

SRI AUROBINDO

THE SYNTHESIS OF YOGA

Introduction to Chapter I:
The Four Aids

by

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Transcription of lectures given at *SUPER SCHOOL*

The talks on the first chapter of The Life Divine: The Human Aspiration resulted in a question from the students: 'We understand that the aim of life is to realize the divine life on earth itself and that this human aspiration is justified both intuitively and rationally. The question now is: How to realize this Divine Life?'

As a result of this question, Kireetbhai decided to take up the first chapter of The Synthesis of Yoga: The Four Aids, as this presents in summary the 'how' of the Divine Life. Unfortunately, the introduction to the first talk was not recorded on the tape, but Kireetbhai had just remarked that the first paragraph of the first chapter summarizes the argument of the Synthesis of Yoga.

For ready reference, the complete chapter: The Four Aids, can be found at the end of this series of talks.

THE SYNTHESIS OF YOGA - *The Four Aids*

I.

Yoga-siddhi, the perfection that comes from the practice of Yoga, can be best attained by the combined working of four great instruments. There is, first, the knowledge of the truths, principles, powers and processes that govern the realisation — shastra.”

Some processes may be very short if you want to move very fast and if you know the principles then even processes can be shortened. The knowledge of processes is conditioned by the knowledge of principles. And the principles always depend upon the Truth. So, truths, principles, powers and processes. These four things are necessary.

Any book that describes these four things is called *shastra*. If you read the *Bhagavad Gita* for example you get the same kind of knowledge of the truths, principles, powers and processes. That is why the *Bhagavad Gita* is also called Yoga *shastra*. If you read the *Upanishads* you have the same: truths, principles, powers and processes. *Upanishads* are also called Yoga *shastra*. The *Veda* also contains the truths, principles, powers and processes. *Veda* is also called Yoga *shastra*. There are many other Yoga *shastras* in India and also elsewhere, in other parts of the world. There are many many such *shastras*.

But no *shastra* deals with the problem with which we have started. We have started with the question: “How do we realise divine life on the earth?” Some *shastras* describe only how you can ascend towards the Divine. They do not tell you how to come back. You go upwards but they don’t tell you how to come down. Some tell you how to go upwards up to a certain point but not beyond that point. The *Veda* for example gives you the *shastra* of going upwards and also coming down but not to that point which will make collective divine life on the earth possible. That requires a further descent. Therefore this book, *The Synthesis of Yoga*, is the only book which tells you how to realise divine life on the earth. Not only to rise up towards the Divine but to bring down the Divine to such an extent that the whole earth can be flooded with the Divine Light.

Therefore we have selected this book. I had selected the *Veda* initially just to begin. It only prepared your mind, whether you remember or not does not matter. We shall come back again one day to all that we have dealt with in the first part of our journey. But that created a climate in your mind. So that everything that comes here will not be so strange as it would have been. One day we shall study the *Upanishads*, at least a few of them. One day we shall study also the *Bhagavad Gita* because that give you a passage. We shall also study what Christ for example has said about the movement towards the Divine, the manifestation of the Divine Love on the earth for example. There are many such processes and we shall come across many of them.

But this book, *The Synthesis of Yