in the heart or above the head etc." (CWSA 32: 276)

15.

"At first one must put one's will in unison with the Mother's will knowing that it is an instrument only and that it is the Mother's will behind that alone can give the result. Afterwards, when one becomes conscious fully of the Mother's force working within, then the personal will is replaced by the divine." (CWSA 32: 256)

16.

"During the course of the sadhana one can learn to draw upon the universal Life-Force and replenish the energies from it. But usually the best way is to learn to open oneself to the Mother's Force and become conscious of it supporting and moving or pouring into the system and giving the energy needed for the work whether it be mental, vital or physical.

There is naturally a higher Energy above the present universal forces and it is that which will transform the nature and take up the mental, vital, physical energies and change them into its own likeness." (CWSA 29: 272)

XVIII—The Higher Force Can Transform the Instrument to Get Intuitive Knowledge

1.

"When you have opened yourself to a higher Force, when you have made yourself a channel for the energy of its work, it is quite natural that the Force should flow and act in the way that is wanted or the way that is needed and for the effect that is needed. Once the channel is made, the Force that acts is not necessarily bound by the personal limitations or disabilities of the instrument; it can disregard them and act in its own power. In doing so it may use the instrument simply as a medium and, as soon as the work is finished, leave him just what he was before, incapable in his ordinary moments of doing such good work, capable only when he is seized and used and illumined. But also it may by its power of transforming action set the instrument right, accustom it to the necessary intuitive knowledge and movement so that this living perfected instrument can at will call for and receive the action of the Force. In technique, there are two different things,—there is the intellectual knowledge which one has acquired and applies or thinks one is applying—there is the intuitive cognition which acts in its own right, even if it is not actually possessed by the worker so that he cannot give an adequate account of the modes of working or elements of what he has done. Many poets have a very summary

theoretic knowledge of metrical or linguistic technique; they have its use but they would not be able to explain how they write or what are the qualities and constituent methods of their successful art, but they achieve all the same things that are perfect in the weaving of sounds and the skill of words, consummate in rhythm and language. Intellectual knowledge of technique is a help but a minor help; it can become a mere device or a rigid fetter. It is an intuitive divination of the right process that is more frequent and a more powerful action—or even it is an inspiration that puts the right sounds or right words without need of even any intuitive choice. This is especially true of poetry, for there are arts—those that work in a more material substance—where perfect work cannot be done without full technical knowledge,—painting, sculpture, architecture." (CWSA 29: 268–269)

2.

"What the higher Force writes through you is your own in the sense that you have been an instrument of manifestation— as is indeed every artist or worker. When you put your name to it, it is the name of the instrumental creator; but for sadhana it is necessary to recognise that the real Power, the true Creator was not your surface self, you were simply the living harp on which the Musician played his tune.

The true Ananda of creation is not the pleasure of the ego in having personally done well and in being somebody, that is an extraneous element which attaches itself to the true joy of work and creation. The Ananda comes by the in rush of a larger Might and Delight, *āveśa*; 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 *samarpaṇa*, of spiritual realisation or divine love, but in the spiritual consciousness and life the Ananda of creation has its place." (CWSA 29: 269–270)

3.

"The Force from above is the Force of the Higher Consciousness. That from behind works as a mental, vital or physical force according to need. When the being is open to it and there is a certain passivity to its working, it

takes the place of the personal activity and the Person is a witness of its action." (CWSA 29: 271)

XIX—Be Receptive to the Force When You Work

1.

"*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)

2.

"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.

Love and blessings." (CWM 14: 320)

3.

"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.

To arrive at this condition the important thing is a persistent aspiration, call and self-offering, and a will to reject all in oneself or around that stands in the way. Difficulties there will always be at the beginning and for as long a time as is necessary for the change; but they are bound to disappear if they are met by a settled faith, will and patience." (CWSA 29: 234)

4.

"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 subconscient which stands in the way of the physical mind being in its mass free and responsive." (CWSA 29: 260)

5.

"In your work for us you have the knowledge that our force stands behind you; it is always there and can increase your power to help others, not only when you are doing the work but at other times or whenever they turn towards you

with the idea or faith that the help they need can come from you.” (CWSA 35: 709)

XX—In a Perfect Instrument the Work Will Be Done by the Mother's Force

1.

"The feeling that all one does is from the Divine, that all action is the Mother's is a necessary step in experience, but one cannot remain in it—one has to go farther. Those can remain in it who do not want to change the nature, but only to have the experience of the Truth behind it. Your action is according to universal Nature and in that again it is according to your individual nature, and all Nature is a force put out by the Divine Mother for the action of the universe. But as things are it is an action in the Ignorance and the ego; while what we want is an action of the divine Truth unveiled and undeformed by the Ignorance and the ego. So when you feel that your actions are all done by the force (...) of the Mother, that is a true experience. But the will of the Mother (...) is that all you do should be done not by her force in Nature as now, but her own direct force in the Truth of her nature, the higher divine Nature. So also it was correct, what you thought afterwards, that unless there is this change, the experience that all you do is done by her will cannot be altogether true. So it will not be permanent till then. For if it were permanent now, it might keep you in the lower action as it does many and prevent or retard the change. What you need as a permanent experience now is that of the Mother's Force working in

you in all things to change this ignorant consciousness and nature into her divine consciousness and nature.

It is the same with the truth about the instrument. It is true that each being is an instrument of the cosmic Shakti, therefore of the Mother. But the aim of the sadhana is to become a conscious and perfect instrument instead of one that is unconscious and therefore imperfect. You can be a conscious and perfect instrument only when you are no longer acting in obedience to the ignorant push of the lower nature, but in surrender to the Mother and aware of her higher Force acting within you. So here too your intuition was perfectly true.

But all this cannot be done in a day. So you are once more right in not being anxious or uneasy. One must be vigilant, but not anxious and uneasy, ... The Mother's Force will act and bring the result in its own time—provided one offers all to her and aspires and is vigilant, calling and remembering her at all times, rejecting quietly all that stands in the way of the action of her transforming Force. Your second view of this was more from the right angle of vision than the first. To say that it is not I who have to act, so I need not mind, is to say too much—one has to act in so far as one has to aspire, offer oneself, assent to the Mother's working, reject all else, more and more surrender. All else will be done in time; there is no need for anxiety or depression or impatience." (CWSA 32: 242–243)

2.

"*During the work, is it good to go on thinking: 'It is the Mother who does the work through us*?

If it is *work*, you can always do that, provided you realise that it depends on the instrument whether the Mother's force works fully or not.

But if we think it is the Mother who is working through us, wrong movements may hide in the disguise of the Mother?

If you think all your actions come from the Mother, then of course it will have that effect—the actions come from Prakriti. Work is a different matter, for it is the Mother's work you are doing." (CWSA 32: 242)

3.

"Let us constantly aspire to be a perfect instrument for the Divine's work." (CWM 14: 304)

4.

"Let nothing short of perfection be your ideal in work and you are sure to become a true instrument of the Divine." (CWM 14: 304)

5.

"*Today I felt as if someone other than myself was carrying out my actions. Of course I was there, but in the background. Was it not the Mother's Force trying to take me into itself integrally?*

It is too much to say that. What you say amounts only to some glimpse of the cosmic Force behind all the actions." (CWSA 32: 242)

6.

"*What is meant by being an instrument or being used by the Mother's Force? When one acts on impulse, often it is a wrong movement—how can that be a case of being an instrument? When you wrote to X, 'You are being used as an effective instrument', did you write it as a temporary encouragement?*

So long as one is not conscious of the Force working through one, one is moved by the Prakriti. The Prakriti may be used sometimes by the Divine for some work to be done, but that is not what is meant in the Yoga by being an 'instrument'. I do not know to what you refer as regards *X*,—his poetry was inspired by us and he felt it and it certainly helped several people; to that extent he was an effective instrument for the work so long as he was in the right attitude. Naturally, it is for the work that one can be

an instrument, not for things like sex which have nothing to do with the Yoga or the work. But the real instrumentality begins when the consciousness of the Force working begins within." (CWSA 32: 244)

7.

"It is a Force that comes and pushes to work and is as legitimately a part of the spiritual life as others. It is a special Energy that takes hold of the worker in the being and fulfils itself through him. To work with a full energy like this in one is quite salutary. The only thing is not to overdo it—that is to avoid any exhaustion or recoil to a fatigued inertia.

As for the dedication make the *saṅkalpa* always of offering it, remember and pray when you can (I mean in connection with the work). This is to fix a certain attitude. Afterwards, the Force can take advantage of this key to open the deeper dedication within." (CWSA 29: 270–271)

8.

"*In a letter about work Sri Aurobindo says: 'As for the dedication make the saṅkalpa always of offering it, remember and pray when you can. . . . This is to fix a certain attitude. Afterwards, the Force can take advantage of this key to open the deeper dedication within.' May I know in what terms this deeper dedication can be expressed?*

One begins to feel a double consciousness, one an inner being within which is always dedicated, spontaneously and silently full of the devotion to the Mother or aware of her Force working or of her presence or all these together and another the outer through which the work is done." (CWSA 32: 244)

XXI—Action Can Come Out of the Inner Being in Union with the Mother

1.

"It is a little difficult at first to combine the inward condition with the attention to the outward work and mingling with others, but a time comes when it is possible for the inner being to be in full union with the Mother while the action comes out of that concentrated union and is consciously guided in all its details so that some part of the consciousness can attend to everything outside, even be concentrated upon it and yet feel the inward concentration in the Mother." (CWSA 29: 254)

2.

"A perfect perfection in working is only possible after supramentalisation; but a relative good working is possible on the lower planes if one is in contact with the Divine and careful, vigilant and conscious in mind and vital and body. That is a condition, besides, which is preparatory and almost indispensable for the supramentalisation." (CWSA 32: 255)

3.

"*Perhaps I am mistaken in believing that I shall find myself close to you more rapidly by dissolving my being than by mixing with many people and doing much work.*

I have had the experience myself that one can be fully concentrated and be in union with the Divine even while working physically with one's hands; but naturally this asks for a little practice, and for this the most important thing to avoid is *useless talking*. It is not *work* but *useless talk* which takes us away from the Divine." (CWM 16: 178)

XXII—Consciousness Can Come by Turning to the Mother

1.

"It is not by thinking and reading that consciousness comes. There are many who read and think a great deal but are not conscious, have not the witness developed in them. There are others who work all day like *X*, yet are very strongly conscious. When one has the power of stopping thinking altogether and only looking, then the Witness becomes very strong and conscious. This consciousness can come by practice, but it can also come by turning to the Mother and thinking of her always and offering to her everything. The being opens, the Mother's force begins to work and one becomes more and more conscious." (CWSA 30: 243)

XXIII—Find the Mother in Work and Action

1.

"You must be able to find the Mother in work and action as well as in concentration and silence. It is quite possible even if there is the silence within you and no restless movement, to move and act and do all that is needful. It is in fact when all within is silent, free from desire and with no restless movement that the Mother's force can act best and do things in the right way. You should aspire to the Mother for the right force to act and do work and find her in the work and action." (CWSA 32: 241)

2.

"All depends on the attitude with which you do the work. If done with the right attitude, it will surely bring you nearer to me." (CWM 14: 298)

3.

"I am quite satisfied with your way of doing the work and it is sure to help you to come nearer to me." (CWM 14: 298)

4.

"What Mother must have said is 'Why do you make any separation between me and work?' It is she who is doing the work, she is there in it, so it is a mistake to make an

opposition between concentration on her and the work. Her presence is there in both.” (CWSA 32: 253)

XXIV—Feel the Mother's Force behind You and Open to Her Guidance

1.

"It is not enough to remember that the work is the Mother's—and the results also. You must learn to feel the Mother's force behind you and to open to the inspiration and the guidance. Always to remember by an effort of the mind is too difficult; but if you get into the consciousness in which you feel always the Mother's force in you or supporting you, that is the true thing." (CWSA 32: 247–248)

2.

"*My thoughts, emotions and sensations are all turned towards the Mother. But how can I make them serve her in practical life? I still make mistakes and do not always get the right inspiration*.

That depends on the physical mind. It has to learn to stop listening to itself and following its own ideas and to call seriously and persistently for the inspiration of the Mother—your physical mind has to become a portion of hers, answering at once and accurately to whatever comes from her." (CWSA 32: 251)

3.

"*X says that he cannot feel your presence during work as he can during meditation. He does not understand how work can help him.*

He has to learn to consecrate his work and feel the Mother's power working through it. A purely sedentary subjective realisation is only a half realisation." (CWSA 32: 251—252)

4.

Prayers for a Sadhak

"Deliver me from anger, ingratitude and foolish pride. Make me calm, humble and gentle. Let me feel your divine control in my work and in all my action." (CWSA 35: 843)

XXV—To Know Whether the Impulse for Work Comes from the Mother or Not

1.

"*Before undertaking any action one tries to know whether the impulse comes from the Mother or not, but generally one doesn't have enough discernment to know it and yet one acts. Can one know from the result of the action whether it came from the Mother or not?*

One does not have the discernment because one does not care to have it! Listen, I don't think there is a single instance in which one does not find within oneself something very clear, but you must sincerely want to know—we always come back to the same thing—you must sincerely want it. The first condition is not to begin thinking about the subject and building all sorts of ideas: opposing ideas, possibilities, and entering into a formidable mental activity. First of all, you must put the problem as though you were putting it to someone else, then keep silent, remain like that, immobile. And then, after a little while you will see that at least three different things may happen, sometimes more. Take the case of an intellectual, one who acts in accordance with the indications of his head. He has put the problem and he waits. Well, if he is indeed attentive, he will notice that there is (the chronological order is not absolute, it may come in a different order) at

first (what is most prominent in an intellectual) a certain idea: 'If I do that in this way, it will be all right; it must be like that', that is to say, a mental construction. A second thing which is a kind of impulse: 'That will have to be done. That is good, it must be done.' Then a third which does not make any noise at all, does not try to impose itself on the others, but has the tranquillity of a certitude—not very active, not giving a shock, not pushing to action, but something that knows and is very quiet, very still. This will not contradict the others, will not come and say, 'No, that's wrong'; it says simply, 'See, it is like this', that's all, and then it does not insist. The majority of men are not silent enough or attentive enough to be aware of it, for it makes no noise. But I assure you it is there in everybody and if one is truly sincere and succeeds in being truly quiet, one will become aware of it. The thinking part begins to argue, 'But after all, this thing will have this consequence and that thing will have that consequence, and if one does this...' and this, and that... and its noise begins again. The other (the vital) will say, 'Yes, it *must* be done like that, it *must* be done, you don't understand, it *must*, it is indispensable.' There! Then you will know. And according to your nature you will choose either the vital impulse or the mental leading, but very seldom do you say quite calmly, 'Good, it is this I am going to do, whatever happens', and even if you don't like it very much. But it is always there. I am sure that it is there even in the murderer before he kills, you

understand, but his outer being makes such a lot of noise that it never even occurs to him to listen. But it is always there, always there. In every circumstance, there is in the depth of every being, just this little (one can't call it 'voice', for it makes no sound) this little indication of the divine Grace, and sometimes to obey it requires a tremendous effort, for all the rest of the being opposes it violently, one part with the conviction that what it thinks is true, another with all the power, the strength of its desire. But don't tell me that one can't know, for that is not true. One can know. But one does not always know what is necessary, and sometimes, if one knows what is to be done, well, one finds some excuse or other for not doing it. One tells oneself, 'Oh! I am not so sure, after all, of this inner indication; it does not assert itself with sufficient force for me to trust it.' But if you were quite indifferent, that is, if you had no desire, either mental or vital or physical desire, you would know with certainty that it is that which must be done and nothing else. What comes and gets in the way is preference—preferences and desires. Every day one may have hundreds and hundreds of examples. When people begin to say, 'Truly I don't know what to do', it always means that they have a preference. But as here in the Ashram they know there is something else and as at times they have been a little attentive, they have a vague sensation that it is not quite that: 'It is not quite that, I don't feel quite at ease.' Besides, you were saying a while

ago that it is the result which gives you the indication; it has even been said (it has been written in books) that one judges the divine Will by the results! All that succeeds has been willed by the Divine; all that doesn't, well, He has not willed it! This is yet again one of those stupidities big as a mountain. It is a mental simplification of the problem, which is quite comic. That's not it. If one can have an indication (in proportion to one's sincerity), it is uneasiness, a little uneasiness—not a great uneasiness, just a little uneasiness.

Here, you know, you have another means, quite simple (I don't know why you do not use it, because it is quite elementary); you imagine I am in front of you and then ask yourself, 'Would I do this before Mother, without difficulty, without any effort, without something holding me back?' That will never deceive you. If you are sincere you will know immediately. That would stop many people on the verge of folly." (CWM 4: 385–387)

XXVI—Openness Brings the Mother's Energy in Work

1.

"*Yesterday I worked with great vigour and after I saw Mother in the evening I felt that there was no physical tiredness at all and that I could work for twelve hours more.*

It is the Mother's energy that comes down into the vital and physical for those who are open." (CWSA 32: 241)

2.

"Not only in your inward concentration, but in your outward acts and movements you must take the right attitude. If you do that and put everything under the Mother's guidance, you will find that difficulties begin to diminish or are much more easily got over and things become steadily smoother.

Now that these things have happened you should learn from them and feel the necessity of being, as you say, conscious in your work. In your work and acts you must do the same as in your concentration. Open to the Mother, put them under her guidance, call in the peace, the supporting Power, the protection and, in order that they may work, reject all wrong influences that might come in their way by creating wrong, careless or unconscious movements." (CWSA 32: 319)

XXVII—The Inexhaustible Energy Is Backing the Work of the Ashram

1.

"To do properly the work of the Ashram one must be strong and plastic enough to know how to utilise the inexhaustible Energy which is backing you all.

I expect everybody here to rise to the height of the needs.

If we are not able to do even that much, how can we hope to be ready for the descent of the Light of Truth when it will come to manifest upon earth?..." CWM 13: 159)

2.

"This [*renewal of energy for work*] is the thing that used to happen daily to the physical workers in the Asram. Working with immense energy and enthusiasm, with a passion for the work they might after a time feel tired—then they would call the Mother and a sense of rest came into them and with or after it a flood of energy so that twice the amount of work could be done without the least fatigue or reaction. In many there was a spontaneous call of the vital for the Force, so that they felt the flood of energy as soon as they began the work and it continued so long as the work had to be done." (CWSA 32: 420)

3.

"Don't be afraid of vital energy in work. Vital energy is an invaluable gift of God without which nothing can be done,—as the Mother has always insisted from the beginning; it is given that His work may be done.

I am very glad it has come back and cheerfulness and optimism with it. That is as it should be." (CWSA 32: 420)

XXVIII—Regard Your Life as Given to You Only for the Divine Work

1.

"Regard your life as given you only for the divine work and to help in the divine manifestation." (CWSA 32: 8)

2.

"The work which the sadhak of the supramental Yoga has to do is not his own work for which he can lay down his own conditions, but the work of the Divine which he has to do according to the conditions laid down by the Divine. Our Yoga is not for our own sake but for the sake of the Divine. It is not our own personal manifestation that we are to seek, the manifestation of the individual ego freed from all bounds and from all bonds, but the manifestation of the Divine. Of that manifestation our own spiritual liberation, perfection, fullness is to be a result and a part, but not in any egoistic sense or for any ego-centred or self-seeking purpose. This liberation, perfection, fullness too must not be pursued for our own sake, but for the sake of the Divine. I emphasise this character of the creation because a constant forgetfulness of this simple and central truth, a conscious, half-conscious or wholly ignorant confusion about it has been at the root of most of the vital revolts that have spoiled many an individual sadhana here and

disturbed the progress of the general inner work and the spiritual atmosphere.

The supramental creation, since it is to be a creation upon earth, must be not only an inner change but a physical and external manifestation also. And it is precisely for this part of the work, the most difficult of all, that surrender is most needful; for this reason, that it is the actual descent of the supramental Divine into Matter and the working of the Divine Presence and Power there that can alone make the physical and external change possible." (CWSA 31: 161–162)

XXIX—In Works, Aspiration Towards Perfection Is True Spirituality

1.

"In works, aspiration towards Perfection is true spirituality." (CWM 14: 306)

2.

"You will become more and more perfect in your work as the consciousness grows, increases, widens and is enlightened." (CWM 14: 303)

3.

"In all action, all work done, the degree of perfection depends upon the degree of consciousness." (CWM 14: 303)

4.

"*To work in the Divine's way is not easy for a blind and egoistic person like me. By that I mean: to work unegoistically and to keep myself open to your force so that it may work unhampered in me. Am I right?*

Yes, it is correct.

Judging by that standard I have no right to work for you at all; but it is also not desirable, perhaps, to cease to work for you.

Certainly you must not stop working for me. It is by working that the perfection of the working comes." (CWM 14: 303)

5.

"Perfection in the work must be the aim, but it is only by a very patient effort that this can be obtained." (CWM 14: 304)

6.

"Whatever work you do, do it as perfectly as you can. That is the best service to the Divine in man." (CWM 14: 306)

7.

"It is by combined and patient effort that all good work is done." (CWM 14: 304)

8.

"Open yourself more and more to the Divine's force and your work will progress steadily towards perfection." (CWM 14: 304)

9.

"If men had to stop work when they are not perfect, everybody would stop working. It is in the work that we must progress and purify ourselves.

Continue to do the work you are doing but never forget that it can and must become better." (CWM 14: 307)

10.

"To do the work that one does with all sincerity, as perfectly as one can, is certainly one of the best ways to serve the Divine." (CWM 14: 307)

XXX—Experience of True Attitude in Work

1.

"This [*experience of the true attitude*] happens when the work is always associated with the Mother's thought, done as an offering to her, with the call to do it through you. All ideas of ego, all association of egoistic feelings with the work must disappear. One begins to feel the Mother's force doing the work; the psychic grows through a certain inner attitude behind the work and the adhar becomes open both to the psychic intuitions and influences from within and to the descent from above. Then the result of meditation can come through the work itself." (CWSA 32: 253)

XXXI—Spiritual Effectiveness of Work

1.

"The spiritual effectivity of work of course depends on the inner attitude. What is important is the spirit of offering put into the work. If one can in addition remember the Mother in the work or through a certain concentration feel the Mother's presence or force sustaining or doing the work, that carries the spiritual effectivity still farther. But even if one cannot in moments of clouding, depression or struggle do these things, yet there can be behind a love or bhakti which was the original motive power of the work and that can remain behind the cloud and reemerge like the sun after dark periods. All sadhana is like that and it is why one should not be discouraged by the dark moments, but realise that the original urge is there and that therefore the dark moments are only an episode in the journey which will lead to greater progress when they are once over." (CWSA 29: 242)

2.

"The Divine, the Eternal is the Lord of our sacrifice of works and union with him in all our being and consciousness and in its expressive instruments is the one object of the sacrifice; the steps of the sacrifice of works must therefore be measured, first, by the growth in our nature of something that brings us nearer to divine Nature, but

secondly also by an experience of the Divine, his presence, his manifestation to us, an increasing closeness and union with that Presence." (CWSA 23: 114)

3.

"As that self-giving progresses, the work of the sacrifice becomes easier and more powerful and the prevention of the opposing Forces loses much of its strength, impulsion and substance. Two inner changes help most to convert what now seems difficult or impracticable into a thing possible and even sure. There takes place a coming to the front of some secret inmost soul within which was veiled by the restless activity of the mind, by the turbulence of our vital impulses and by the obscurity of the physical consciousness, the three powers which in their confused combination we now call our self. There will come about as a result a less impeded growth of a Divine Presence at the centre with its liberating Light and effective Force and an irradiation of it into all the conscious and subconscious ranges of our nature. These are the two signs, one marking our completed conversion and consecration to the great Quest, the other the final acceptance by the Divine of our sacrifice." (CWSA 23: 133)

4.

"For even when we speak of the sacrifice of works by itself, we do not mean the offering only of our outward acts, but

of all that is active and dynamic in us; our internal movements no less than our external doings are to be consecrated on the one altar. The inner heart of all work that is made into a sacrifice is a labour of self-discipline and self-perfection by which we can hope to become conscious and luminous with a Light from above poured into all our movements of mind, heart, will, sense, life and body. An increasing light of divine consciousness will make us close in soul and one by identity in our inmost being and spiritual substance with the Master of the world-sacrifice,—the supreme object of existence proposed by the ancient Vedanta; but also it will tend to make us one in our becoming by resemblance to the Divine in our nature, the mystic sense of the symbol of sacrifice in the sealed speech of the seers of the Veda." (CWSA 23: 134)

XXXII—To Have Active Surrender Do Some Useful Work

1.

"*What is 'a glad and strong and helpful submission'?*

Do you know what it means to be glad? Do you know what it means to be strong? Do you know what it means to be helpful? Well, the surrender, that is, the self-giving to the Divine, must be happy, joyful, made gladly; it must be strong, one must not give oneself through weakness and impotence but with an active and strong will. And then the surrender must not remain absolutely indolent: 'I have made my surrender, I have nothing more to do in life, I have only to remain still, my surrender is made.' And it must be helpful, that is, it must be active—it must undertake the transformation of the being or do some useful work." (CWM 4: 357)

2.

"It goes without saying that if in your action, your work, you have in the least this feeling, 'I am doing it because I have been told to do it', and there is not a total adherence of the being, and you do not do the work because you feel it must be done and you love doing it; if something holds back, stands apart, separate, 'I was told it had to be done like that so I did it like that', it means there is a great gulf

between you and surrender. True surrender is to feel that one wants, one has, this complete inner adherence: you cannot do *but that*, that which you have been given to do, and what you have not been given to do you cannot do. But at another moment the work may change; at any moment it may be something else, if it is decided that it be something else. It is there that plasticity comes in. That makes a very great difference. It is well understood that those who work are told, 'Yes, work, that is your way of surrendering', but it is a beginning. This way has to be progressive. It is only a beginning, do you understand?" (CWM 4: 373)

3.

"Just as you give yourself through work to the Mother doing all for her, so there is an inner giving or consecration. Ordinarily the mind and vital live for themselves, want this or that, seek after it and feel dissatisfied and unfulfilled if they do not get it. But when they give themselves, this ceases. Whatever the Mother does with them that they accept—ask for nothing, rely on her entirely, live for her will and not for their desires. Then they begin to be empty of their old selves and old movements, fill with the presence of the Mother, the will of the Mother, the workings of the Mother—that becomes all their life." (CWSA 32: 253)

4.

"*Does not surrender consist in offering one's work like a good servant?*

Work is a good discipline. But it is not this idea, it is not the idea of a passive, unconscious and almost involuntary submission. It is not that. It does not lie only in work.

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. You

may work, do disinterested work without any idea of personal profit, work for the joy of working, but if you are not at the same time ready to leave this work, to change the work or change the way of working, if you cling to your own way of working, your surrender is not complete. You must come to a point when everything is done because you feel within, very clearly, in a more and more imperious way, that it is this which must be done and in this particular way, and that you do it only because of that. You do not do it because of any habit, attachment or preference, nor even any conception, even a preference for the idea that it is the best thing to do—else your surrender is not total. As long as you cling to something, as long as there is something in you which says, 'This may change, that may change, but that, *that* will not change', as long as you say about anything at all, 'That will not change' (not that it refuses to change, but because you can't think of its changing), your surrender is not complete." (CWM 4: 371–373)

5.

"For example, you have decided to offer your life to the Divine, you take that decision. But all of a sudden, something altogether unpleasant, unexpected happens to you and your first movement is to react and protest. Yet you have made the offering, you have said once for all: 'My life belongs to the Divine', and then suddenly an extremely

unpleasant incident happens (that can happen) and there is something in you that reacts, that does not want it. But here, if you want to be truly logical with your offering, you must bring forward this unpleasant incident, make an offering of it to the Divine, telling him very sincerely: 'Let Your will be done; if You have decided it that way, it will be that way.' And this must be a willing and spontaneous adhesion. So it is very difficult." (CWM 5: 52–53)

6.

"Power of action: the power which results from a true surrender to the Divine." (CWM 14: 324)

XXXIII—Inspiration in Work

1.

"What you find happening [*a loss of inspiration*] is a common experience in all work. Mother says it is due to the fact that in beginning the work there is an inspiration of what to do and the mind at first acts as a channel for it and all goes well. Afterwards the mind begins to be acting on its own account, without one's noticing it usually unless one is very conscious and accustomed to scrutinise oneself—and do the thing without the original inspiration by its ordinary means. This is felt very clearly in work like poetry and music—for there one feels the inspiration coming and feels it failing and getting mixed up with the ordinary mind. So long as it goes on, everything is done easily and well, but as soon as the mind begins to interfere or to work in its place, then the work is less well done. In work like cooking one does not directly and vividly feel the inspiration, only a brightness and perceptiveness and confidence perhaps —so also one does not notice when the physical mind becomes active. In a thing like poetry one can break off till the inspiration comes again, but in cooking one can't do that, the work has to be finished there and then. I suppose this can be remedied only by one's becoming more conscious within as one does in sadhana, till one can see and counteract the wrong movement of inferior mental activity by bringing down of one's will again the right inspiration and perception." (CWSA 29: 252)

XXXIV—If Our Nature Is Imperfect, the Work Also Will Be Imperfect

1.

"Not only liberation but perfection must be the aim of the Karmayoga. The Divine works through our nature and according to our nature; if our nature is imperfect, the work also will be imperfect, mixed, inadequate. Even it may be marred by gross errors, falsehoods, moral weaknesses, diverting influences. The work of the Divine will be done in us even then, but according to our weakness, not according to the strength and purity of its source. If ours were not an integral Yoga, if we sought only the liberation of the self within us or the motionless existence of Purusha separated from Prakriti, this dynamic imperfection might not matter. Calm, untroubled, not depressed, not elated, refusing to accept the perfection or imperfection, fault or merit, sin or virtue as ours, perceiving that it is the modes of Nature working in the field of her modes that make this mixture, we could withdraw into the silence of the spirit and, pure, untouched, witness only the workings of Prakriti. But in an integral realisation this can only be a step on the way, not our last resting-place. For we aim at the divine realisation not only in the immobility of the Spirit, but also in the movement of Nature. And this cannot be altogether until we can feel the presence and power of the Divine in every step, motion, figure of our activities, in

every turn of our will, in every thought, feeling and impulse. No doubt, we can feel that in essence even in the nature of the Ignorance, but it is the divine Power and Presence in a disguise, a diminution, an inferior figure. Ours is a greater demand, that our nature shall be a power of the Divine in the Truth of the Divine, in the Light, in the force of the eternal self-conscient Will, in the wideness of the sempiternal Knowledge." (CWSA 23: 251–252)

XXXV—Without Work the Nature Does Not Change

1.

"It is not our experience that by meditation alone it is possible to change the nature, nor has retirement from outward activity and work much profited those who have tried it; in many cases it has been harmful. A certain amount of concentration, an inner aspiration in the heart and an opening of the consciousness to the Mother's presence there and to the descent from above are needed. But without action, without work the nature does not really change; it is there and by contact with men that there is the test of the change in the nature. As for the work one does, there is no higher or lower work; all work is the same provided it is offered to the Mother and done for her and in her power." (CWSA 32: 252)

XXXVI—The Work of Works of Human Beings

1.

"The ascent to the divine Life is the human journey, the Work of works, the acceptable Sacrifice. This alone is man's real business in the world and the justification of his existence, without which he would be only an insect crawling among other ephemeral insects on a speck of surface mud and water which has managed to form itself amid the appalling immensities of the physical universe." (CWSA 21: 48)

XXXVII—The Ashram Was Started So That One Need Not Engage in Earning and Can Concentrate on Inner Aspiration

1.

"Of course, there is a kind of work which is done only for purely pecuniary [financial] and personal reasons, like the one—whatever it may be—which is done to earn a living. That attitude is exactly the one Sri Aurobindo compares with the damp logs of wood which are heaped so thick the flame cannot leap up. It has something dark and heavily dull about it.

And this brings us to something which I have already told you several times, but which presents a problem not yet solved by circumstances. I think I have already spoken to you about it, but still I shall speak about it again this evening because of this sentence of Sri Aurobindo's. ["*If a division of works has to be made, it is between those that are nearest to the heart of the sacred flame and those that are least touched or illumined by it because they are more at a distance, or between the fuel that burns strongly or brightly and the logs that if too thickly heaped on the altar may impede the ardour of the fire by their damp, heavy and diffused abundance*." *(CWSA 23: 141)*]

At the beginning of my present earthly existence I came into contact with many people who said that they had a great inner aspiration, an urge towards something

deeper and truer, but that they were tied down, subjected, slaves to that brutal necessity of earning their living, and that this weighed them down so much, took up so much of their time and energy that they could not engage in any other activity, inner or outer. I heard this very often, I saw many poor people—I don't mean poor from the monetary point of view, but poor because they felt imprisoned in a material necessity, narrow and deadening.

I was very young at that time, and I always used to tell myself that if ever I could do it, I would try to create a little world—oh! quite a small one, but still... a small world where people would be able to live without having to be preoccupied with food and lodging and clothing and the imperative necessities of life, so as to see whether all the energies freed by this certainty of a secure material living would turn spontaneously towards the divine life and the inner realisation.

Well, towards the middle of my life—at least, what is usually the middle of a human life—the means were given to me and I could realise this, that is, create such conditions of life. And I have come to this conclusion, that it is *not* this necessity which hinders people from consecrating themselves to an inner realisation, but that it is a dullness, a tamas, a lack of aspiration, a miserable laxity, an I-don't-care attitude, and that those who face even the hardest conditions of life are sometimes the ones who react most and have the intensest aspiration.

That's all. I am waiting for the contrary to be proved to me.

I would very much like to see the contrary but I haven't yet seen it. As there are many energies which are not utilised, since this terrible compulsion of having something to eat or a roof to sleep under or clothes on one's back does not exist—as one is sure of all that—there is a whole mass of energies which are not utilised for that; well, they are spent in idle stupidities. And of these, the foolishness which seems to me the most disastrous is to keep one's tongue going: chatter, chatter, chatter. I haven't known a place where they chatter more than here, and say everything they should not say, busy themselves with things they should not be concerned with. And I know it is merely an overflow of unused energy. That is all. So the division in works is perhaps not quite what one thinks...." (CWM 8: 160–161)

2.

"Education is a sacerdocy, teaching is a sacerdocy, and to be at the head of a State is a sacerdocy. Then, if the person who fulfils this role aspires to fulfil it in the highest and the most true way, the general condition of the world can become much better. Unfortunately, most people never think about this at all, they fill their role somehow—not to speak of the innumerable people who work only to earn money, but in this case their activity is altogether rotten,

naturally. That was my very first basis in forming the Ashram: that the work done here be an offering to the Divine." (CWM 4: 93)

3.

"13. *How will work be organised and distributed in Auroville?*

'Money would no longer be the sovereign lord; individual worth would have a far greater importance than that of material wealth and social standing. There, work would not be a way to earn one's living but a way to express oneself and to develop one's capacities and possibilities while being of service to the community as a whole, which, for its own part, would provide for each individual's subsistence and sphere of action'." (CWM 13: 189–190)

4.

"*X no longer works for the Ashram; like so many others he lives in the Ashram and works for himself.*

It is just that that is leading the Ashram to financial ruin." (CWM 13: 152) (CWM 17: 242)

XXXVIII—In the Ashram There Is the Difficulty of Keeping the Inner Attitude Unmixed in Activity

1.

"*Then how can one do this [Do this means the aspiration for active identification with the Supreme] in an external world which absorbs you constantly? I am thinking of people who live in the West, for example; they are constantly swallowed up by their work, their appointments, the telephone, they don't even have a minute to purify what comes pouring in on them all the time, and recover. In such conditions, how can one do this?*

Oh, you must know what to take and what to leave!

That is the other extreme.... Certainly, monasteries, retreats, escape into the forests or caves are necessary to counterbalance modern hyper-activity; and yet there is less of all that now than there was one or two thousand years ago. But to me this seems to have been a lack of understanding—it did not last.

Of course, it is this excessive activity which makes an excessive immobility necessary.

But how can one find a way to be what one should be, in normal conditions?

How can one avoid falling into one kind of excess or the other?

Yes, to live normally and to be free.

My child, that is why the Ashram was created! That was the idea. Because, in France, I was always asking myself: How can one find the time to find oneself? How can one even find the time to understand how to become free? So then I thought: a place where material needs will be sufficiently provided for, so that if one truly wants to become free, one can do so. And the Ashram was founded on this idea, not on any other—a place where people would have enough to live on so as to have time to think of the True Thing.

(*Mother smiles*) Human nature is such that laziness has taken the place of aspiration—not for everyone, but anyway in quite a general way—and licence or libertinism has taken the place of freedom—which would tend to prove that the human race has to pass through a period of rough handling before it is ready to pull itself away more sincerely from its slavery to activity.

Indeed, the first movement is this: 'Oh! To find the place where one can concentrate, find oneself, truly live without being preoccupied with material things.' That is the first aspiration. It was even on this basis, at any rate in the beginning, that disciples were chosen—but it does not last!

Things become easy and so one lets oneself go. There are no moral restraints and so one acts foolishly.

But one cannot even say that there was a mistake in the selection—one would be tempted to believe it, but it is not true; because the selection was made according to a very precise and clear inner indication.... It is probably the difficulty of keeping the inner attitude unmixed. This is exactly what Sri Aurobindo wanted, what he was trying for. He said: 'If I could find one hundred people, that would be enough.' But it did not stay one hundred for long, and I must say that even when it was a hundred, it was already mixed.

Many came, attracted by the True Thing, but... one lets oneself go. That is, it is impossible to hold firm in one's true position." (CWM 10: 197–198)

XXXIX—The Consciousness Awakens Under the Stress of Difficulties

1.

"*Yes, I have noticed that in the extreme difficulty of the outer conditions of the world, the aspiration was much more intense.*

Yes, of course!

It is much more intense, it is almost a question of life and death.

Yes, that's it! That is to say, man is still so crude that he needs extremes. That is what Sri Aurobindo said: For love to be true, hatred was necessary; true love could be born only under the pressure of hatred. That's it. Well, one must accept things as they are and try to go further. That is all.

That is probably why there are so many difficulties—difficulties accumulate here: difficulties of character, health and circumstances. It is because the consciousness awakens under the stress of difficulties. If everything is easy and peaceful, one falls asleep.

That is also how Sri Aurobindo explained the necessity of war. In peacetime, one becomes slack.

It is a pity.

I cannot say that I find it very pretty, but it seems to be like that.

This is just what Sri Aurobindo said in *The Hour of God*: If you have the Force and the Knowledge and misuse the moment, woe to you.

It is not revenge, it is not punishment, not at all, but you draw upon yourself a necessity, the necessity for a violent impulsion—to react to something violent." (CWM 10: 198–199)

2.

[Man is still so crude that he needs extremes to progress. That is what Sri Aurobindo said: For love to be true, hatred was necessary; true love could be born only under the pressure of hatred.]

[Thoughts and Aphorisms]

> 88 – This world was built by Death that he might live. Wilt thou abolish death? Then life too will perish. Thou canst not abolish death, but thou mayst transform it into a greater living.
>
> 89 – This world was built by Cruelty that she might love. Wilt thou abolish cruelty? Then love too will perish. Thou canst not abolish cruelty, but thou mayst transfigure it into its opposite, into a fierce Love and Delightfulness.

> 90 – This world was built by Ignorance and Error that they might know. Wilt thou abolish ignorance and error? Then knowledge too will perish. Thou canst not abolish ignorance and error, but thou mayst transmute them into the utter and effulgent exceeding of reason.
>
> 91 – If Life alone were and not death, there could be no immortality; if love were alone and not cruelty, joy would be only a tepid and ephemeral rapture; if reason were alone and not ignorance, our highest attainment would not exceed a limited rationality and worldly wisdom.
>
> 92 – Death transformed becomes Life that is Immortality; Cruelty transfigured becomes Love that is intolerable ecstasy; Ignorance transmuted becomes Light that leaps beyond wisdom and knowledge.

It is the same idea, that is, opposition and contraries are a stimulus to progress. Because to say that without cruelty Love would be tepid [unenthusiastic]... The principle of Love as it exists beyond the Manifested and the Non-Manifested has nothing to do with either tepidness or cruelty. Only, Sri Aurobindo's idea would seem to be that

opposites are the quickest and most effective means of shaping Matter so that it can intensify its manifestation.

As an experience, this is absolutely certain, in the sense that, first of all, when one comes into contact with eternal Love, the supreme Love, one immediately has—how to put it?—a perception, a sensation—it is not an understanding, it is something very concrete: even the most illumined material consciousness, however much it has been moulded and prepared, is *incapable* of manifesting That. The first thing one feels is this kind of incapacity. Then comes an experience: something which manifests a form of—one cannot call it exactly 'cruelty', because it is not cruelty as we know it—but within the totality of circumstances, a vibration appears and, with a certain intensity, refuses love as it is manifested here. It is precisely this: something in the material world which refuses the manifestation of love as it exists at present. I am not speaking of the ordinary world, I am speaking of the present consciousness at its highest. It is an experience, I am speaking of something that has happened. So the part of the consciousness which has been struck by this opposition makes a direct appeal to the origin of Love, *with an intensity which it would not have without the experience of this refusal*. Limits are broken and a flood pours down which *could not* have manifested before; and something is expressed which was not expressed before.

When one sees this, there is obviously a similar experience from the point of view of what we call life and death. It is this kind of constant 'brooding' or presence of Death and the possibility of death, as it is said in *Savitri*: we have a constant companion throughout the journey from cradle to grave; we are constantly accompanied by this threat or presence of Death. Well, along with this, in the cells, there is a call for a Power of Eternity, with an intensity which would not be there except for this constant threat. Then one understands, one begins to feel quite concretely that all these things are only ways of intensifying the manifestation, of making it progress, of making it more perfect. And if the means are crude, it is because the manifestation itself is very crude. And as it becomes more perfect and fit to manifest that which is *eternally progressive*, the very crude means will give way to subtler ones and the world will progress without any need for such brutal oppositions. This is simply because the world is still in its infancy and human consciousness is still entirely in its infancy.

This is a very concrete experience.

It follows that when the earth no longer needs to die in order to progress, there will be no more death. When the earth no longer needs to suffer in order to progress, there will be no more suffering. And when the earth no longer needs to hate in order to love, there will be no more hatred.

(Silence)

This is the quickest and most effective means to bring creation out of its inertia and lead it towards its fulfilment." (CWM 10: 164 –166)

3.

"This is an experience I am having more and more: for the contact with this true divine Love to be able to manifest, that is, to express itself freely, it demands an extraordinary strength in beings and things, which does not yet exist. Otherwise everything falls apart.

There are lots of very convincing details, but of course, because they are 'details' or very personal things, one cannot speak of them; but on the evidence of repeated experiences, I have to say this: when this Power of *pure* Love—which is so wonderful, which is beyond all expression—as soon as it begins to manifest abundantly, freely, it is as if quantities of things crumbled down immediately—they cannot stand. They cannot stand, they are dissolved. Then... then everything stops. And this stopping, which one might think is a disgrace, is just the opposite! It is an infinite Grace.

Simply to perceive, a little concretely and tangibly, the difference between the vibration in which one lives normally and almost continually, and that vibration—simply

to observe this infirmity, which I call sickening—it really makes you feel sick—that is enough to stop everything.

Only yesterday, this morning, there are long moments when this Power manifests; then suddenly, there is a kind of wisdom, an immeasurable wisdom which causes everything to subside in perfect tranquillity: what must be shall be, it will take the time that is needed. And then everything is all right. In this way, everything is all right immediately. But the splendour fades.

One has only to be patient.

Sri Aurobindo also has written this: Aspire intensely, but without impatience.... The difference between intensity and impatience is very subtle — it is all a difference in vibration. It is subtle, but it makes all the difference.

Intensely, but without impatience. That's it. One must be in that state.

And for a very long time, a very long time, one must be satisfied with inner results, that is, results in one's personal and individual reactions, one's inner contact with the rest of the world—one must not expect or be premature in wanting things to materialise. Because our hastiness usually delays things.

If it is like that, it is like that." (CWM 10: 199–200)

XL—Overcome Ego the Motive in the Work for the Divine

1.

"Human nature has always been egoistic in its basis and so it brings in the ego motive into the work for the Divine also. That can only be overcome slowly, for what is ingrained in the human vital nature and has been active through hundreds of lives cannot disappear at once. To be conscious and to have the steady will to change and make the inner motive of bhakti and self-giving prevail over the outer motives is the one thing necessary." (CWSA 31: 219)

2.

"Not only do we, as in the way of works, get rid of the 'I' of the worker and see the Lord alone as the true source of all works and sanction of works and His executive Nature-power or else His supreme Shakti as the sole agent and worker,—but we get rid also of the ego-sense which mistakes the instruments or the expressions of our being for our true self and spirit." (CWSA 23: 359–360)

3.

"The elimination of all egoistic activity and of its foundation, the egoistic consciousness, is clearly the key to the consummation we desire. And since in the path of works action is the knot we have first to loosen, we must

endeavour to loosen it where it is centrally tied, in desire and in ego; for otherwise we shall cut only stray strands and not the heart of our bondage. These are the two knots of our subjection to this ignorant and divided Nature, desire and ego-sense. And of these two desire has its native home in the emotions and sensations and instincts and from there affects thought and volition; ego-sense lives indeed in these movements, but it casts its deep roots also in the thinking mind and its will and it is there that it becomes fully self-conscious. These are the twin obscure powers of the obsessing world-wide Ignorance that we have to enlighten and eliminate.” (CWSA 23: 101–102)

XLI—The True Service and the True Yoga Are to Do What the Mother Wants and Not What You Want

1.

"If you say 'I will not eat' or 'I will eat only once until you do what I say,' that is not *prārthanā* or *bhikṣā*, that is putting compulsion on the Mother to do what you want.

I do not know what you mean by giving you your service. If it is the old work, that is not possible any longer. Other work will have to be found. But you should remember that the true service and the true Yoga is to do what the Mother wants and not what you want. It is by making one's will one with hers and submitted to hers that one can advance and feel unity with her and her constant presence." (CWSA 32: 415—416)

2.

"The Mother has her own reasons for her decisions; she has to look at the work as a whole without regard to one department or branch alone and with a view to the necessities of the work and the management. Whatever work is done here, one has always to learn to subordinate or put aside one's own ideas and preferences about things concerning it and work for the best under the conditions and decisions laid down by her. This is one of the main difficulties throughout the Asram, as each worker wants to do according to his own ideas, on his own lines according

to what he thinks to be the right or convenient thing and expects that to be sanctioned. It is one of the principal reasons of difficulty, clash or disorder in the work, creating conflict between the workers themselves, conflict between the workers and the heads of departments, conflict between the idea of the sadhaks and the will of the Mother. Harmony can only exist if all accept the will of the Mother without grudge and personal reaction.

Independent work does not exist in the Asram. All is organised and interrelated, neither the heads of departments nor the workers are independent. To learn subordination and cooperation is necessary for all collective work; without it there will be chaos." (CWSA 32: 425–426)

XLII—Go On Doing Ashram Work Without Getting Disturbed or Troubled

1.

"If you leave it to the Mother entirely, then what the Mother would want you to do is to go on with the work as best you can without allowing yourself to be disturbed or troubled by these things which you enumerate in your letters, without insisting on your own ideas or vital feelings. That is indeed the rule that all ought to follow, to do their work here as the Mother's work, not their own; the worker must not insist on the work being done according to his own ideas; for that is to treat it as his own work not the Mother's. If there are inconveniences, troubles, things done not as he would like them to be, still he should go on doing his work as best he can under the circumstances. That is a rule of the sadhana, to remain unconcerned by outward circumstances and quietly do what one has to do, what one can do, leaving the rest to the Mother. It is not possible to have everything perfect at present, even supposing that what one thinks to be right is the best. There is much in the Asram and the work that is not as perfect as the Mother would like it to be, but she knows that the perfection she would like is not yet possible because of circumstances and the imperfection of her instruments; she arranges all for the best according to what is now possible. The worker should do his work in this

spirit according to the Mother's arrangements and he should use his work as a means for growing spiritually in devotion, obedience, self-offering to the Mother, not insisting on himself, his ideas, his feelings and preferences. To be able to do that makes the consciousness ready for inner experience and progress in sadhana.

I have tried to explain what the Mother wants and why she wants it. She wants you to do her work quietly, taking all inconveniences, defects or difficulties quietly, and doing your best; what *X* does or arranges should not disturb you—if he makes mistakes he is responsible for it to the Mother and it is for the Mother to see what is to be done. That is what she wants from you—if you can do it, then things will go more smoothly and she will be able more easily to lead things in the direction she wants. It is also, as I have tried to explain to you, the best thing for your own sadhana." (CWSA 32: 414–415)

XLIII—A Strong Interest in Work Can Quiet the Gloominess and Dullness

1.

"I have explained to you why so many people (not by any means all) are in this gloomy condition, dull and despondent. It is the tamas, the inertia of the Inconscient, that has got hold of them. But also it is the small physical vital which takes only an interest in the small and trivial things of the ordinary daily and social life and nothing else. When formerly the sadhana was going on on higher levels (mind, higher vital etc.), there was plenty of vigour and verve and interest in the details of the Asram work and life as well as in an inner life; the physical vital was carried in the stream. But for many this has dropped; they live in the unsatisfied vital physical and find everything desperately dull, gloomy and without interest or issue. In their inner life the tamas from the Inconscient has created a block or a bottleneck and they do not find any way out. If one can keep the right condition and attitude, a strong interest in work or a strong interest in sadhana, then this becomes quiescent. That is the malady. Its remedy is to keep the right condition and to bring gradually or, if one can, swiftly the light of the higher aspiration into this part of the being also, so that whatever the conditions of the environment, it may keep also the right poise. Then the sunlit path should be less impossible." (CWSA 31: 618)

XLIV—Continue to Work Even If One Feels Lazy

1.

"*Would it not be better to continue the work even if one feels lazy?*

That depends on the work; there we enter another domain.

If it is a work that you are doing for the collectivity and not for yourself personally, then you must do it, whatever happens. It is an elementary discipline. You have undertaken to do this work or have been given the work and have taken it up, therefore you have accepted it, and in that case you must do it. At all times, unless you are absolutely ill, ill in the last degree and unable to move, you must do it. Even if you are rather ill, you must do it. An unselfish work always cures you of your petty personal maladies. Naturally, if you are really compelled to be in bed without being able to move, with a terrible fever or a very serious illness, then that's quite different. But otherwise, if you are just a little indisposed: 'I am not feeling quite well, I have a little headache or I have indigestion, or I have a bad cold, I am coughing', things like that—then doing your work, not thinking of yourself, thinking of the work, doing it as well as you can, that puts you right immediately." (CWM 5: 120–121)

2.

"You should do your work simply in the confidence that it is accepted and appreciated by the Mother, as indeed it is,—for your work has been very good and helpful to her. Let the psychic movement express itself simply and spontaneously in action without allowing the outer mind to interfere; that would very likely release the tension and then your sadhana could proceed in a quiet cheerfulness, confident of its own truth and the Mother's loving acceptance." (CWSA 32: 254)

3.

"*Sweet Mother,*

These days I don't have any interest in my group activities. I am doing the work simply as a duty, without any enthusiasm. Wouldn't it be better to let someone else take my place? I feel it is not fair to the children if I cannot give my best. I will do what You tell me.

You have the knowledge and the experience; they are indispensable conditions for teaching well. I believe that you are a very good teacher and that the children would lose a great deal if you stopped teaching them. Continue, and you will see that soon you will begin to enjoy it again.

Love and blessings." (CWM 17: 367)

4.

"*Sweet Mother,*

I went to work only for one hour, because I had too much work at home.

This is not good; the collective work should not suffer because of personal work." (CWM 16: 262)

5.

"*Sweet Mother,*

X has refused to prepare the new stock-books for next year. And Y is neither willing nor able to do anything. He has made himself completely unfit for any work. I inform you of this so that the situation may improve through Your grace.

I am afraid that the Grace has no effect on lazy people.

Blessings" (CWM 17: 346–347)

6.

"You have been progressing of course, but what Mother told you and tells every one is true that to be a real artist needs hard work for years together. But your mistake is to put stress on these things and get discouraged by any check or difficulty in them. The one thing to be done is to open your consciousness to what is coming down, to let the change operate so that the consciousness becomes a

consciousness of peace and light and power and joy full of the Divine Presence." (CWSA 29: 293)

XLV—How Fatigue Does Not Arise in Work

1.

"*When I do any work for myself or do any work as my own, I get tired. But my mind realises now that this tiredness comes because I have not offered the work to my Divine Parents.*

If there is the full surrender in the work and you feel it is the Mother's and that the Mother's force is working in you, then fatigue does not come." (CWSA 32: 241)

XLVI—The Mother Does Not Give Positions to the Sadhaks; She Gives Them Work

1.

"I do not give positions to the sadhaks—I give them work; and to all I give an equal opportunity. It is those who prove to be most capable and most sincere, honest and faithful that have the biggest amount of work and the greatest responsibility.

Whatever the external circumstances, they are, without exception, the objective projection of what is inside yourself. When in your work you find something giving trouble outside, look within and you will find in yourself the corresponding difficulty.

Change yourself and the circumstances will change." (CWM 13: 160)

2.

"Here is exactly what I said to X: 'I give you the responsibility of the enterprise, the organisation and the carrying on of it. The plans and projects will have to be shown to me for my sanction. For the execution, I shall ask Y, whose enthusiasm I appreciate, to work with you according to the instructions you will give him and to fully collaborate, having in view that it is Sri Aurobindo's and my work, and to do his utmost to make it a success.'

To yourself I say:

Let the work start and be fully organised.

I have no intention of giving posts and positions before something is done and each one proves by acts what he is capable of doing.

It is by the efficiency and the quality of the work that I will judge the workers.

And it is only afterwards that titles can be given.

Never forget that here it is for the *perfection of the work* that we are striving, not for the satisfaction of the ego." (CWM 13: 160)

3.

"There is no question at all of 'position'—nor of prestige. X has a lot of knowledge and experience of the stage that we do not have. She is willing to share it with us. So the only sensible thing for us to do is to learn as much as we can and to be grateful for it.

Moreover never forget that we are working here for the Divine and that no egoistic feeling can be allowed to intervene and spoil the work.

Always present with you." (CWM 13: 162)

4.

"Here nobody can be an exclusive head—everyone must learn to collaborate. It is a very good discipline for vanity, self-conceit and the excessive sense of personal importance." (CWM 13: 163)

XLVII—When You Are Not Working, Aspire

1.

"*During physical pursuits, I find that the Mother's Force takes them up. But when I am not working, what should I aspire for?*

For the Mother's power to work and bring down by the proper stages the higher consciousness. Also for the system to be more and more fit—quiet, egoless, surrendered." (CWSA 32: 252)

XLVIII—Work and Meditation Both Prepare for Spiritual Life and Are Also Means of Realisation

1.

"Work by itself is only a preparation [*for spiritual life*], so is meditation by itself, but work done in the increasing Yogic consciousness is a means of realisation as much as meditation is.

I have not said, I hope, that work *only* prepares. Meditation also prepares for the direct contact. If we are to do work only as a preparation and then become motionless meditative ascetics, then all my spiritual teaching is false and there is no use for supramental realisation or anything else that has not been done in the past." (CWSA 29: 221)

2.

"Work done in the true spirit is meditation." (CWM 14: 298)

3.

"One can progress through meditation, but through work provided it is done in the right spirit one can progress ten times more." (CWM 14: 299)

4.

"*I am not getting much time to sit down for meditation, but the calmness is maintained throughout my work. What should I do when I can make no time for meditation?*

Keep yourself open, remember the Mother always—call for her help and guidance in your work. You must get into a condition in which not only the calmness remains always but the sadhana is going on all the time in work and rest as well as in meditation." (CWSA 32: 156)

5.

"*I could not decide whether to give up my present work or to change it. Then I thought I will leave the work in order to meditate. But I do not know what is good for me. You alone know everything.*

It is a mistake to exercise the mind about these things and try to arrange them with the ordinary mind. It is by confidence in the Mother that the opening needed will come when your consciousness is ready. There is no harm in arranging your present work so that there will be time and energy for some meditation, but it is not by meditation alone that what is needed will come. It is by faith and openness to the Mother." (CWSA 32: 156) (CWSA 29: 109)

6.

"*People say, 'As long as the lower nature is not fully purified, it is dangerous to do a lot of meditation. If one meditates too much before one has become purified by means of work, things might rise up from the lower nature and upset the sadhak. When the higher forces come down*

into a nature not sufficiently purified through work, it is difficult to bear the descent of the divine forces.'

It is not the descent of the higher or divine forces that upsets a sadhak, it is his acceptance of forces of falsehood through ambition, vanity, desire to be a great Yogi or an attachment to his experiences without regard to their truth or their source.

It is not well to spend the whole time or the greater part of the time in meditation unless one is very strong in mind— for one gets into a habit of living in an inner world entirely and losing touch with external realities—this brings in a one sided inharmonious movement and may lead to disturbance of balance. To do both meditation and work and dedicate both to the Mother is the best thing." (CWSA 32: 251)

XLIX—If One Cannot Get Anything from Meditation, Then Work with the Right Spirit Is One's Only Resource

1.

"*If one works with an attitude of service and love, but does not meditate, will it not lead to stagnation from an inner standpoint? Many say, 'We are doing Mother's work and that is sufficient.'*

If they do it in the right spirit, then it may be sufficient for them, as it will bring the rest—because of the spirit in which they do it. It is a matter of idiosyncrasy—there are some who cannot get anything by meditation, so that work or bhakti is their only resource." (CWSA 32: 250)

2.

"Meditation is best when it comes spontaneously. But there should be full concentration in the work if it is to take the place of meditation." (CWSA 29: 222)

L—Time Given to Work and Meditation

1.

"The work should not be diminished for that purpose [*meditation and japa*]. On the other hand it is not necessary for you to work all the time. If the work assigned to you is finished earlier, it does not matter about your not keeping the full office hours." (CWSA 29: 224)

2.

"If this arrangement [*in work*] gives no time for meditation—no time for going inside and establishing there the peace, wideness and joy in which you can meet the Divine inside and in work— it seems defective. What I meant is that it is not necessary either to work all the time or to intoxicate the brain by unrelieved meditation as some do. The result of meditation can be obtained by work, but then you must be able or learn to live inwardly even in the work and to do all from within." (CWSA 29: 224)

3.

"Dhyana and work are both helpful for this Yoga to those who can do both." (CWSA 31: 6263)

4.

"*Should I try meditation?*

It is not necessary if your work is a constant offering to the Divine." (CWM 14: 300)

5.

"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: 224225)

6.

"I have not suggested that you are to progress by *dhyāna* alone; but you have a great capacity for that and you cannot progress fully without it. In this Yoga some kind of action is necessary for all—though it need not take the form of some set labour. But for the moment progress through concentration and inner experience is the first necessity for you." (CWSA 29: 225)

LI—The Poise and Peace of Meditation Can Continue to Flow in Work

1.

"*Ramana Maharshi says that if 'you meditate for an hour or two every day, you can then carry on with your duties. If you meditate in the right manner . . .* '

A very important qualification.

'*then the current of mind induced will continue to flow even in the midst of your work. It is as though there are two ways of expressing the same idea; the same line which you take in meditation will be expressed in your activities.' [The quotation is a paraphrase of Ramana Maharshi's words by Brunton.]*

If the meditation brings poise, peace, a concentrated condition or even a pressure or influence, that *can* go on in the work, provided one does not throw it away by a relaxed or dispersed state of consciousness. That was why the Mother wanted people not only to be concentrated at pranam or meditation but to remain silent and absorb or assimilate afterwards and also to avoid things that relax or disperse or dissipate too much— precisely for this reason that so the effects of what she put on them might continue and the change of attitude the Maharshi speaks of will take

place. But I am afraid most of the sadhaks have never understood or practised anything of the kind—they could not appreciate or understand her directions." (CWSA 32: 214–215)

2.

"*Of course, he adds that setting apart time for meditation is for spiritual novices. You too wrote to me to meditate at least half an hour a day, if only to bring a greater concentration in the work.*

It does bring the effects of meditation into work if one gives it a chance." (CWSA 35: 169)

LII—The Master and Mover of Our Works

1.

"The Master and Mover of our works is the One, the Universal and Supreme, the Eternal and Infinite. He is the transcendent unknown or unknowable Absolute, the unexpressed and unmanifested Ineffable above us; but he is also the Self of all beings, the Master of all worlds, transcending all worlds, the Light and the Guide, the All-Beautiful and All Blissful, the Beloved and the Lover. He is the Cosmic Spirit and all-creating Energy around us; he is the Immanent within us. All that is is he, and he is the More than all that is, and we ourselves, though we know it not, are being of his being, force of his force, conscious with a consciousness derived from his; even our mortal existence is made out of his substance and there is an immortal within us that is a spark of the Light and Bliss that are for ever. No matter whether by knowledge, works, love or any other means, to become aware of this truth of our being, to realise it, to make it effective here or elsewhere is the object of all Yoga." (CWSA 23: 243)

LIII—Our Works Are Part of an Indivisible Cosmic Action

1.

"The Knowledge on which the doer of works in Yoga has to found all his action and development has for the keystone of its structure a more and more concrete perception of unity, the living sense of an all-pervading oneness; he moves in the increasing consciousness of all existence as an indivisible whole: all work too is part of this divine indivisible whole. His personal action and its results can no longer be or seem a separate movement mainly or entirely determined by the egoistic 'free' will of an individual, himself separate in the mass. Our works are part of an indivisible cosmic action; they are put or, more accurately, put themselves into their place in the whole out of which they arise and their outcome is determined by forces that overpass us. That world action in its vast totality and in every petty detail is the indivisible movement of the One who manifests himself progressively in the cosmos. Man too becomes progressively conscious of the truth of himself and the truth of things in proportion as he awakens to this One within him and outside him and to the occult, miraculous and significant process of its forces in the motion of Nature. This action, this movement, is not confined even in ourselves and those around us to the little fragmentary portion of the cosmic activities of which we in

our superficial consciousness are aware; it is supported by an immense underlying environing existence subliminal to our minds or subconscious, and it is attracted by an immense transcending existence which is superconscious to our nature. Our action arises, as we ourselves have emerged, out of a universality of which we are not aware; we give it a shape by our personal temperament, personal mind and will of thought or force of impulse or desire; but the true truth of things, the true law of action exceeds these personal and human formations. Every standpoint, every man-made rule of action which ignores the indivisible totality of the cosmic movement, whatever its utility in external practice, is to the eye of spiritual Truth an imperfect view and a law of the Ignorance." (CWSA 23: 188–189)

2.

"We are forced still to go on dealing with this indivisible movement as if it were a mass of impersonal material out of which we, the ego, the person, have to carve something according to our own will and mental fantasy by a personal struggle and effort. This is man's normal attitude towards his environment, actually false because our ego and its will are creations and puppets of the cosmic forces and it is only when we withdraw from ego into the consciousness of the divine Knowledge-Will of the Eternal who acts in them that we can be by a sort of deputation from above

their master. And yet is this personal position the right attitude for man so long as he cherishes his individuality and has not yet fully developed it; for without this view-point and motive force he cannot grow in his ego, cannot sufficiently develop and differentiate himself out of the subconscious or half-conscious universal mass-existence." (CWSA 23: 189)

3.

"It is indispensable to recognise clearly, not only in our mode of thought but in our way of feeling, sensing, doing, that this movement, this universal action is not a helpless impersonal wave of being which lends itself to the will of any ego according to that ego's strength and insistence. It is the movement of a cosmic Being who is the Knower of his field, the steps of a Divinity who is the Master of his own progressive force of action. As the movement is one and indivisible, so he who is present in the movement is one, sole and indivisible. Not only all result is determined by him, but all initiation, action and process are dependent on the motion of his cosmic force and only belong secondarily and in their form to the creature." (CWSA 23: 189–190)

LIV—In Manifestation the Consciousness Part Translates into Executive Force, which Is Incomplete Without a Worker and a Work

1.

"This becomes still clearer if we consider the manifestation of Sachchidananda. In that manifestation Delight translates itself into Love; Consciousness translates itself into double terms, conceptive Knowledge, executive Force; Existence translates itself into Being, that is to say, into Person and Substance. But Love is incomplete without a Lover and an object of Love, Knowledge without a Knower and an object of Knowledge, Force without a Worker and a Work, Substance without a Person cognizing and constituting it.

... This Self-Awareness and Self-Delight of Brahman has two modes of its Force of consciousness, its Prakriti or Maya,—intensive in self-absorption, diffusive in self-extension. The intensive mode is proper to the pure and silent Brahman; the diffusive to the active Brahman. It is the diffusion of the Self existent in the term and stuff of His own existence that we call the world, the becoming or the perpetual movement (*bhuvanam, jagat*). It is Brahman that becomes; what He becomes is also the Brahman. The object of Love is the self of the Lover; the work is the self-figuration of the Worker; Universe is body and action of the Lord." (CWSA 17: 42)

LV—Giving Up Work Due to Defects in Nature Is Not a Remedy

1.

"The Mother cannot tell you to go because there is no true cause why you should go and it would be very bad for you to do so as well as bad for the work and everything else. The reasons for your not giving up the work are just the same as before and not in the least changed by anything that has happened. Jealousy is no doubt a great defect of the nature, but many here have it; almost everyone has some serious defect in his nature which stands in his way and gives trouble. But it is not a remedy for this to give up work and sadhana and abandon the Mother. You have to go on working and doing the sadhana with the Mother's aid behind you until this and all other obstacles are got rid of. We have told you already that these things cannot be got rid of in a day, but if you persevere and rely on the Mother they will yet disappear. Do not allow an adverse Force to mislead you; reject all depression and go straight forward till you reach the goal." (CWSA 32: 369)

2.

"Silence does not imply that these defects and mistakes do not exist. But all have defects in various forms and make mistakes and the best sadhaks are not exempt. The human way is to get angry and rebuke and condemn and, if the

Mother does not do the same or is not severe, to think she is unjust or partial or unseeing or wilfully blind to the defects of her favourites. But the Mother is not blind; she knows very well the nature of all the sadhaks, their faults as well as their merits; she knows too what human nature is and how these things come and that the human way of dealing with them is not the true way and changes nothing. It is why she has patience and love and charity for all, not for some alone, who are sincere in their work or their sadhana." (CWSA 32: 389–390)

3.

"I can only repeat what I have already written whenever these circumstances and feelings come to you. To leave your work is not a solution—it is through work that one can detect and progressively get rid of the feelings and movements that are contrary to the Yogic ideal,—those of the ego.

Work should be done for the Mother and not for oneself,—that is how one encourages the growth of the psychic being and overcomes the ego. The test is to do the work given by the Mother without abhiman or insistence on personal choice or prestige,—not getting hurt by anything that touches the pride, amour-propre or personal preference.

It is a high and great ideal that is put before the sadhak through work and it is not possible to realise it

suddenly, but to grow steadily into it is possible, if one keeps the aim always before one—to be a selfless and perfectly tempered instrument for the work of the Divine Mother." (CWSA 32: 413)

4.

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

LVI—If You Do not Work Your Sadhana Will Lose All Hold of Realities

1.

"The Mother refuses to relieve you of all work—work is a necessary part of this Yoga. If you do not do work and spend all the time in 'meditation', you and your sadhana will lose all hold of realities; you will lose yourself in uncontrolled subjective imaginations such as those you are now allowing to control you and lead you into actions—like your absenting yourself from Pranam, becoming fanciful and irregular in your taking of food, coming to the Mother at a wrong time and place under the imagination that she has called you—actions dictated by error and false suggestion and not by Truth. It is by doing work for the Mother with surrender to her, with obedience to her expressed will, without fancies and vital self-will that you can remain in touch with the embodied Mother here and progress in the Yoga. Mere subjective experiences without control by us will not lead you to the Truth and may lead you far from it into sheer confusion and error.

If you do not want to do the B.D. [*Building Department*] account and letter work, you can take up the work of keeping the gate daily from 12 to 2; but it is better if you combine this gate work with the typing of letters whenever needed. If you do not want to do the gate work, then you must go on with the work you now have. If you

take the gate work only, you must hand over the typewriter to the B.D. so that it may continue to be used for the work you were doing up till now.

I must warn you that by withdrawing into a one-sided subjective existence within and by pushing away from you all touch with physical realities, you are running into a wrong path and imperilling [*endangering*] your sadhana. What happens to sadhaks who do this is that they make a mental Formation and put it in place of the true embodied Mother here, and then under its inspiration they begin to lose touch with her and disobey her and follow the false suggestions of their mental Formation. The first thing it does is to instigate them not to write to her, not to come to Pranam, not to act as regards food, work etc. On the lines laid down by her, to disobey her—as you have disobeyed her with regard to coming to Pranam this morning. Another very bad sign of this false condition is when they feel not in touch with the Mother when they meet her in the body and guided only by some disembodied Mother in their own egoistic consciousness—that is a sure sign that a Falsehood is getting into their sadhana. As regards their way of life, they do not wish to do like the others, but to have a special way of life of their own, governed by some Imagination within them. All this you must stop. You must come to Pranam regularly, take your food regularly, sleep regularly, do the work given you conscientiously, following the lines laid down for this Asram

by the Mother, and through a right consciousness in this life you must realise her Truth in the physical existence." (CWSA 32: 248–249)

2.

"*Sweet mother,*

I want to be happy, but how? Sadness comes during my work; I cannot forget it. My dear mother, be with me always.

My dear child,

This causeless sadness may also come while you work, but if you didn't work it would be far worse. It is in work that one finds balance and joy.

I am always with you to help and support you.

Love from your mother." (CWM 16: 132)

LVII—Those Who Do Not Work or Do Little Work for the Mother Do Not Get Transformed

1.

"*When I am alone for some time, I feel aspiration in the heart, peace and Samata. I feel as if nothing can disturb me. But when I come out to work or move here and there and mix with others, I lose this feeling. Why does it happen like this?*

It is the difficulty of being calm and surrendered in action and movement; when there is no action and one is simply sitting still, it is easy to be quiet.

How can this weakness be rejected from the nature so that I can live in peace and Samata in the midst of work and everywhere?

By rejecting ego and desire and living and working for the Divine alone.

Will those who live in peace and Samata but do not work for the Mother's sake or do little work be transformed fully?

No; they do not get transformed at all." (CWSA 32: 250)

2.

(*The disciple wrote about a sadhak who did very little work and, in addition, was advising new workers not to 'slave like coolies'.*)

When you are not doing your work with a full sense of your responsibility, it is not a reason to incite new workers to act like you." (CWM 17: 212)

3.

"There is no reason why one should not offer to work if there is work to do. Often there is work to be done and no one offers, so it is not done. Most of the Asram work is done by a few people, while others do a little only or only what they please." (CWSA 35: 752)

LVIII—The Feeling That You Have Worked Enough in Life

1.

"But this is not for lazy folk. It's for people who like progress. Not for those who come and say, 'Oh! I have worked hard in my life, now I want to rest, will you please give me a place in the Ashram?' I tell them, 'Not here. This is not a place for rest because you have worked hard, this is a place for working even harder than before.' So, formerly, I used to send them to Ramana Maharshi: 'Go there, you will enter into meditation and you will get rest.' Now it is not possible, so I send them to the Himalayas; I tell them, 'Go and sit before the eternal snows! That will do you good'." (CWM 8: 21)

2.

"It is not the number of years you have lived that makes you grow old. You become old when you stop progressing.

As soon as you feel you have done what you had to do, as soon as you think you know what you ought to know, as soon as you want to sit and enjoy the results of your effort, with the feeling you have worked enough in life, then at once you become old and begin to decline.

When, on the contrary, you are convinced that what you know is nothing compared to all which remains to be known, when you feel that what you have done is just the

starting-point of what remains to be done, when you see the future like an attractive sun shining with the innumerable possibilities yet to be achieved, then you are young, however many are the years you have passed upon earth, young and rich with all the realisations of tomorrow.

And if you do not want your body to fail you, avoid wasting your energies in useless agitation. Whatever you do, do it in a quiet and composed poise. In peace and silence is the greatest strength." (CWM 12: 123)

3.

"In ordinary life, already, this happens so much. Indeed, this is the bourgeois ideal, which has deadened mankind and made man into what he is now: 'Work while you are young, accumulate wealth, honour, position; be provident, have a little foresight, put something by, lay up a capital, become an official—so that later when you are forty you 'can sit down', enjoy your income and later your pension and, as they say, enjoy a well-earned rest.'—To sit down, to stop on the way, not to move forward, to go to sleep, to go downhill towards the grave before one's time, cease to live the purpose of life—to sit down!

The minute one stops going forward, one falls back. The moment one is satisfied and no longer aspires, one begins to die. Life is movement, it is effort, it is a march forward, the scaling of a mountain, the climb towards new revelations, towards future realisations. Nothing is more

dangerous than wanting to rest. It is in action, in effort, in the march forward that repose must be found, the true repose of complete trust in the divine Grace, of the absence of desires, of victory over egoism.

True repose comes from the widening, the universalisation of the consciousness. Become as vast as the world and you will always be at rest. In the thick of action, in the very midst of the battle, the effort, you will know the repose of infinity and eternity." (CWM 9: 66)

LIX—Wrong Ideas of Work

1.

"If there is temporary physical inability, one can take rest, but solely for the purpose of recovering the physical energy. The idea of giving up physical work for mental self-development is a creation of the mental ego." (CWSA 31: 768)

2.

"*Then, Mother why do all the spiritual schools in India have as their doctrine escape from action?*

Yes, because all this is founded upon the teaching that life is an illusion. It began with the teaching of the Buddha who said that existence was the fruit of desire, and that there was only one way of coming out of misery and suffering and desire; it was to come out of existence. And then this continued with Shankara who added that not only is it the fruit of desire but it is a total illusion, and as long as you live in this illusion you cannot realise the Divine. For him there was not even the Divine, I think; for the Buddha, at least, there wasn't any.

Then did they truly have experiences?

That depends on what you call 'experience'. They certainly had an inner contact with something.

The Buddha certainly had an inner contact with something which, in comparison with the external life, was a non-existence; and in this non-existence, naturally, all the results of existence disappear. There is a state like this; it is even said that if one can keep this state for twenty days, one is sure to lose one's body; if it is exclusive, I quite agree with it.

But it may be an experience which remains at the back, you see, and is conscious even while not being exclusive, and which causes the contact with the world and the outer consciousness to be supported by something that is free and independent. This indeed is a state in which one can truly make very great progress externally, because one can be detached from everything and act without attachment, without preference, with that inner freedom which is expressed outwardly." (CWM 7: 288–289)

3.

"*I aspire to be divinised rapidly by the Mother so that she can take me up for her work. It seems to me it will be spiritual work, like she is doing.*

How can you do like the Mother or do the work she alone can do? That is the ambition and vanity coming in." (CWSA 32: 417)

4.

"*My condition today is that my inner eyes wish to turn towards the Mother and call her by closing my outer eyes. In fact, my eyes tend to close while doing any work. Is this all right?*

If you are working you have to see your work, so it is no use closing the eyes; but one can always do the work in a concentration in which the inner being is turned towards the Mother while the outer does the Mother's work." (CWSA 32: 418)

5.

"What you say is perfectly correct. There is a stupid spirit of competition and claim, as if by being here and working one were doing a favour to the Mother, as if her permission to be here were not a grace and her giving work also were not a grace. If the sadhaks could get rid of this wrong attitude, they would go much faster in their spiritual progress and the atmosphere of the Asram would be clearer and purer." (CWSA 32: 420)

6.

"To begin a work and to leave it half done and to start another work elsewhere, is not a very wholesome habit." (CWM 14: 306)

7.

"*Why do people complain that they are not able to keep up the sadhana during work?*

It is a question of doing work in the right attitude—as a means of sadhana. Most take the work as work only." (CWSA 35: 748)

8.

"What you write shows that you had a wrong idea of the work. The work in the Asram was not meant as a service to humanity or to a section of it called the sadhaks of the Asram. It was not meant either as an opportunity for a joyful social life and a flow of sentiments and attachments between the sadhaks and an expression of the vital movements, a free vital interchange whether with some or with all. The work was meant as a service to the Divine and as a field for the inner opening to the Divine, surrender to the Divine alone, rejection of ego and all the ordinary vital movements and the training in a psychic elevation, selflessness, obedience, renunciation of all mental, vital or other self-assertion of the limited personality. Self-affirmation is not the aim, development of the personal self is not the aim, the formation of a collective vital ego is also not the aim. The merging of the little ego in union with the Divine, purification, surrender, the substitution of the Divine guidance for one's own ignorant self-guidance

based on one's personal ideas and personal feelings is the aim of Karma Yoga, the surrender of one's own will to the Divine Will.

If one feels human beings to be near and the Divine to be far and seeks the Divine through service of and love of human beings and not the direct service and love of the Divine, then one is following a wrong principle — for that is the principle of the mental, vital and moral, not the spiritual life." (CWSA 35: 752–753)

LX—Problems of Complete Cessation of Work

1.

"Moreover, a complete cessation of work and entire withdrawal into oneself is seldom advisable; it may encourage a too one sided and visionary condition in which one lives in a sort of mid world of purely subjective experiences without a firm hold on either external reality or on the highest Reality and without the right use of the subjective experience to create a firm link and then a unification between the highest Reality and the external realisation in life." (CWSA 29: 216)

2.

"If one went to the Himalayas, the likelihood is that one would make oneself fit for inactive meditation and quite unfit for life and the Mother's service—so in the next life the character would be like that. This is simply the influence of old ideas that have no application in this Yoga. It is here in the life near the Mother, in the work itself that one must become fit to be a perfect instrument of the Mother." (CWSA 29: 246)

3.

"But I do not regard the ascetic way of living as indispensable to spiritual perfection or as identical with it. There is the way of spiritual self-mastery and the way of

spiritual self-giving and surrender to the Divine, abandoning ego and desire even in the midst of action or of any kind of work or all kinds of work demanded from us by the Divine. If it were not so, there would not have been great spiritual men like Janaka or Vidura in India and even there would have been no Krishna or else Krishna would have been not the Lord of Brindavan and Mathura and Dwarka or a prince and warrior or the charioteer of Kurukshetra, but only one more great anchorite. The Indian scriptures and Indian tradition, in the Mahabharata and elsewhere, make room both for the spirituality of the renunciation of life and for the spiritual life of action. One cannot say that one only is the Indian tradition and that the acceptance of life and works of all kinds, *sarvakarmāṇi*, is un-Indian, European or Western and unspiritual." (CWSA 29: 250) (CWSA 35: 771)

4.

"It may be necessary for an individual here and there to plunge into meditation for a time and suspend work for that time or make it subordinate; but that can only be an individual case and a temporary retirement." (CWSA 29: 216)

5.

"Work, even manual work, is something indispensable for the inner discovery. If one does not work, if one does not

put his consciousness into matter, the latter will never develop. To let the consciousness organise a bit of matter by means of one's body is very good. To establish order around oneself helps to bring order within oneself." (CWM 13: 208)

6.

"True spirituality lies in the service of the divine work.

To refuse to work for all is only a demonstration of selfishness, and has no spiritual value.

The first thing to do to be able to live in Auroville is to consent to free oneself from one's ego." (CWM 13: 210)

7.

"The negative means [*of sadhana*] are not evil—they are useful for their object which is to get away from life. But from the positive point of view, they are disadvantageous because they get rid of the powers of the being instead of divinising them for the transformation of life." (CWSA 29: 23)

8.

"We forbade *D* to retire,—he was always wanting to give up work, withdraw from all intercourse and spend all his time in meditation; but he did it as much as he could—result, collapse. *C* never asked permission and I cannot say what his retirement was like, but I hear he boasted that by

his intense sadhana he had conquered sex not only for himself but all the sadhaks! He had to leave the Asram owing to his unconquerable attachment to his wife and child and he is there living the family life and has produced another child—what a success for retirement. Where the retirement is helpful and fits the mind or the nature, we approve it, but in the face of these results how can you expect us to follow what the mind calls a consistent course and impose it as the right thing on everybody?" (CWSA 35: 679)

LXI—Advice to the Heads of Departments

1.

"Now that the Granary has moved to a building which belongs to the Mother and has been repaired at much expense, it is necessary that there should be someone among its inmates charged with seeing to the place and to the proper order and maintenance of things there—a manager. The Mother wishes you to take up the charge of manager. You will see to the observance of the general rules that have to be followed if the house is to be maintained in good condition and also to all matters pertaining to the management. Whenever you are in doubt, you can refer or report to the Mother. I trust you will find that all the inmates when they know of the Mother's wishes will sincerely cooperate with you in seeing that all goes well and in an orderly way in the Ganapati House." (CWSA 32: 428)

2.

"*X* is not wrong in giving importance to persons. It is quite true that the work would go on if the persons now incharge were not there and others were in their place, but in most cases it would go on badly or at least worse than now and there would be no certainty that those others would be adequate instruments of the Mother's will. For the work of the charge of departments for instance done by men like

X, Y, Z, there is needed a combination of qualities, a special capacity, a personality and the power of control called organisation and above all fidelity and obedience to the Mother's will, the faith in her perceptions and the desire to carry them out. It is not many in the Asram who have that combination. Before the Mother took up directly through *X* the work, now concentrated in Aroumé and the granaries, all was confusion, disorder, waste, self-indulgence, disregard of the Mother's will. Now though things are far from perfect, because the workers are not at all perfect, still all that is changed. In that change your presence in the kitchen and *A*'s in the granary has counted for much; without you there it would have been far more difficult to realise the organisation of things the Mother wanted and in these two parts of the work it might even have been impossible. The Divine Will is there but it works through persons and there is a great difference between one instrument and another—that is why the person can be of so much importance." (CWSA 32: 429–430)

3.

"In fact, if X and a few others had not made themselves the instruments of the Mother and helped her to reorganise the whole material side of the Asram, the Asram would have collapsed long ago under the weight of a frightful mismanagement, waste, self indulgence, disorder, chaotic self-will and disobedience. He and they faced unpopularity

and hatred in order to help her to save it. It was the Mother who selected the heads for her purpose in order to organise the whole; all the lines of the work, all the details were arranged by her and the head strained to observe her methods and it was only afterwards that she stepped back and let the whole thing go on on her lines but with a watchful eye always. The heads are carrying out her policy and instructions and report everything to her and she often modifies what they do when she thinks fit. Their action is not perfect, because they themselves are not yet perfect and they are also hampered by the ego of the workers and the sadhaks. But nothing can be perfect so long as the sadhaks and the workers do not come to the realisation that they are not here for their ego and self-indulgence of their vital and physical demands but for a high and exacting Yoga of which the first aim is the destruction of desire and the substitution for it of the Divine Truth and the Divine Will." (CWSA 32: 430)

4.

"It is quite impossible to take you away from the kitchen and leave the others to work in your place. Such a solution would be very bad for you, for it would mean your losing a work in which the Mother's force has been long with you and sitting in your room with your thoughts which will not be helpful or according to your active nature. It would be very bad too for the kitchen; your place cannot be filled by

anyone else there, however well they may work in their own limits—none of them could be trusted with the responsibility the Mother has given to you.

The difficulties you have are the difficulties which are met in each department and office of the Asram. It is due to the imperfections of the sadhaks, to their vital nature. You are mistaken in thinking that it is due to your presence there and that if you withdrew all would go smoothly. The same state of things would go on among themselves, disagreements, quarrels, jealousies, hard words, harsh criticisms of each other. *X*'s or any other's complaints against you are because you are firm and careful in your management; there are the same or similar complaints against Y and others who discharge their trust given to them by the Mother scrupulously and well. There are against them the same murmurs and jealousies as are directed against you in the kitchen because of their position and their exercise of it. It would be no solution for Y or others trusted by the Mother to withdraw and leave the place to those who would discharge the duty less scrupulously and less well. It is the same with you and the kitchen work; it is not the way out. The way out can only come by a change in the character of the sadhaks brought about by the process of the sadhana. Till then you should understand and be patient and not allow yourself to be disturbed by the wrong behaviour of the others, but remain quietly doing your best, anchoring yourself on the trust and

support given you by *Y* and the Mother. It is the Mother's work and the Mother is there to support you in doing it; put your reliance on that and do not allow the rest to affect you." (CWSA 32: 434)

5.

"I do not know why there should be so much difficulty about the instructions; you have been doing this work for many years and must surely know the lines on which it has been conducted by *X* and what to do in most cases. In the others where there is no guide in past experience, you have to do your best and in case *X*'s instructions are incomplete and you have to act on your own judgment, you can point it out to him if he finds fault with what is done.

For the rest your judgment about his method of work does not agree with the Mother's observation of him and his work. She has found him one of the ablest organisers in the Asram and one of the most energetic workers who did not spare himself until she compelled him to do so, one who understood and entered completely into her views and carried them out not only with great fidelity but with success and capacity. She has known more instances than one in which he has organised so completely and thoroughly that the labour has been reduced to a minimum and the efficiency raised to a maximum. I may say however that the saving of labour is not the main consideration in

work; there are others equally important and more so. As for the principle that everyone should be allowed to do according to his nature, that can apply only where people do independent work by themselves; where many have to work together, it cannot always be done—regularity and discipline are there the first rule.

I do not understand your remark about the Mother. The whole work of Aroumé, of the Granary, of the Building Department, etc. was arranged by the Mother not only in general plan and object but in detail. It was only after she had seen everything in working order that she drew back and allowed things to go on according to her plan, but still with an eye on the whole. It is therefore according to the Mother's arrangement that people here are working. When it was not so, when Mother allowed the sadhaks to do according to their own ideas or nature, indicating her will but not enforcing it in detail, the whole Asram was a scene of anarchy, confusion, waste, disorderly self-indulgence, clash and quarrel, self-will, disobedience, and if it had gone on, the Asram would have ceased to exist long ago. It was to prevent that that the Mother chose *X* and a few others on whom she could rely and reorganised all the departments, supervising every detail and asking the heads to enforce proper methods and discipline. Whatever remains still of the old defects is due to the indiscipline of many workers and their refusal to get rid of their old

nature. Even now if the Mother withdrew her control, the whole thing would collapse." (CWSA 32: 438–439)

6.

"You are mistaken in thinking that *X* conceals things from the Mother or does as he pleases without telling her. She knows all and is not in a state of ignorance. What you write in your second letter is nothing new to her. There were hundreds of protests and complaints against *X* (as against other heads of departments), against his methods, his detailed acts and arrangements, his rigid economy, his severe discipline and many things else. The Mother saw things and where there was justfication for change, she has made it, but she has consistently supported X, because the things complained of, economy, discipline, refusal to bend to the claims and fancies and wishes of the sadhaks, were just what she had herself insisted on—without them he could not have done the work as she wanted it done. If he had been loose, indulgent, not severe, he might have become popular, but he would not have been her instrument for the work. Whatever defects there might be in his nature, were the Mother's concern; if there was too much rigidity anywhere, it was for her to change it. But she refused to yield to complaints and clamour born of desire and ego; her yielding would only have brought the old state of things back and put an end to the Asram." (CWSA 32: 439–440)

LXII—Advice to Those Working Under Heads of Departments

1.

"We did not say that you must do *everything X* tells you; but if you work under any one who is the head of the department (*X* or another), the work must be done according to his instructions, as he is responsible.

The work itself is the Mother's and it is the Mother who gives you the work.

The suggestion to go, like the desires which support it, come from adverse forces. If you take the right attitude of self-giving, all that will disappear." (CWSA 32: 432–433)

2.

"*My complaint about X is his attitude towards the Dining Room workers—he is simply too harsh with most of them. With all his experience it should be possible for him to be a little more generous in speech and expression. Why should he make a wry face when someone asks for an extra piece of bread? It does not remove the person's greed; rather it gives rise to eating bazaar food. When Y breaks down weeping, could X not bend a little to indulge her? With a more pleasant mood and face, he could satisfy so many people and avoid the clashes which have been continuous under his regime.*

I do not agree. It is impossible to maintain order if one is indulgent to everybody and strictness is indispensable. That is what Mother found when she was herself looking after the work; indulgence only brought absolute disorder, people became entirely selfish, undisciplined, taking every advantage they could. I do not see either how a system of indulgence to the moods of the women is likely to help their sadhana,—it is likely rather to nourish what is wayward and exacting in them. If they do not learn discipline and self-control, on what basis can they build their sadhana and character?" (CWSA 32: 428)

3.

"*Why should the conditions of work be such that one is compelled to act and be guided by the will of X? It amounts to the surrender of one's intellect, energies and capacities to him instead of to the Mother. How does working under such a person help one's sadhana?*

... For every department there must be a head ... *X* is there in the B.D. [*Building Department*] as the head because he is a qualified engineer. That is a necessity of outward organisation which is unavoidable here as elsewhere and has to be accepted if the work is to be done. But it does not mean that *X* or any other head is to be considered as a superior person or that one has to surrender to his ego. One has to get rid of his own ego as far as possible and

regard the work done under whatever conditions as an offering to the Mother." (CWSA 32: 429)

4.

"*X* spoke to the Mother this evening about the proposal of more work in the kitchen for you. But before that we had received your letter and what you write makes it necessary to make certain things precise and clear.

I gather that what you want is to be independent in your work, taking from *X* what you need, and after a time improve the cooking according to your own ideas. But this is not the understanding with which you were given the work and it is not possible. The understanding is that you do the work with the materials given [to] you and nothing more, as you are doing now. Also you seem to say that you will find it difficult to work under the control of *X* and will resent it if in a clash with him Mother upholds him against you. In that case it is better not to go farther with the proposal of extending your work. For there has been too much clash and disharmony already in the D.R. and kitchen and the Mother wants no more, especially as a more harmonious working has been established after long difficulty.

The arrangements of the work are not *X*'s but the Mother's. Several years ago she put him at the head of the food departments and organised them through him according to her own will not only in general but in detail.

All changes since then have been made in the same way. He is there so that she may exercise through him her single control over all the work. It is the same system in all the departments and it cannot be changed. There has been much resistance owing to the wish of the workers to be independent, to impose each his own ideas and arrangements, and to resentment against the control of the head of the department. But all that could only lead to friction and clash of ideas and clash of egos and constant disturbance. The Mother has succeeded finally in getting rid of that and imposing some amount of harmony and discipline. It is not therefore a question of *X*'s independent control but of the Mother's control of the work through the person chosen by her.

I may remind you of what I wrote about the spirit in which work should be done to be helpful for sadhana. It has to be done as an offering, without vital egoism or assertion of self-will, as the Mother's work and not one's own, to carry out her ideas and will and not one's own. It is work done in that spirit that opens the vital to her and allows her Force to work in the being and the nature." (CWSA 32: 431–432)

5.

"Everybody says his report or account is true and all the others are liars. Our experience is that each pulls his own way and arranges the facts in his own mind so as to be

most convenient for his own case. But that is not the point. The point is that the rules laid down by the Mother must be kept in the spirit as well as the letter." (CWSA 32: 433)

6.

"Do not allow yourself to be grieved or discouraged. Human beings have unfortunately the habit of being unkind to each other. But if you do your work in all sincerity, the Mother will be satisfied and all the rest will come afterwards." (CWSA 32: 433)

7.

"All that has happened between you and *X*, as described by you, are trifles and a little good sense and good will on both sides should be enough to deprive them of importance and to get over any slight disturbance they may create. Quarrels take place and endure because both sides think the other is in the wrong and has behaved ill; but neither side can be in the right in a vital quarrel. The very fact of quarrelling like that puts both in the wrong. Moreover, it is not right to be so sensitive about being dominated or controlled. In the work especially one must accept the control of anyone whom the Mother puts in charge, so far as the work goes. In other matters, one can keep one's due independence without breaking off relations or any kind of quarrel.

There would be no use in changing your work or your residence, even if it were possible under the circumstances. It is the inner attitude that has to be kept right, the will to harmony must be fully established. A change of work is not the remedy. The idea of a good atmosphere or bad atmosphere in the house is also a thing not to be indulged. One must create one's own atmosphere not penetrable by other influences and one can always do that by union and closeness to the Mother." (CWSA 32: 435)

8.

"I do not believe that to change work will help you to change your character; it has never proved successful before." (CWM 14: 312)

9.

"The reasons for which you ask to change your work are psychological and do not depend on the work itself. Wherever you will go, you will carry them with you and nowhere will you be able to find peace unless you have the peace in your heart." (CWM 14: 312)

10.

"But why allow the behaviour of others to affect you so much? To go on with your work as if nothing had happened

is all right and a progress in the right direction, but inwardly also nothing should be affected.

You must never think or imagine that the Mother is not looking towards you with love and blessing or that she can for a moment turn her face away from you. You are her child and her love is steadfast towards you." (CWSA 32: 435)

11.

"I wrote that your letter showed an attack of the old consciousness because of its tone: 'I will not bear these things—it is better for me to go away from here etc.' These are the old suggestions, not the attitude of your inner being which was to give yourself and leave all to the Mother. The attitude of your inner being must also extend to your attitude to these outer things—knowing that whatever imperfections there are have to be worked out from within by each one, just as your own imperfections have to be worked out from within yourself by the Mother's aid and working in you." (CWSA 32: 435–436)

12.

"Your whole upset is founded on imaginations. *X* has not made any 'lying' report to the Mother; the Mother did not show any displeasure to you for two days or any days. Your vital thought she must be like yourself and make a huge fuss about the perfectly insignificant trifle out of which you

have made something gigantic, desperate and catastrophic. There was never any rule that *Y*'s permission must be taken for anything to be done in the kitchen; it is *X* who is head of the kitchen and whose permission has to be taken.

All the rest is pure self-inflation of an imaginary trouble because you choose to think of the Mother as a capricious tyrant acting according to the ideas of false reports of her favourites, an idea which has no better foundation than the fact that she does not flatter or pamper your ego by agreeing with you and taking your side or giving value to your mental reasons, each one of course thinking that his own 'reasons' are the only right way and to disagree with them is high treason against Truth and Justice.

What is amazing is that you should have got in to such a state about any thing so trivial as this boiling of milk and *Z* going to *Y* for an explanation. No man in his senses ought to quarrel over such matters or magnify into a stupendous tragedy. It shows that egoistic sensitiveness not only in your case but in that of many others in the Asram has reached enormous and fantastic proportions. It is time that the sadhaks of this Asram realised what they have come here for;—it is not to nourish the ego and to insist on its being considered and fondled, but to abnegate the ego and seek only after the Divine." (CWSA 32: 437–438)

13.

"I do not think it is any use going into the detail of the things you write of—most of them are trifles which could easily be set right if there were not a settled misunderstanding between you and *X* which makes both nervous about everything the other does so that you magnify small things and give them an undue importance. It is the natural result of personal feelings getting into the work and there is no remedy except doing the work without personal feelings. I had hoped from what you said in your letter a few days ago that you had determined to get rid of it altogether on your side and do the work looking to the Mother alone and not mind what *X* did or did not do. If you could do that, Mother would have been better able to put a persistent pressure on him and make him gradually change and become less self-occupied, tactless and sensitive." (CWSA 32: 445)

14.

"It was your mistake to listen to what people say about you and *X* and *Y* and attach any value to their foolish chatter. *X* did not grow serious with you because of that. He was puzzled by your change of manner, the stiffness of your attitude towards him and your apparently diminished interest in the work. It is what the Mother says that is true and matters and not what people say; if you listen to what people say, you will lose touch with the Mother's

consciousness. It is because of that that these thoughts have come back on you about your badness and the rest of it. The Mother had told you to work freely with *X*; she told you that his influence was good for you, and for many days you had peace and joy and freedom from the restless mind and you had the psychic opening. Now you must go back to that and do as you were doing before. Turn to the Mother only and let her consciousness and her will work in you. Then you will recover what you had got, silence the mind and be free." (CWSA 32: 485–486)

15.

"The remedy for these things is to think more and more of the Mother and less and less of the relations of others with yourself apart from the Mother. As *X* is trying, so you should try to meet others in the Mother, in your consciousness of unity with the Mother and not in a separate personal relation. Then these difficulties disappear and harmony can be established—for then it is not necessary to try and please others—but both or all meet in their love for the Mother and their work for her." (CWSA 32: 445)

16.

"*Mother, I would like to know whether I have reached the point of being able to surrender in work. I don't think so. I am going to try to take an attitude of complete obedience*

to the person in charge: whatever he says, must be done without any argument.

Yes, this is good. If you do not obey, it is you who become responsible for the slightest mistake; if on the other hand you scrupulously obey, the whole responsibility rests with the person who has given the orders." (CWM 17: 165–166)

17.

"The Mother has her own reasons for her decisions; she has to look at the work as a whole without regard to one department or branch alone and with a view to the necessities of the work and the management. The objection to buying much of this size was hers and not *X*'s. Whatever work is done here, one has always to learn to subordinate or put aside one's own ideas and preferences about things concerning it and do for the best under the conditions and decisions laid down by her. This is one of the main difficulties throughout the Asram, as each worker wants to do according to his own ideas, on his own lines according to what he thinks to be the right or convenient thing and expects that to be sanctioned. It is one of the principal reasons of difficulty, clash or disorder in the work, creating conflict between the workers themselves, conflict between the workers and the heads of departments, conflict between the ideas of the sadhaks and the will of

the Mother. Harmony can only exist if all accept the will of the Mother without grudge or personal reaction.

Independent work does not exist in the Asram. All is organised and interrelated; neither the heads of departments nor the workers are independent. To learn subordination and cooperation is necessary for all collective work; without it there will be chaos." (CWSA 35: 756)

18.

"Whoever is put in charge of a Dept. is responsible to the Mother for the proper working of that Department and those who are assisting him must help him to keep everything in order and not act according to their own whims and fancies. If there is anything which seems to them not right in his arrangements, they can bring it to his notice or to the Mother's notice, but not indulge in irresponsible indiscipline. Your behaviour does not justify X's losing his temper, but neither were you justified in pushing him against the wall. This kind of scene ought not to happen in the Asram. It is besides not only with X you have clashed but with a good many others in the Asram, and it is no use telling me that it was always the other man who misbehaved and that you were an angel of calm and patience and good behaviour. Quarrelsomeness and self-assertion and indiscipline go ill with a claim of Yogic calmness." (CWSA 35: 800)

LXIII—Without Collaboration the Right Inspiration Will Not Be Effective

1.

"Formerly I used to keep control over everything. Nothing would be done without my first knowing and approving of it. Afterwards I adopted a different mode of acting. I withdrew from all the details and kept myself at a distance, watching things from above, as it were, and sending the right inspiration to each worker in his own field.

This change was necessary for the worker's spiritual development. He has to become aware of my influence inwardly. But he can receive it only if all the workers collaborate. Without collaboration the right inspiration will not be effective. The action from above has a wide sweep: it covers all the departments and is one harmonious whole. If walls are set up in the field of work, dividing and breaking it up, the work can never be according to the spiritual Will.

So bear this in mind: no collaboration, no right working." (CWM 13: 162)

LXIV—To Improve the Relation between the Employer and the Employee

1.

"Nothing lasting can be established without a basis of trust. And this trust must be mutual. You [*employees*] must be convinced that it is not only my [*employer's*] good that I am aiming at, but also yours [*employees*]. And on my side I must know and feel that you are here not merely to profit but also to serve.

There is no welfare of the whole without the welfare of each part. There is no harmonious growth of the whole without the progress of each one of its parts.

If you feel you are being exploited, I also will feel that you are trying to exploit me. And if you fear you are being deceived, I also will feel that you are trying to deceive me.

It is only in straightforwardness, sincerity and confidence that human society can progress." (CWM 13: 177–178)

LXV—Paid Workers in the Ashram

1.

"You should be very polite with those who depend upon you for their living. If you ill-treat them, they feel very much but cannot reply to you as man to man for fear of losing their job.

There may be some dignity in being rough with your superiors, but with those who depend on you, the true dignity is to be very courteous." (CWM 13: 169)

2.

"And our politeness should not be merely an outer form, stiff politeness, so to say. It must be something coming from within. Whatever may be the difficulties and whatever may be the circumstances—Mother fully knows even to the minutest detail the circumstances, when we lose our temper and get irritated in our work, and knowing that fully well she says—whatever may be the circumstances, rudeness or curt behaviour is never permissible." (CWM 13: 167)

3.

"*The shoe-maker would like a raise. He requests me to ask you for 10 rupees instead of 8, as he has to support a family of three.*

Family considerations do not interest me at all. The salary should depend on the work of the worker, on his ability, his regularity, not on the number of people he has to feed. For if we took these circumstances into consideration, it would no longer be paid work but charity, and as I have said very often, we are not a relief committee. As a general rule I have not increased the salary of the workers and servants this year, but if this boy works very well and if you are satisfied with his behaviour, I can give him 9 rupees instead of 8, to begin with." (CWM 13: 169)

4.

"When the workmen come to fetch their *billas* [*Work-tokens*] do not detain them unduly.

After a day's work they need to go home for rest." (CWM 13: 169)

5.

"A servant is not a convict and must be allowed some amount of liberty and free movement." (CWM 13: 170)

6.

"I am sure that servants behave according to the way they are treated." (CWM 13: 170)

7.

(*About the treatment of servants*)

"Don't be indulgent, don't be severe.

They should know that you see everything, but you should not scold them." (CWM 13: 178)

8.

"It is very bad to constantly rebuke servants—the less you scold them, the better it is. When *X* asks you to scold them you must refuse to do so and tell him that I have forbidden you to do it.

As for your co-workers, each one must be left free to do according to his own feelings.

My love and blessings." (CWM 13: 170)

9.

"If you are sure that the servants are robbing, it proves that they are not properly supervised and you will have to look to it more carefully." (CWM 13: 170)

10.

"I told you already my point of view about the number of workmen. The more they are, the less they do. I do not approve of 14 men for the vegetables. The work can be done and well done with much less." (CWM 13: 170)

11.

"My dear child,

X will have told you my decision about Y. I had to take it, in spite of your 'objection', because this man only asked to be given another work in the Ashram; he neither threatened nor asked for more wages. He is a good worker and it would be a pity to lose him. This you can easily understand if you get over the first egoistic reactions to this affair; and surely you cannot accept the feeling of being 'insulted' which is quite unyogic.

I hope that after reading this you will recover and come to a truer view of this very small and unimportant event.

With my love and blessings." (CWM 13: 170–171)

12.

"You can take him as daily labourer at annas 10 per day, but I refuse to pay overtime; you will have to see that he finishes his work in time. Our experience is constant that when the workmen are paid overtime they do practically nothing during the working hours and so manage to have regularly overtime pay at a very high rate." (CWM 13: 171)

13.

"Be careful about the various reports of the workers—they are always biased. Each one speaks always with his preferences (likes and dislikes) and twists things." (CWM 13: 177)

14.

"What I said to the workers on April 21st, 1952:

It was unnecessary for you to assemble here and take all this trouble for nothing. But since you are here I have some things to tell you.

First, you are demanding your cloths. I have never said that you would not receive them. But it is difficult to get hold of them and it takes time. They are on the way now and when they arrive you will be informed.

As for an increase in your wages, I have already answered you, and I repeat, I have overstepped the limits of my present resources and I cannot add to my expenditure in any way. So if I increase the wages of some of you, I shall be obliged to dismiss some others in order to compensate. It remains to be seen which is stronger: your individual egoism or your collective egoism.

Do you want to increase your own earnings at the expense of the livelihood of some of your fellow-workers?

You complain that you live in misery; and I tell you that you live in misery because you waste your money on drinking and smoking and because you waste your energy in sexual excess. All these—alcohol, tobacco and sexual excess—ruin your health.

Money does not bring happiness. The Sannyasi who possesses nothing and usually eats only one meal a day is perfectly happy if he is sincere. Whereas a rich man may

be thoroughly unhappy if he has ruined his health by all sorts of excess and over-indulgence.

I repeat, it is not money that makes a man happy, but rather an inner balance of energy, good health and good feelings. Stop drinking, smoking and over-indulging, stop hating and envying, and then you will no longer lament your lot, you will no longer feel that the world is full of misery." April 1952 (CWM 13: 173–174)

15.

"Do you know the story of the hen that laid golden eggs? There was once a peasant whose entire fortune consisted of one hen; but this was a wonderful hen. Every other day she gave him a golden egg. Now this peasant in his stupid and greedy ignorance imagined that the hen's body must be full of gold, and that if he opened it up he would find a great treasure. So he slit her open — and found nothing. Thus he lost both the hen and the eggs.

This story shows us that ignorant and stupid greed is sure to lead to ruin. So learn a lesson from it and understand that if you demand from me what is beyond my means, and if I were so foolish as to yield to you, I should go straight to my ruin and the result would be that all the work would be stopped and you would be out of work and would therefore have no wages at all, and no way to earn your living." 18 March 1955 (CWM 13: 176–177)

16.

"To increase the salary of some will mean to deprive others of their livelihood." (CWM 13: 177)

LXVI—The Tendency of Harmony and Affection with Those with Whom You Work Comes from the Psychic Being

1.

"Both the love for the Mother which you feel so strongly and the other tendency of harmony and affection with those with whom you live or work come from the psychic being. When the psychic intensifies its influence, this love for the Mother becomes strong and is the main mover of the nature. But there is also a feeling of good will, harmony, kindness or affection towards others which also comes up and is not so much personal as the result of the soul's inmost relation to all souls who are children of the Mother. There is no harm in this psychic feeling, on the contrary it creates happiness and harmony—it is only the vital love between persons that has to be rejected because it draws away from full consecration to the Divine. But this helps the growth of the soul into the Mother's consciousness and helps the work and helps also the inner life to grow." (CWSA 32: 463)

2.

Fund-Raising Work

"*How can I make myself fit for the Mother's divine work? Should I actively pull her power or open myself passively*

and wait for it to descend and work in and through me? What are the conditions that I must fulfil to allow the materialisation of this money power? If I have the capacity, as you had told me the last time, what shall I do to fulfil the capacity?

It is something in the inner being that has the power of which the Mother spoke, not the external human part. I think you are seeking the power in the external being, but that can only raise up difficulties. Awaken the psychic in you, let the inner being come out and replace the ego, then the latent power also will become effective. You can then do the work and the service to which you aspire." (CWSA 35: 766)

LXVII—Special Relationship with the Mother and the Ashram Workers

1 January 1946
DECLARATION TO THE WORKERS OF SRI AUROBINDO ASHRAM

"It is my desire to explain to the workers the special relationship that exists between them and me as compared with the ordinary relationship between employer and employees. It is also my desire that having understood this special relationship the workers should always keep this understanding before them in all their deliberations and in all the joint demands which they make to me.

This special relationship is as follows:

(a) The work in the Ashram is not done for profit, as is well known. Therefore during the war when things became expensive and difficult for everyone, it became so for me too, without my income increasing in any way by the fact of the same circumstances. Industrial and commercial concerns made more profits and so could easily increase the wages, but here in the Ashram only the expenses went on increasing. In spite of this, in view of the difficulties of the workers I gave them regular increments and dearness allowances.

(b) There have been times when there was no work for some workers, but unlike business firms I have never

dismissed workers but have always endeavoured to find some other work for them to do. It has always been my policy not to send away, for want of work, workers who have served faithfully. I could have easily done so and could have even closed down all the works without any serious hardship to the Ashram. But by doing so I would have only increased the general misery which is already so great, and that I did not want to do.

(c) There are a good number of workers who have worked for me for many long years and have served me with devotion and faithfulness and who besides considering me as their employer have also looked to me as their protector, of them and their families.

(d) On the whole the workers of the Ashram have so far worked more or less as members of a family with me as their head, and this special relationship has no doubt brought benefit to many of them. I would like to preserve this relationship and make it the foundation for all my dealings with the workers.

With these points in view, it is suggested that the workers of the Ashram should form a separate syndicate of their own, since they stand with regard to their employer in a different position from other workers, as has already been explained. This syndicate might be affiliated to the general body of workers, but would maintain its own line of action and conduct.

It is further suggested that this syndicate of Ashram workers should elect a committee which represents the various shades of opinion among the workers. This committee would receive and consider the demands put forward by the workers and, having deliberated and arrived at a decision that it considers just and reasonable, would present it to me for action through their president. I will receive with goodwill and sympathy all requests of this kind and will act for the best according to the reasonableness of the demand.

In these times of struggle and conflict and misery and suffering I offer to all who wish to work under me, with me, the possibility of a reciprocal understanding and a fruitful and beneficial collaboration." 5 March 1946 (CWM 13: 171–173)

LXVIII—The Mother's Readiness to Take All Employees of the Ashram into Her Fold

TO THE EMPLOYEES OF SRI AUROBINDO ASHRAM

"What I wish to do for you.

I shall tell you how I view the solution of your problems, both individual and collective, and what is the truth of the relation between us.

But for the working out of the programme I am going to place before you, two essential conditions are necessary. First, I must have the financial means to execute my plan; secondly, you must show a minimum of sincerity, honesty and goodwill in your attitude towards me and towards your work. You have most unfortunately the habit of trying to deceive me. Bad advisers have taught you that that is the best thing to do in your relation with your employer. It may be that when the employer himself seeks to deceive you and exploit you, this attitude on your part is legitimate. But in regard to me it is a foolishness and a blunder; first of all, because you cannot deceive me and your deceit becomes immediately obvious and takes away from me all desire to come to your aid, and secondly because I am not a 'boss' and I do not seek to exploit you.

All my effort is towards realising in the world as much truth as actual circumstances will allow; and with the

increase of truth, the welfare and happiness of all will necessarily increase.

Differences of caste and class have no truth for me; all that counts is individual value. My aim is to create a big family in which it will be possible for each one to fully develop his capacities and express them. Each one will have his place and occupation in accordance with his capacities and in a relation of goodwill and brotherhood.

As a consequence of such a family organisation there will be no need of remuneration or wages. Work should not be a means of earning one's livelihood; its purpose should be twofold: first to develop one's nature and capacity for action, and, secondly, in proportion to one's physical means and moral and intellectual aptitude, to give service to the family to which one belongs and to whose welfare it is but proper to contribute, as it is proper for the family to provide for the real needs of each of its members.

To give a concrete form to this ideal under the present conditions of life, my idea is to build a kind of city accommodating at the outset about two thousand persons. It will be built according to the most modern plans, meeting all the most up-todate requirements of hygiene and public health. It will have not only residential houses, but also gardens and sportsgrounds for physical culture. Each family will be lodged in a separate house; bachelors will be grouped according to their occupations and affinities.

Nothing necessary for life will be forgotten. Kitchens equipped in the most modern hygienic way will supply equally to all simple and healthy food, assuring the energy necessary for the proper maintenance of the body. They will function on a co-operative basis of work in common and of collaboration.

In the matter of education, what is necessary is to arrange for the moral and intellectual instruction and development of all, children and adults: various schools, technical instruction in different vocations, classes for music and dance, a cinema hall where educational films will be shown, a lecture hall, a library, a reading room, varied physical education, a sportsground and so on.

Each one can choose the kind of activity that is most suitable to his nature and will receive the required training. Even small gardens will be provided where those who like cultivation can grow flowers, fruits and vegetables.

In the matter of health, there will be regular medical visits, a hospital, a dispensary, a nursing home for the segregation of contagious cases. A department of hygiene will have the exclusive function of inspecting all public and private buildings to see that the most rigorous rules of cleanliness are observed everywhere and by all. As natural adjuncts to this department public baths and common laundries will be put at the disposal of everyone.

Finally, big stores will be set up where one can find all the small 'extras' which give life variety and

pleasantness and which one will get against 'coupons' that will be given in recompense for especially notable achievement in work or conduct.

I shall not give a long description of the organisation and the working of the institution, although everything in it to the smallest details has already been foreseen.

It goes without saying that for admission to live in this ideal place the essential conditions that need to be fulfilled are good character, good conduct, honest, regular and efficient work and a general goodwill." 10 July 1954 (CWM 13: 174–176)

LXIX—The Path of Works

1.

"The Path of Works aims at the dedication of every human activity to the supreme Will. It begins by the renunciation of all egoistic aim for our works, all pursuit of action for an interested aim or for the sake of a worldly result. By this renunciation it so purifies the mind and the will that we become easily conscious of the great universal Energy as the true doer of all our actions and the Lord of that Energy as their ruler and director with the individual as only a mask, an excuse, an instrument or, more positively, a conscious centre of action and phenomenal relation. The choice and direction of the act is more and more consciously left to this supreme Will and this universal Energy. To That our works as well as the results of our works are finally abandoned. The object is the release of the soul from its bondage to appearances and to the reaction of phenomenal activities. Karmayoga is used, like the other paths, to lead to liberation from phenomenal existence and a departure into the Supreme. But here too the exclusive result is not inevitable. The end of the path may be, equally, a perception of the Divine in all energies, in all happenings, in all activities, and a free and unegoistic participation of the soul in the cosmic action. So followed it will lead to the elevation of all human will and activity to the divine level, its spiritualisation and the justification of

the cosmic labour towards freedom, power and perfection in the human being." (CWSA 23: 39–40)

2.

"The triple way takes for its chosen instruments the three main powers of the mental soul-life of the human being. Knowledge selects the reason and the mental vision and it makes them by purification, concentration and a certain discipline of a God directed seeking its means for the greatest knowledge and the greatest vision of all, God-knowledge and God-vision. Its aim is to see, know and be the Divine. Works, action selects for its instrument the will of the doer of works; it makes life an offering of sacrifice to the Godhead and by purification, concentration and a certain discipline of subjection to the divine Will a means for contact and increasing unity of the soul of man with the divine Master of the universe. Devotion selects the emotional and aesthetic powers of the soul and by turning them all Godward in a perfect purity, intensity, infinite passion of seeking makes them a means of God-possession in one or many relations of unity with the Divine Being. All aim in their own way at a union or unity of the human soul with the supreme Spirit." (CWSA 24: 610)

3.

"Each Yoga in its process has the character of the instrument it uses; ... the way of knowledge is spiritual and cognitive, the way of devotion spiritual, emotional and

aesthetic, the [*process of the*] way of works [*is*] spiritual and dynamic by action." (CWSA 24: 610)

4.

"The path of works is in a way the most difficult side of God's triune causeway; yet is it not also, in this material world at least, the easiest, widest & most delightful? For at every moment we clash against God the worker & grow into His being by a thousand divine touches." (CWSA 12: 472)

5.

"This book [*Part One of The Synthesis of Yoga*] is entirely about the yoga of works, of action, that is to say, the finding of union with the Divine in action and work, and in the consecration of one's work to the Divine." (CWM 8: 44)

6.

"And here we always come back to the same thing, to what Sri Aurobindo describes in *The Synthesis of Yoga*: it is the way of knowledge or the way of devotion or the way of works. But the way of works is precisely the one which keeps you in physical life and makes you find your liberation in it; and perhaps this is the most effective way of all but also the most difficult." (CWM 8: 299)

LXX—Yoga of Works Is an Indispensable and Important Element of an Integral Yoga

1.

"In the ordinary human existence an outgoing action is obviously three-fourths or even more of our life. It is only the exceptions, the saint and the seer, the rare thinker, poet and artist who can live more within themselves; these indeed, at least in the most intimate parts of their nature, shape themselves more in inner thought and feeling than in the surface act. But it is not either of these sides separated from the other, but rather a harmony of the inner and the outer life made one in fullness and transfigured into a play of something that is beyond them which will create the form of a perfect living. A Yoga of works, a union with the Divine in our will and acts—and not only in knowledge and feeling—is then an indispensable, an inexpressibly important element of an integral Yoga. The conversion of our thought and feeling without a corresponding conversion of the spirit and body of our works would be a maimed achievement.

But if this total conversion is to be done, there must be a consecration of our actions and outer movements as much as of our mind and heart to the Divine. There must be accepted and progressively accomplished a surrender of our capacities of working into the hands of a greater Power behind us and our sense of being the doer and

worker must disappear. All must be given for a more direct use in to the hands of the divine Will which is hidden by these frontal appearances; for by that permitting Will alone is our action possible. A hidden Power is the true Lord and over-ruling Observer of our acts and only he knows through all the ignorance and perversion and deformation brought in by the ego their entire sense and ultimate purpose. There must be effected a complete transformation of our limited and distorted egoistic life and works into the large and direct outpouring of a greater divine Life, Will and Energy that now secretly supports us. This greater Will and Energy must be made conscious in us and master; no longer must it remain, as now, only a superconscious, upholding and permitting Force. There must be achieved an undistorted transmission through us of the all-wise purpose and process of a now hidden omniscient Power and omnipotent Knowledge which will turn into its pure, unobstructed, happily consenting and participating channel all our transmuted nature. This total consecration and surrender and this resultant entire transformation and free transmission make up the whole fundamental means and the ultimate aim of an integral Karmayoga." (CWSA 23: 91–92)

2.

"The Yoga of Action also is not fulfilled, is not absolute, is not victoriously complete until the seeker has felt and lives

in his essential and integral oneness with the Supreme. One he must be with the Divine both in his highest and inmost and in his widest being and consciousness, in his work, his will, his power of action, his mind, body, life. Otherwise he is only released from the illusion of individual works, but not released from the illusion of separate being and instrumentality. As the servant and instrument of the Divine he works, but the crown of his labour and its perfect base or motive is oneness with that which he serves and fulfils." (CWSA 23: 362)

3.

"A Yoga turned towards an all-embracing realisation of the Supreme will not despise the works or even the dreams, if dreams they are, of the Cosmic Spirit or shrink from the splendid toil and many-sided victory which he has assigned to himself in the human creature. But its first condition for this liberality is that our works in the world too must be part of the sacrifice offered to the Highest and to none else, to the Divine Shakti and to no other Power, in the right spirit and with the right knowledge, by the free soul and not by the hypnotised bondslave of material Nature. If a division of works has to be made, it is between those that are nearest to the heart of the sacred flame and those that are least touched or illumined by it because they are more at a distance, or between the fuel that burns strongly and brightly and the logs that if too thickly heaped on the altar

may impede the ardour of the fire by their rather damp, heavy and diffused abundance. But, otherwise, apart from this division, all activities of knowledge that seek after or express Truth are in themselves rightful materials for a complete offering; none ought necessarily to be excluded from the wide framework of the divine life." (CWSA 23: 141)

4.

"Of course, there is a kind of work which is done only for purely pecuniary and personal reasons, like the one—whatever it may be—which is done to earn a living. That attitude is exactly the one Sri Aurobindo compares with the damp logs of wood which are heaped so thick the flame cannot leap up. It has something dark and heavily dull about it." (CWM 8: 160)

5.

"Psychologically, to what does this division correspond in our life?

I suppose it is different for each one. So each one must find those activities which increase his aspiration, his consciousness, his deeper knowledge of things, and those which, on the contrary, mechanise him and bring him back more thoroughly into a purely material relation with things.

It is difficult to make a general rule." (CWM 8: 159)

6.

"To act in God and not in the ego. And here, first, not to choose action by reference to personal needs and standards, but in obedience to the dictates of the living highest Truth above us. Next, as soon as we are sufficiently founded in the spiritual consciousness, not to act any longer by our separate will or movement, but more and more to allow action to happen and develop under the impulsion and guidance of a divine Will that surpasses us. And last, the supreme result, to be exalted into an identity in knowledge, force, consciousness, act, joy of existence with the Divine Shakti; to feel a dynamic movement not dominated by mortal desire and vital instinct and impulse and illusive mental free-will, but luminously conceived and evolved in an immortal self-delight and an infinite self-knowledge. For this is the action that comes by a conscious subjection and merging of the natural man into the divine Self and eternal Spirit; it is the Spirit that for ever transcends and guides this world-Nature." (CWSA 23:101)

7.

"What is true is that there are many who can prepare themselves only by work, their consciousness not being yet ready for meditation of the more intense kind. But even for those who can do intense meditation from the beginning, sadhana by work is also necessary in this Yoga. One cannot arrive at its goal by meditation alone. As for your own

capacity, it was evident when for a fairly long period an active sadhana was proceeding within you. Everybody's capacity however is limited—little can be done by one's own strength alone. It is reliance on the Divine Force, the Mother's Force and Light and openness to it that is the real capacity." (CWSA 35: 749)

8.

"There can be ... no Yoga of works without the human worker, the supreme Will, Master of all works and sacrifices, and the divine use by the individual of the universal faculties of power and action." (CWSA 23: 32)

9.

(*The disciple wrote that he felt the Mother's Presence only while working, and therefore work was his only sadhana. The Mother replied:*)

In the integral Yoga there is no distinction between the sadhana and the outward life; it is in each and every movement of the daily life that the Truth must be found and practised." (CWM 17: 210)

LXXI—After a Karmayogi Has Identified with the Divine, He Will Be in the World and He Works

1.

"He [*the sadhaka of the Karmayoga*] will be identified with the Divine and with others only through the divine consciousness and not through the mental nature.

For, even after he is free, the sadhaka will be in the world and to be in the world is to remain in works. But to remain in works without desire is to act for the good of the world in general or for the kind or the race or for some new creation to be evolved on the earth or some work imposed by the Divine Will within him. And this must be done either in the framework provided by the environment or the grouping in which he is born or placed or else in one which is chosen or created for him by a divine direction." (CWSA 23: 211)

2.

"But there is a yet higher attainment, there is an infinity (anantya ¯) in which even this last limitation is exceeded, because the nature is utterly fulfilled and its boundaries vanish. There the soul lives without any boundaries; for it uses all forms and moulds according to the divine Will in it, but it is not restrained, it is not tied down, it is not imprisoned in any power or form that it uses. This is the summit of the path of works and this the utter liberty of

the soul in its actions. In reality, it has there no actions; for all its activities are a rhythm of the Supreme and sovereignly proceed from That alone like a spontaneous music out of the Infinite." (CWSA 23: 213)

3.

"On this realisation [of Immortality in] man can base his free activity in the universe.

But having so far attained, what further utility has the soul for birth or for works? None for itself, everything for God and the universe.

Immortality beyond the universe is not the object of manifestation in the universe, for that the Self always possessed. Man exists in order that through him the Self may enjoy Immortality in the birth as well as in the non-becoming.

Nor is individual salvation the end; for that would only be the sublime of the ego, not its self-realisation through the Lord in all.

Having realised his own immortality, the individual has yet to fulfil God's work in the universe. He has to help the life, the mind and the body in all beings to express progressively Immortality and not mortality.

This he may do by the becoming in the material body which we ordinarily call birth, or from some status in another world or even, it is possible, from beyond world. But birth in the body is the most close, divine and effective

form of help which the liberated can give to those who are themselves still bound to the progression of birth in the lowest world of the Ignorance.” (CWSA 17: 59)

LXXII—Works in the Yoga of Knowledge

LXXII—(A) Works in the Traditional System of Jnanayoga

1.

"Action is permissible only in the first stages of the search in order to purify the seeker and make him morally and temperamentally a fit vessel for the knowledge. Even this action must either be confined to the performance of the rites of worship and the prescribed duties of life rigorously ordained by the Hindu Shastra or, as in the Buddhistic discipline, must be guided along the eightfold path to the supreme practice of the works of compassion which lead towards the practical annihilation of self in the good of others. In the end, in any severe and pure Jnanayoga, all works must be abandoned for an entire quiescence. Action may prepare salvation; it cannot give it. Any continued adherence to action is incompatible with the highest progress and may be an insuperable obstacle to the attainment of the spiritual goal. The supreme state of quiescence is the very opposite of action and cannot be attained by those who persist in works." (CWSA 23: 288)

LXXII—(B) Work Perfect with Inner Passivity

1.

"... what we do is to approach as completely as possible to the inactivity of the passive and silent Brahman. We have stilled our mind and silenced the activity of the thought and the disturbances of the heart, we have arrived at an entire inner peace and indifference; we attempt now to still the mechanical action of the life and body, to reduce it to the most meagre minimum possible so that it may eventually cease entirely and for ever. This, the final aim of the ascetic Yoga which refuses life, is evidently not our aim. By the alternative choice we can have an activity perfect enough in outward appearance along with an entire inner passivity, peace, mental silence, indifference and cessation of the emotions, absence of choice in the will." (CWSA 23: 403)

LXXII—(C) In the Yoga of Knowledge One Must Be Free from Attachment to Action and Inaction

1.

"And here there arises the question of physical action or inaction. It is ordinarily considered that the Yogin should draw away from action as much as possible and especially that too much action is a hindrance because it draws off the energies outward. To a certain extent this is true; and we must note farther that when the mental Purusha takes up the attitude of mere witness and observer, a tendency to silence, solitude, physical calm and bodily inaction grows upon the being. So long as this is not associated with inertia, incapacity or unwillingness to act, in a word, with the growth of the tamasic quality, all this is to the good. The power to do nothing, which is quite different from indolence, incapacity or aversion to action and attachment to inaction, is a great power and a great mastery; the power to rest absolutely from action is as necessary for the Jnanayogin as the power to cease absolutely from thought, as the power to remain indefinitely in sheer solitude and silence and as the power of immovable calm. Whoever is not willing to embrace these states is not yet fit for the path that leads towards the highest knowledge; whoever is unable to draw towards them, is as yet unfit for its acquisition.

At the same time it must be added that the power is enough; the abstention from all physical action is not indispensable, the aversion to action mental or corporeal is not desirable. The seeker of the integral state of knowledge must be free from attachment to action and equally free from attachment to inaction. Especially must any tendency to mere inertia of mind or vitality or body be surmounted, and if that habit is found growing on the nature, the will of the Purusha must be used to dismiss it. Eventually, a state arrives when the life and the body perform as mere instruments the will of the Purusha in the mind without any strain or attachment, without their putting themselves into the action with that inferior, eager and often feverish energy which is the nature of their ordinary working; they come to work as forces of Nature work without the fret and toil and reaction characteristic of life in the body when it is not yet master of the physical. When we attain to this perfection, then action and inaction become immaterial, since neither interferes with the freedom of the soul or draws it away from its urge towards the Self or its poise in the Self. But this state of perfection arrives later in the Yoga and till then the law of moderation laid down by the Gita is the best for us; too much mental or physical action then is not good since excess draws away too much energy and reacts unfavourably upon the spiritual condition; too little also is not good since defect leads to a habit of inaction and even to an incapacity which has afterwards to

be surmounted with difficulty. Still, periods of absolute calm, solitude and cessation from works are highly desirable and should be secured as often as possible for that recession of the soul into itself which is indispensable to knowledge." (CWSA 23: 347–348)

2.

"The Yogin, as the Gita says, even in acting does no actions, for it is not he, but universal Nature directed by the Lord of Nature which is at work. He is not bound by his works, nor do they leave any after effects or consequences in his mind, nor cling to or leave any mark on his soul; they vanish and are dissolved by their very execution and leave the immutable self unaffected and the soul unmodified. Therefore this would seem to be the poise the uplifted soul ought to take, if it has still to preserve any relations with human action in the world existence, an unalterable silence, tranquillity, passivity within, an action without regulated by the universal Will and Wisdom which works, as the Gita says, without being involved in, bound by or ignorantly attached to its works. And certainly this poise of a perfect activity founded upon a perfect inner passivity is that which the Yogin has to possess, as we have seen in the Yoga of Works." (CWSA 23: 405–406)

LXXII—(D) The Yogin's Aim in the Sciences, Practical Sciences and Arts That Make for Knowledge

1.

"But the Yogin has to see that it is no longer done as part of an ignorant mental life; it can be accepted by him only if by the feeling, the remembrance, the dedication within it, it is turned into a movement of the spiritual consciousness and becomes a part of its vast grasp of comprehensive illuminating knowledge.

For all must be done as a sacrifice, all activities must have the One Divine for their object and the heart of their meaning. The Yogin's aim in the sciences that make for knowledge should be to discover and understand the workings of the Divine Consciousness-Puissance in man and creatures and things and forces, her creative significances, her execution of the mysteries, the symbols in which she arranges the manifestation. The Yogin's aim in the practical sciences, whether mental and physical or occult and psychic, should be to enter into the ways of the Divine and his processes, to know the materials and means for the work given to us so that we may use that knowledge for a conscious and faultless expression of the spirit's mastery, joy and self-fulfilment. The Yogin's aim in the Arts should not be a mere aesthetic, mental or vital gratification, but, seeing the Divine everywhere,

worshipping it with a revelation of the meaning of its own works, to express that One Divine in ideal forms, the One Divine in principles and forces, the One Divine in gods and men and creatures and objects.” (CWSA 23: 142)

LXXIII—Works in the Yoga of Devotion

LXXIII—(A) Works Done by a Religious Man and a Seeker of Integral Yoga in the Yoga of Devotion

1.

"It is possible, as in a certain high exaggeration of the path of knowledge, to cut here also the knot of the problem, escape the difficulty of uniting the spirit of love with the crudities of the world-action by avoiding it; it is open to us, withdrawing from outward life and action altogether, to live alone with our adoration of the Divine in the heart's silence. It is possible too to admit only those acts that are either in themselves an expression of love for the Divine, prayer, praise, symbolic acts of worship or subordinate activities that may be attached to these things and partake of their spirit, and to leave aside all else; the soul turns away to satisfy its inner longing in the absorbed or the God-centred life of the saint and devotee. It is possible, again, to open the doors of life more largely and to spend one's love of the Divine in acts of service to those around us and to the race; one can do the works of philanthropy, benevolence and beneficence, charity and succour to man and beast and every creature, transfigure them by a kind of spiritual passion, at least bring into their merely ethical appearance the greater power of a spiritual motive. This is indeed the solution most commonly favoured by the religious mind of

today and we see it confidently advanced on all sides as the proper field of action of the God-seeker or of the man whose life is founded on divine love and knowledge. But the integral Yoga pushed towards a complete union of the Divine with the earth-life cannot stop short in this narrow province or limit this union within the lesser dimensions of an ethical rule of philanthropy and beneficence. All action must be made in it part of the God-life, our acts of knowledge, our acts of power and production and creation, our acts of joy and beauty and the soul's pleasure, our acts of will and endeavour and struggle and not our acts only of love and beneficent service. Its way to do these things will be not outward and mental, but inward and spiritual, and to that end it will bring into all activities, whatever they are, the spirit of divine love, the spirit of adoration and worship, the spirit of happiness in the Divine and in the beauty of the Divine so as to make all life a sacrifice of the works of the soul's love to the Divine, its cult of the Master of its existence." (CWSA 23: 161–162)

LXXIII—(B) To Turn Life into an Act of Adoration to the Supreme Through the Spirit in One's Works

1.

It is possible so to turn life into an act of adoration to the Supreme by the spirit in one's works; for, says the Gita, 'He who gives to me with a heart of adoration a leaf, a flower, a fruit or a cup of water, I take and enjoy that offering of his devotion'; and it is not only any dedicated external gift that can be so offered with love and devotion, but all our thoughts, all our feelings and sensations, all our outward activities and their forms and objects can be such gifts to the Eternal. It is true that the special act or form of action has its importance, even a great importance, but it is the spirit in the act that is the essential factor; the spirit of which it is the symbol or materialised expression gives it its whole value and justifying significance. Or it may be said that a complete act of divine love and worship has in it three parts that are the expressions of a single whole,—a practical worship of the Divine in the act, a symbol of worship in the form of the act expressing some vision and seeking or some relation with the Divine, an inner adoration and longing for oneness or feeling of oneness in the heart and soul and spirit. It is so that life can be changed into worship,—by putting behind it the spirit of a transcendent and universal love, the seeking of oneness, the sense of oneness; by making each act a symbol, an

expression of Godward emotion or a relation with the Divine; by turning all we do into an act of worship, an act of the soul's communion, the mind's understanding, the life's obedience, the heart's surrender." (CWSA 23: 162–163)

LXXIII—(C) An Act Without Emotional Content Is Not Integrally Spiritual

1.

"For if without a spiritual aspiration worship is meaningless and vain, yet the aspiration also without the act and the form is a disembodied and, for life, an incompletely effective power. It is unhappily the fate of all forms in human life to become crystallised, purely formal and therefore effete, and although form and cult preserve always their power for the man who can still enter into their meaning, the majority come to use the ceremony as a mechanical rite and the symbol as a lifeless sign, and because that kills the soul of religion, cult and form have in the end to be changed or thrown aside altogether. There are those even to whom all cult and form are for this reason suspect and offensive; but few can dispense with the support of outward symbols and, even, a certain divine element in human nature demands them always for the completeness of its spiritual satisfaction. Always the symbol is legitimate in so far as it is true, sincere, beautiful and delightful, and even one may say that a spiritual consciousness without any aesthetic or emotional content is not entirely or at any rate not integrally spiritual. In the spiritual life the basis of the act is a spiritual consciousness perennial and renovating, moved to express itself always in new forms or able to renew the truth of a form always

by the flow of the spirit, and to so express itself and make every action a living symbol of some truth of the soul is the very nature of its creative vision and impulse. It is so that the spiritual seeker must deal with life and transmute its form and glorify it in its essence.” (CWSA 23: 163–164)

LXXIII—(D) Devotion in Acts Not Only Makes the Way Dynamic but Brings an Element of Joy and Love

1.

"In itself the adoration in the act is a great and complete and powerful sacrifice that tends by its self-multiplication to reach the discovery of the One and make the radiation of the Divine possible. For devotion by its embodiment in acts not only makes its own way broad and full and dynamic, but brings at once into the harder way of works in the world the divinely passionate element of joy and love which is often absent in its beginning when it is only the austere spiritual Will that follows in a struggling uplifting tension the steep ascent, and the heart is still asleep or bound to silence. If the spirit of divine love can enter, the hardness of the way diminishes, the tension is lightened, there is a sweetness and joy even in the core of difficulty and struggle. The indispensable surrender of all our will and works and activities to the Supreme is indeed only perfect and perfectly effective when it is a surrender of love. All life turned into this cult, all actions done in the love of the Divine and in the love of the world and its creatures seen and felt as the Divine manifested in many disguises become by that very fact part of an integral Yoga." (CWSA 23: 165)

LXXIII—(E) A God-Lover Can Be the Divine Worker

1.

"So too this God-lover will be the divine worker, not for the sake of works or for a self-regarding pleasure in action, but because in this way God expends the power of his being and in his powers and their signs we find him, because the divine Will in works is the outflowing of the Godhead in the delight of its power, of divine Being in the delight of divine Force. He will feel perfect joy in the works and acts of the Beloved, because in them too he finds the Beloved; he will himself do all works because through those works too the Lord of his being expresses his divine joy in him: when he works, he feels that he is expressing in act and power his oneness with that which he loves and adores; he feels the rapture of the will which he obeys and with which all the force of his being is blissfully identified." (CWSA 24: 590–591)

LXXIII—(F) A God-Lover Seeks the Divine by Meeting the Divine in All the Activities

1.

"Nor will the seeking of the Divine through life and the meeting of him in all the activities of his being and of the universal being be absent from the scope of his [God-lover] worship. All Nature and all life will be to him at once a revelation and a fine trysting-place. Intellectual and aesthetic and dynamic activities, science and philosophy and life, thought and art and action will assume for him a diviner sanction and a greater meaning. He will seek them because of his clear sight of the Divine through them and because of the delight of the Divine in them. He will not be indeed attached to their appearances, for attachment is an obstacle to the Ananda; but because he possesses that pure, powerful and perfect Ananda which obtains everything but is dependent on nothing, and because he finds in them the ways and acts and signs, the becomings and the symbols and images of the Beloved, he draws from them a rapture which the normal mind that pursues them for themselves cannot attain or even dream. All this and more becomes part of the integral way and its consummation." (CWSA 24: 591)

LXXIV—Salvation Through Works

1.

"In Hinduism, the Sanatandharma, ... the peculiar and central religious experience of Hinduism,—the reality & eternity of the Self, the transience & unreality of all else,—is insisted upon as the guiding principle & indispensable idea. This is the bridge which carries you over to immortality; this is the gate of salvation. The Jnanamargin envisages only one reality, the Brahman, and by turning away from all that is phenomenal and seeking the One reality in himself, enters into the being of the Eternal. The Bhakta envisages only two realities, God & himself, and by the ecstatic union of himself with God through love and adoration, enters into the pure and unmixed presence of the Eternal. The Karmamargin envisages three realities which are one; the Eternal in Itself, pure and without a second, the Eternal as a transcendent Will or Force manifesting Himself phenomenally but not really in cosmic work & the Eternal in the Jivatman, manifesting Himself similarly in individual work in a finite body; and he too, by abandoning desire and laying his works upon God, attains likeness to the Eternal and through that gate enters into identity with the Eternal. In one thing all these agree, the transience & unreality of phenomenal existence. But if phenomenal existence is unreal, of what use is it to remain in the world? Let us abandon house and wealth and wife

and friends and children; let us flee from them to the solitude of mountain & forest and escape as soon as possible by knowledge & meditation from the world of phenomena. Such was the cry that arose in India before and after the days of Buddha, when the power of the Jnanamarga was the strongest on the Hindu consciousness. The language of the Bhakta is not very different; 'Let us leave the things of the world,' he cries, 'let us forget all else and think and speak only of the name of Hari.' Both have insisted that works and the world are a snare & a bondage from which it is best to flee. The Karmayogin alone has set himself against the current and tried to stand in the midmost of the cosmic stir, in the very surge and flux of phenomena without being washed away in the tide. Few, he has said, who remain in the world, can be above the world and live in communion with the Eternal; but few also who flee to the mountains, really attain Him, and few of those who spend their days in crying Lord, Lord, are accepted by Him to whom they cry. It is always the many who are called, the few who are chosen. And if Janak could remain in the world and be ever with God in the full luxury, power & splendour of the life of a great king, if Rama & Srikrishna lived in the world and did the works of the world, yet were God, who shall say that salvation cannot be attained in the midst of actions, nay, even through the instrumentality of actions? To this dispute the answer of Srikrishna is the one solution. To abandon desire

in the spirit is the one thing needful; if one fail to do this, it is vain for him to practise Yoga in mountain or forest solitude, it is vain to sing the name of Hari and cry Lord, Lord, from morn to night, it is vain to hope for safety by 'doing one's duty in the world'. The man unpurified of desire, whatever way he follows, will not find salvation. But if he can purify his spirit of desire, then whether on solitary mountain and in tiger-haunted forest, or in Brindavun the beautiful, or in the king's court, the trader's shop or the hut of the peasant, salvation is already in his grasp. For the condition of salvation is to leave the lower unreal self and turn to the real Self; and the stain & brand of the lower self is desire." (CWSA 17: 192–193)

2.

"But the works of the Karmayogin are works done with knowledge and without desire. These certainly cannot prevent release or lead to fresh debt and fresh bondage. For bondage is the result of desire and ignorance and disappears with desire and ignorance. Desire & ignorance are indeed the boundaries of Nature's jurisdiction and once we have left them behind, we have passed out of her kingdom; we have taken sanctuary from her pursuit and are freemen released from the action of her laws. To deny the innocence of works without desire would be to deny reason, to deny Sruti, to deny facts. For Janaka and others did works, Srikrishna did works, but none will say that

either the *avatar* or the *jivanmukta* were bound by his works; for their *karma* was done with knowledge and without desire. Works without desire, then, cannot prevent salvation or lead to fresh bondage.

It may be argued, however, that if they do not prevent salvation, neither do they help towards salvation. The works of the Bhakta or Jnani do not bind him because he has attained the Eternal and by the strength of that attainment becomes free from desire and ignorance; but works done before attainment can be nothing but means of bondage; only the pursuit of God-knowledge and the worship & adoration of God, to which the name of works does not properly apply, are free from responsibility. But this reasoning too is not consistent with divine teaching, with experience or with reason. For divine teaching distinctly tells us that works done after abandonment of the world and devoted to God only, do lead to salvation. We know also that a single action done without desire and devoted to the Lord, gives us strength for fresh actions of the same kind, and the persistent repetition of such works must form the habit of desirelessness & self-devotion to Him, which then become our nature and atmosphere. We have already seen that desirelessness necessarily takes us outside the jurisdiction of Nature, and when we are outside the jurisdiction of Nature, where can we be if not in the presence of the Eternal? Nor can self-devotion to the Lord be reasonably said not to lead to the Lord; for where else

can it lead? It is clear therefore that works without desire not only do not prevent salvation but are a mighty help towards salvation." (CWSA 17: 204–205)

LXXV—The Works of Rites and Ceremonies, Vedic, Puranic or Tantric Do Not Bring Salvation

1.

"What is it, after all, to which the denial of salvation by works amounts, when looked at not from the standpoint of logic only but of actual spiritual experience? Some people when they talk of Karma or works, think only of rites and ceremonies, Vedic, Puranic or Tantric. That kind of works, certainly, do not bring us to salvation. They may give success & great joy, power and splendour in this world. Or they may lead to enjoyment after death in Paradise; but Paradise is not salvation; it is a temporary joyous condition of the soul, the pleasure of which ceases when the cause is exhausted. Or these rites may lead to the conscious possession and use of occult powers, latent in ordinary men, by which you may help or harm others; but the possession of occult powers cannot be an assistance, it is indeed often a hindrance to salvation. Or rites and ceremonies may purify and prepare the mind and fit it for starting on one of the paths to salvation. This indeed is their only helpfulness for the true aim of our existence. They are no more than an infant or preparatory class in the school of Brahmavidya." (CWSA 17: 202–203)

LXXVI—Works Done with Desire, Without Knowledge, and Not Devoted to God, Cannot Lead to Salvation

1.

"It is evident again that works done with desire, works done without knowledge and not devoted to God, cannot lead to salvation, but only to continued bondage. Works prompted by desire, lead only to the fulfilment of desire; nor do they disappear in that consummation. For all work that we do, has, besides its effect on ourselves, infinite effects on others and on the general course of phenomena; these in their turn become causes and produce fresh effects; so the ripple continues widening till we lose sight of it in the distance of futurity. For all the effects of our action we are responsible and by each new thing we do, we are entering into so many debts which we must discharge before we can be released from the obligation of phenomenal existence. Existence in phenomena may be imaged as a debtor's prison in which the soul is detained by a million creditors not one of whom will forgive one farthing of his claims. But those claims we can never discharge; each sum we get to pay off our old creditors, we can only procure by entering into fresh debts which put us at the mercy of new and equally implacable claimants. Nature, the great judge and gaoler, is ever giving fresh decrees against us, for her law is inexorable and will not

admit of remission or indulgence. We can obtain our release only by escaping from her jurisdiction into the divine sanctuary where the slave of Nature, by his very entry, becomes free and her master." (CWSA 17: 203)

LXXVII—In All Work the Jivanmukta Feels Perfectly Free

1.

But the Jivanmukta [living liberated man] feels no bondage [*in work*]. In all work and action, he feels perfectly free, because the work is not done by him personally (there is no sense of limited ego) but by the cosmic Force. The limitations of the work are those put by the cosmic Force itself on its own action. He himself lives in communion of oneness with the Transcendent which is above the cosmos and feels no limitation. That is at least how it is felt in the Overmind." (CWSA 29: 265)

2.

"Do? why should he [*a certain Yogi*] want to do anything if he was in the eternal peace or Ananda or union with the Divine? If a man is spiritual and has gone beyond the vital and mind, he does not need to be always 'doing' something. The self or spirit has the joy of its own existence. It is free to do nothing and free to do everything—but not because it is bound to action and unable to exist without it." (CWSA 29: 264)

3.

"The Jivanmukta [living liberated man] is the ideal of the Karmayogin and though he may not reach his ideal in this

life or the next, still he must always strive to model himself upon it. Do therefore your deeds in this world and wish to live your hundred years. You should be willing to live your allotted term of life not for the sake of long living, but because the real you in the body is Brahman who by the force of His own Shakti is playing for Himself and by Himself this dramatic *lila* of creation, preservation and destruction. He is Isha, the Lord, Creator, Preserver and Destroyer; and you also in the field of your own Prakriti are the lord, creator, preserver and destroyer. You are He; only for your own amusement you have imagined yourself limited to a particular body for the purposes of the play, just as an actor imagines himself to be Dushyanta, Rama or Ravana. The actor has lost himself in the play and for a moment thinks that he is what he is acting; he has forgotten that he is really not Dushyanta or Rama, but Devadatta who has played & will yet play a hundred parts besides. When he shakes off this illusion and remembers that he is Devadatta, he does not therefore walk off the stage and by refusing to act, break up the play, but goes on playing his best till the proper time comes for him to leave the stage. The object of this phenomenal world is creation and it is our business, while we are in the body, to create. Only, so long as we forget our true Self, we create like servants under the compulsion of Prakriti and are slaves and bound by her actions which we falsely imagine to be our own. But when we know and experience

our true Self, then we are masters of Prakriti and not bound by her creations. Our Self becomes the Sakshi, the silent spectator of the actions of our Nature which she models in the way she thinks would best please it. So are we at once spectator and actor; and yet because we know the whole to be merely an illusion of apparent actions, because we know that Rama is not really killing Ravana, nor Ravana being killed, for Ravana lives as much after the supposed death as before, so are we neither spectator nor actor, but the Self only and all we see nothing but visions of the Self. The Karmamargin therefore will not try or wish to abandon actions while he is in this world, but only the desire for their fruits; neither will he try or wish to leave his life in this world before its appointed end. The man who violently breaks the thread of his life before it is spun out, will obtain a result the very opposite to what he desires. The Karmamargin aims at being a Jivanmukta, he will not cherish within himself the spirit of the suicide." (CWSA 17: 209–210)

4.

"Those who flee from the world or shun action (the Sannyasis) do so because they would be involved or bound; they believe the world to be unreal, but in fact it weighs on them as a reality so long as they are in it. When one is perfectly free from the illusion of the reality of things, then they cannot weigh on one or bind at all." (CWSA 29: 264)

LXXVIII—In the Integral Yoga, the Yoga of Knowledge, Devotion, Works and Self-perfection Culminates in the Yoga of Supramental Realisation

1.

"The yoga of knowledge is the path that leads to the Divine through the exclusive pursuit of the pure and absolute Truth.

The yoga of devotion is the path that leads to union with the Divine through perfect, total and eternal love.

In the integral yoga of Sri Aurobindo, the two combine with the yoga of works and the yoga of self-perfection to make a homogeneous whole, culminating in the yoga of supramental realisation." (CWM 16: 236)

2.

"The way of works turns by this road of sacrifice to meet the path of Devotion; it can be itself a devotion as complete, as absorbing, as integral as any the desire of the heart can ask for or the passion of the mind can imagine." (CWSA 23: 112)

3.

"In its close, if not long before it, this way of works turns by communion with the Divine Presence, Will and Force into a way of Knowledge more complete and integral than

any the mere creature intelligence can construct or the search of the intellect can discover." (CWSA 23: 113)

4.

"It has all the power of a way of works integral and absolute, but because of its law of sacrifice and self-giving to the Divine Self and Master, it is accompanied on its one side by the whole power of the path of Love and on the other by the whole power of the path of Knowledge. At its end all these three divine Powers work together, fused, united, completed, perfected by each other." (CWSA 23: 114)

5.

"We can see also that in the integral view of things these three paths are one. Divine Love should normally lead to the perfect knowledge of the Beloved by perfect intimacy, thus becoming a path of Knowledge, and to divine service, thus becoming a path of Works. So also should perfect Knowledge lead to perfect Love and Joy and a full acceptance of the works of That which is known; dedicated Works to the entire love of the Master of the Sacrifice and the deepest knowledge of His ways and His being. It is in this triple path that we come most readily to the absolute knowledge, love and service of the One in all beings and in the entire cosmic manifestation." (CWSA 23: 40)

6.

"Each [way, knowledge, devotion and works] is guided in the ways of its own characteristic power. But all power is in the end one, all power is really soul-power. ... But when by Yoga any of these powers is taken up from the dispersed and distributive action, raised to its highest degree, concentrated, it becomes manifest soul-power and reveals the essential unity. ... The triple way may appear to be altogether mental and spiritual in its way of seeking and its objectives, but it can be attended by results more characteristic of the other paths, which offer themselves in a spontaneous and involuntary flowering, and for the same reason, because soul-power is all-power and where it reaches its height in one direction its other possibilities also begin to show themselves in factor in incipient potentiality. This unity at once suggests the possibility of a synthetic Yoga." (CWSA 24: 610–611)

7.

"Our [Integral Yoga's] synthesis takes man as a spirit in mind much more than a spirit in body and assumes in him the capacity to begin on that level, to spiritualise his being by the power of the soul in mind opening itself directly to a higher spiritual force and being and to perfect by that higher force so possessed and brought into action the whole of his nature. For that reason our initial stress has

fallen upon the utilisation of the powers of soul in mind and the turning of the triple key of knowledge, works and love in the locks of the spirit ...” (CWSA 24: 612)

8.

“In other words, a perfection has to be aimed at which amounts to the elevation of the mental into the full spiritual and supramental nature. Therefore this integral Yoga of knowledge, love and works has to be extended into a Yoga of spiritual and gnostic self-perfection. As gnostic knowledge, will and ananda are a direct instrumentation of spirit and can only be won by growing into the spirit, into divine being, this growth has to be the first aim of our Yoga. The mental being has to enlarge itself into the oneness of the Divine before the Divine will perfect in the soul of the individual its gnostic outflowering. That is the reason why the triple way of knowledge, works and love becomes the key-note of the whole Yoga, for that is the direct means for the soul in mind to rise to its highest intensities where it passes upward into the divine oneness. That too is the reason why the Yoga must be integral.” (CWSA 24: 614)

9.

“To open oneself to the supracosmic Divine is an essential condition of this integral perfection; to unite oneself with

the universal Divine is another essential condition. Here the Yoga of self-perfection coincides with the Yogas of knowledge, works and devotion; for it is impossible to change the human nature into the divine or to make it an instrument of the divine knowledge, will and joy of existence, unless there is a union with the supreme Being, Consciousness and Bliss and a unity with its universal Self in all things and beings." (CWSA 24: 622)

10.

"Supermind, mind, life and body are the four instruments which the spirit uses for its manifestation in the workings of Nature. Supermind is spiritual consciousness acting as a self-luminous knowledge, will, sense, aesthesis, energy, self-creative and unveiling power of its own delight and being. Mind is the action of the same powers, but limited and only very indirectly and partially illumined. Supermind lives in unity though it plays with diversity; mind lives in a separative action of diversity, though it may open to unity." (CWSA 24: 625)

11.

"But it is meant that the Siddha of the active integral perfection will live dynamically in the working of the transcendent power of the divine Spirit as a universal will through the supermind individualised in him for action. His

works will therefore be the works of an eternal Knowledge, an eternal Truth, an eternal Might, an eternal Love, an eternal Ananda; but the truth, knowledge, force, love, delight will be the whole essential spirit of whatever work he will do and will not depend on its form; they will determine his action from the spirit within and the action will not determine the spirit or subject it to a fixed standard or rigid mould of working." (CWSA 24: 644–645)

LXXIX—The Justification of Works in the Isha Upanishad

1.

"In the first [movement in Isha Upanishad], a basis is laid down by the idea of the one and stable Spirit inhabiting and governing a universe of movement and of the forms of movement. (*Verse 1, line 1*)

On this conception the rule of a divine life for man is founded,—enjoyment of all by renunciation of all through the exclusion of desire. (*Verse 1, line 2*)

There is then declared the justification of works and of the physical life on the basis of an inalienable freedom of the soul, one with the Lord, amidst all the activity of the multiple movement. (*Verse 2*)" Isha Upanishad: Part One (CWSA 17: 13–14)

2.

"Similarly, the Isha has for its subject the nature of human life & action lived & done in the light of Vedantic knowledge & supreme realisation. It is the gospel of a divine life on earth, a consecration of works, the seed & foundation of Karmayoga." (CWSA 17: 370)

3.

"Being one with all beings, we possess, in their enjoyment, in ours and in the cosmic Being's, delight of universal self

expression. It is only by this Ananda at once transcendent and universal that man can be free in his soul and yet live in the world with the full active Life of the Lord in His universe of movement.

THE JUSTIFICATION OF WORKS

This freedom does not depend upon inaction, nor is this possession limited to the enjoyment of the inactive Soul that only witnesses without taking part in the movement.

On the contrary, the doing of works in this material world and a full acceptance of the term of physical life are part of its completeness.

For the active Brahman fulfils Itself in the world by works and man also is in the body for self-fulfilment by action. He cannot do otherwise, for even his inertia acts and produces effects in the cosmic movement. Being in this body or any kind of body, it is idle to think of refraining from action or escaping the physical life. The idea that this in itself can be a means of liberation, is part of the Ignorance which supposes the soul to be a separate entity in the Brahman.

Action is shunned because it is thought to be inconsistent with freedom. The man when he acts, is supposed to be necessarily entangled in the desire behind the action, in subjection to the formal energy that drives

the action and in the results of the action. These things are true in appearance, not in reality.

Desire is only a mode of the emotional mind which by ignorance seeks its delight in the object of desire and not in the Brahman who expresses Himself in the object. By destroying that ignorance one can do action without entanglement in desire.

The Energy that drives is itself subject to the Lord, who expresses Himself in it with perfect freedom. By getting behind Nature to the Lord of Nature, merging the individual in the Cosmic Will, one can act with the divine freedom. Our actions are given up to the Lord and our personal responsibility ceases in His liberty.

The chain of Karma only binds the movement of Nature and not the soul which, by knowing itself, ceases even to appear to be bound by the results of its works.

Therefore the way of freedom is not inaction, but to cease from identifying oneself with the movement and recover instead our true identity in the Self of things who is their Lord." (CWSA 17: 19–20)

4.

"Thus, the third movement of the Upanishad is a justification of life and works, which were enjoined upon the seeker of the Truth in its second verse. Works are the essence of Life. Life is a manifestation of the Brahman; in Brahman the Life Principle arranges a harmony of the

seven principles of conscious being by which that manifestation works out its involution and evolution." (CWSA 17: 63)

5.

"The central idea of the Upanishad, which is a reconciliation and harmony of fundamental opposites, is worked out symmetrically in four successive movements of thought." (CWSA 17: 13)

6.

"The pairs of opposites successively taken up by the Upanishad and resolved are, in the order of their succession:

1. The Conscious Lord and phenomenal Nature.
2. Renunciation and Enjoyment.
3. Action in Nature and Freedom in the Soul.
4. The One stable Brahman and the multiple Movement.
5. Being and Becoming.
6. The Active Lord and the indifferent Akshara Brahman.
7. Vidya and Avidya.
8. Birth and Non-Birth
9. Works and Knowledge.

These discords are thus successively resolved: ..." (CWSA 17: 85)

ACTION AND FREEDOM

7.

"Actions are not inconsistent with the soul's freedom. Man is not bound by works, but only seems to be bound. He has to recover the consciousness of his inalienable freedom by recovering the consciousness of unity in the Lord, unity in himself, unity with all existence.3 This done, life and works can and should be accepted in their fullness; for the manifestation of the Lord in life and works is the law of our being and the object of our world-existence." (CWSA 17: 86)

WORKS AND KNOWLEDGE

8.

"The opposition between works and knowledge exists as long as works and knowledge are only of the egoistic mental character. Mental knowledge is not true knowledge; true knowledge is that which is based on the true sight, the sight of the Seer, of Surya, of the Kavi. Mental thought is not knowledge, it is a golden lid placed over the face of the Truth, the Sight, the divine Ideation, the Truth-Consciousness. When that is removed, sight replaces mental thought, the all-embracing truth-ideation, Mahas, Veda, Drishti, replaces the fragmentary mental activity. True Buddhi (Vijnana) emerges from the dissipated action

of the Buddhi which is all that is possible on the basis of the sensemind, the Manas. Vijnana leads us to pure knowledge (Jnana), pure consciousness (Chit). There we realise our entire identity with the Lord in all at the very roots of our being.

But in Chit, Will and Seeing are one. Therefore in Vijnana or truth-ideation also which comes luminously out of Chit, Will and Sight are combined and no longer as in the mind separated from each other. Therefore when we have the sight and live in the truth-consciousness, our will becomes the spontaneous law of the truth in us and, knowing all its acts and their sense and objective, leads straight to the human goal, which was always the enjoyment of the Ananda, the Lord's delight in self-being, the state of Immortality. In our acts also we become one with all beings and our life grows into a representation of oneness, truth and divine joy and no longer proceeds on the crooked path of egoism full of division, error and stumbling. In a word, we attain to the object of our existence which is to manifest in itself whether on earth in a terrestrial body and against the resistance of Matter or in the worlds beyond or enter beyond all world the glory of the divine Life and the divine Being." (CWSA 17: 90–91)

The second verse of the Isha Upanishad says 'Do, verily, thy deeds in this world and wish to live thy hundred years,

for thus to thee and there is no other way than this, action cleaveth not to a man'

9.

"The way of the Sannyasin who leaves the world and devotes all himself to Jnana or Bhakti, is a good way, and there is none better; but the way of the Tyagin who lives among sense-objects and in the whirl of action without cherishing the first or yielding to the rush of the second, is the right way for the Karmayogin. This is what the Upanishad with great emphasis proceeds to establish as the second rule of conduct for the Karmamargin.

"Do, verily, thy deeds in this world and wish to live thy hundred years, for thus to thee and there is no other way than this, action cleaveth not to a man."

A hundred years is the full span of a man's natural life when he observes all the laws of his nature and keeps his body and mind pure by the use of pure food, by pure ways of living, by purity of thought and by self-restraint in the satisfaction of his desires. The term is ordinarily diminished by heedlessness, sin, contamination or the effects of our past action in other lives; it may, on the other hand, be increased to hundreds of years by Yoga. But the Karmayogin will neither desire to increase his term of life nor to diminish it. To increase his term of life would show a desire for and clinging to phenomenal existence quite inconsistent with that abandonment of desire which we

have seen to be the fundamental law of Karmayoga. A few great Yogis have prolonged their lives without personal desire merely to help the world by their presence or example. These are exceptional cases which the ordinary Karmamargin need not keep in view. On the other hand we must not turn our backs on life; we must not fling it from us untimely or even long for an early release from our body, but willingly fill out our term and even be most ready to prolong it to the full period of man's ordinary existence so that we may go on doing our deeds in this world. Mark the emphasis laid on the word ... 'doing' by adding to it the particle ev, the force of which is to exclude any other action, state, person or thing than the one expressed by the word to which it is attached. Verily we must do our deeds in this world and not avoid doing them. There is no need to flee to the mountains in order to find God. He is not a hill-man or a serpent that we should seek for Him only in cave & on summit; nor a deer or tiger that the forest only can harbour Him. He is here, in you and around you; He is in these men and women whom you see daily, with whom you talk & pass your life. In the roar of the city you can find Him and in the quiet of the village, He is there. You may go to the mountains for a while, if the din of life deafens you & you wish to seek solitude to meditate; for to the Karmayogin also Jnana is necessary and solitude is the nurse of knowledge. You may sit by the Ganges or the Narmada near some quiet temple or in some sacred asram

to adore the Lord; for to the Karmayogin also *bhakti* is necessary, and places like these which are saturated with the *bhakti* of great saints and impassioned God-lovers best feed and strengthen the impulse of adoration in the soul. But if Karmayoga be your path, you must come back and live again in the stir of the world. In no case flee to solitude and inaction as a coward and weakling,—not in the hope of finding God, but because you think you can by this means escape from the miseries and misfortunes of your life which you are too weak to face. It is not the weak and the coward who can climb up to God, but the strong and brave alone. Every individual Jivatman must become the perfect Kshatriya before he can become the Brahmin. For there is a caste of the soul which is truer and deeper than that of the body. Through four soul-stages a man must pass before he can be perfect; first, as a Sudra, by service and obedience to tame the brute in his being; then, as a Vaishya to satisfy within the law of morality the lower man in him and evolve the higher man by getting the first taste of delight in well-doing to others than himself and his; then, as the Kshatriya, to be trained in those first qualities without which the pursuit of the Eternal is impossible, courage, strength, unconquerable tenacity and self-devotion to a great task; last, as the Brahmin, so to purify body & mind and nature that he may see the Eternal reflected in himself as in an unsoiled mirror. Having once seen God, man can have no farther object in life than to

reach and possess Him. Now the Karmayogin is a soul that is already firmly established in the Kshatriya stage and is rising from it through an easily-attained Brahminhood straight & swift to God. If he loses hold of his courage & heroism, he loses his footing on the very standing-ground from which he is to heighten himself in his spiritual stature until his hand can reach up to and touch the Eternal. Let his footing be lost, & what can he do but fall?" (CWSA 17: 194–196)

'Action clingeth not to a man'

10.

"But in that case we are eternally bound by the chain of our works, nailed helplessly to the wheel of karma? Not so; for the wheel of karma is an error and the chain of our works is a grand illusion. 'Action clingeth not to a man.' Bondage is not the result of works, & liberation is not the result of cessation of works. Bondage is a state of the mind; liberation is another state of the mind. When through the principle of desire in the mind the soul, the Ish, the lord, mixes himself up in the whirl of Prakriti, he sees himself in mental consciousness as if carried forward in the stream of causality; he seems to the mind in him to be bound by the effects of his works; when he relinquishes desire, then he recovers his lordship—which in his higher being he has never lost—and appears to himself what he

has always been in reality, free in his being, swarat, samrat. It follows then that the way to liberate oneself is not to renounce works but to rise from mind to Supra-mind, from the consciousness of mental being, sambhava, to the consciousness of self-being, swayambhava or asambhuti. It is necessary to remember oneself, but it is not necessary to forget phenomena. For action is the movement of Prakriti and the chain of action is nothing more terrible or mystic than the relation of cause & effect. That chain does not bind the Master; action leaves no stain on the soul. The works of the liberated man produce an effect indeed, but on the stream of Prakriti, not on the soul which is above its action and not under it, uses action & is not victimised by it, determines action & is not determined by it. But if action in its nature bound the soul, then freedom here would be impossible. It does not & cannot; the soul allows mind to mix itself up with its works, buddhir lipyate, but the action does not adhere to the soul, na karma lipyate nare. The fear of action is Maya; the impossibility of combining action with calm & renunciation is a false sanskara. Nivritti or calm is the eternal state & very nature of the soul, pravritti is in manifestation the eternal state and very nature of Prakriti. Their coexistence & harmony is not only possible, but it is the secret of the world obscured only by ignorance in the mind. The enemy therefore is not action, but ignorance; not works bind us, but works done in the state of ignorance give us the illusion

of bondage. The idea of separateness, of limitation with its fruit of desire, internal struggle, disappointment, grief, pain,—this alone is our stumbling block. Abolish it, see God alone everywhere & all difficulty disappears. Nivritti & Pravritti, tyaga & bhoga move harmoniously to the perfect fulfilment of the divine purpose." (CWSA 17: 384–385)

11.

"The Lord possesses always His double term and conducts the action of the universe, extended in it, but not attached to or limited by His works. The human soul, entangled in mind, is obscured in vision by the rushing stream of Prakriti's works and fancies itself to be a part of that stream and swept in its currents and in its eddies. It has to go back in its self-existence to the silent Purusha even while participating in its self-becoming in the movement of Prakriti. It becomes, then, not only like the silent Purusha, the witness and upholder, but also the Lord and the free enjoyer of Prakriti and her works. An absolute calm and passivity, purity and equality within, a sovereign and inexhaustible activity without is the nature of Brahman as we see it manifested in the universe.

There is therefore no farther objection to works. On the contrary, works are justified by the participation or self identification of the soul with the Lord in His double aspect of passivity and activity. Tranquillity for the Soul, activity

for the energy, is the balance of the divine rhythm in man." (CWSA 17: 46–47)

LXXX—Perfect Action on a Gnostic Basis

1.

"The gnostic perfection, spiritual in its nature, is to be accomplished here in the body and takes life in the physical world as one of its fields, even though the gnosis opens to us possession of planes and worlds beyond the material universe. The physical body is therefore a basis of action, *pratiṣṭhā*, which cannot be despised, neglected or excluded from the spiritual evolution: a perfection of the body as the outer instrument of a complete divine living on earth will be necessarily a part of the gnostic conversion. The change will be effected by bringing in the law of the gnostic Purusha, *vijñānamaya puruṣa*, and of that into which it opens, the Anandamaya, into the physical consciousness and its members. Pushed to its highest conclusion this movement brings in a spiritualising and illumination of the whole physical consciousness and a divinising of the law of the body. For behind the gross physical sheath of this materially visible and sensible frame there is subliminally supporting it and discoverable by a finer subtle consciousness a subtle body of the mental being and a spiritual or causal body of the gnostic and bliss soul in which all the perfection of a spiritual embodiment is to be found, a yet unmanifested divine law of the body. ...

There will remain, because it will then only be entirely possible, the perfect action and enjoyment of being

on the gnostic basis. The Purusha enters into cosmic manifestation for the variations of his infinite existence, for knowledge, action and enjoyment; the gnosis brings the fullness of spiritual knowledge and it will found on that the divine action and cast the enjoyment of world and being into the law of the truth, the freedom and the perfection of the spirit. But neither action nor enjoyment will be the lower action of the gunas and consequent egoistic enjoyment mostly of the satisfaction of rajasic desire which is our present way of living. Whatever desire will remain, if that name be given, will be the divine desire, the will to delight of the Purusha enjoying in his freedom and perfection the action of the perfected Prakriti and all her members. The Prakriti will take up the whole nature into the law of her higher divine truth and act in that law offering up the universal enjoyment of her action and being to the Anandamaya Ishwara, the Lord of existence and works and Spirit of bliss, who presides over and governs her workings. The individual soul will be the channel of this action and offering, and it will enjoy at once its oneness with the Ishwara and its oneness with the Prakriti and will enjoy all relations with Infinite and finite, with God and the universe and beings in the universe in the highest terms of the union of the universal Purusha and Prakriti." (CWSA 24: 695–696)

LXXXI—Mahasaraswati Is the Mother's Power of Work

1.

"Mahasaraswati is the Mother's Power of Work and her spirit of perfection and order." (CWSA 32: 22)

2.

"The youngest of the Four, [Mahasaraswati] she is the most skilful in executive faculty and the nearest to physical Nature. Maheshwari lays down the large lines of the world forces, Mahakali drives their energy and impetus, Mahalakshmi discovers their rhythms and measures, but Mahasaraswati presides over their detail of organisation and execution, relation of parts and effective combination of forces and unfailing exactitude of result and fulfilment. The science and craft and technique of things are Mahasaraswati's province. Always she holds in her nature and can give to those whom she has chosen the intimate and precise knowledge, the subtlety and patience, the accuracy of intuitive mind and conscious hand and discerning eye of the perfect worker. This Power is the strong, the tireless, the careful and efficient builder, organiser, administrator, technician, artisan and classifier of the worlds. When she takes up the transformation and new-building of the nature, her action is laborious and minute and often seems to our impatience slow and

interminable, but it is persistent, integral and flawless. For the will in her works is scrupulous, unsleeping, indefatigable; leaning over us she notes and touches every little detail, finds out every minute defect, gap, twist or incompleteness, considers and weighs accurately all that has been done and all that remains still to be done hereafter. Nothing is too small or apparently trivial for her attention; nothing however impalpable or disguised or latent can escape her. Moulding and remoulding she labours each part till it has attained its true form, is put in its exact place in the whole and fulfils its precise purpose. In her constant and diligent arrangement and rearrangement of things her eye is on all needs at once and the way to meet them and her intuition knows what is to be chosen and what rejected and successfully determines the right instrument, the right time, the right conditions and the right process. Carelessness and negligence and indolence she abhors; all scamped and hasty and shuffling work, all clumsiness and *à peu près* and misfire, all false adaptation and misuse of instruments and faculties and leaving of things undone or half done is offensive and foreign to her temper. When her work is finished, nothing has been forgotten, no part has been misplaced or omitted or left in a faulty condition; all is solid, accurate, complete, admirable. Nothing short of a perfect perfection satisfies her and she is ready to face an eternity of toil if that is needed for the fullness of her creation.

Therefore of all the Mother's powers she is the most long-suffering with man and his thousand imperfections. Kind, smiling, close and helpful, not easily turned away or discouraged, insistent even after repeated failure, her hand sustains our every step on condition that we are single in our will and straightforward and sincere; for a double mind she will not tolerate and her revealing irony is merciless to drama and histrionics and self-deceit and pretence. A mother to our wants, a friend in our difficulties, a persistent and tranquil counsellor and mentor, chasing away with her radiant smile the clouds of gloom and fretfulness and depression, reminding always of the ever-present help, pointing to the eternal sunshine, she is firm, quiet and persevering in the deep and continuous urge that drives us towards the integrality of the higher nature. All the work of the other Powers leans on her for its completeness; for she assures the material foundation, elaborates the stuff of detail and erects and rivets the armour of the structure." (CWSA 32: 22–23)

3.

"The fourth [Aspects of the Divine Mother, Mahasaraswati] is equipped with her close and profound capacity of intimate knowledge and careful flawless work and quiet and exact perfection in all things." (CWSA 32: 17–18)

4.

"Yes—all perfection in intricacy of detail shows the touch of Mahasaraswati." (CWSA 32: 72)

5.

"*Sitting in meditation today I saw a river flowing from the higher consciousness level to the heart level in me. On this river was a golden boat and seated in it was Mahasaraswati, travelling down the river in golden and white light. What is the meaning of this?*

That is the work of Mahasaraswati to move between the higher consciousness and the heart and through them establish the rule of the Truth in all details of the mind and life and physical nature." (CWSA 32: 72)

6.

"It is Mahasaraswati's work to use the power and light and experiences that come in from above so as to change in detail the whole outer nature." (CWSA 32: 71)

7.

"You must try to fulfil the conditions of Mahasaraswati, make your work more and more perfect, make progress and try for a psychological transformation." (CWM 15: 139)

Other Comprehensive Compilations by Jamshed M. Mavalwalla

Other comprehensive collections compiled by the same compiler are listed below. These works are available for free download through the Sri Aurobindo Society's publications website:

https://auropublications.org/free-e-books/#Jamshed

On the website, the most recently published books appear at the top of the list, while the earliest published books appear at the bottom.

Compilations Related to Sadhana

1. SURRENDER In the Integral Yoga
2. ASPIRATION In the Integral Yoga
3. REJECTION In the Integral Yoga Part I
4. REJECTION In the Integral Yoga Part II
5. Conquering Obstacles in Sadhana
6. LOVE for the DIVINE
7. Bhakti Yoga: The Yoga of Devotion
8. The Supreme Divine Love
9. Preparing for Yoga Through Human Love
10. The Descent of Spritual Peace
11. Peace is Most Needed in Sadhana
12. To Prepare for Spiritual Life Cultivate Equality
13. Necessity for Spiritual Perfection Is Perfect Equality
14. Fundamental Faith Required in Yoga
15. Faith Precedes Spiritual Experience
16. Regain Faith if Faith Falters

17. Cure from Illness by Faith
18. COURAGE in SADHANA
19. HUMILITY in SADHANA
20. SINCERITY in SADHANA
21. How to Become Absolutely SINCERE
22. Insincerity Can Be Changed in Yoga
23. To Succeed in Sadhana Aspire Sincerely
24. PERSEVERANCE in SADHANA
25. RECEPTIVITY in SADHANA
26. All Is She (Compiled by Archana Udaykumar)
27. Faithfulness in Sadhana
28. Modesty in Sadhana
29. Generosity in Sadhana
30. Patience in Sadhana
31. Cheerfulness in Sadhana
32. Meditation, Concentration and Contemplation in Sadhana
33. Namjapa of Mantra in Sadhana
34. Seek Spiritual Progress in Happiness
35. Silence in Sadhana
36. Status of Silence in the Infinite
37. Concentration in Spiritual Life
38. Work in Sadhana
39. Work is Indispensible in Sadhana of Integral Yoga
40. The Gita's Gospel of Works
41. Gratitude towards the Divine
42. Pain, the Hammer of the Gods

Compilations on India: This series of books was released in celebration of the 150th Birth Anniversary of Sri Aurobindo and the 75th Anniversary of India's Independence.

43. India and Her Mission
44. The Task of Building India Is Spiritual

45. The Splendour of Bharat's Past Be Reborn
46. Spirit of Kshatriya with a Large Liberal Ideal
47. Become Indian and Do Not Imitate the West
48. Qualities of the Indian Mind
49. Develop Original Thinking
50. The Mantra Vande Mataram
51. The Men Who Will Lead India
52. India One and Indivisible
53. Indian Spiritual Nationalism

Compilations Related to Sadhana Continued

54. Descent of Higher Consciousness General
55. Descent of Higher Consciousness Specific
56. Higher Destiny by Descent of Higher Consciousness
57. Nexus Between Psychic Being and Higher Consciousness
58. Cure of Illness by Higher Consciousness
59. Descent Can Transform Our Being
60. How the Descent Helps the Evolution
61. Suffering Is Not Indispensable Nor Necessary
62. Causes and Remedies of Suffering
63. Through Yoga One Can Come Out of Suffering
64. Suffering as Means of Progress
65. Release from Suffering in Indian Philosophy
66. How to Account for Suffering If Existence Is Delight
67. Delight Secretly Supports All Our Sufferings
68. Purity in Sadhana

One compilation is available only in printed book form:
Sadhana of the Psychic Being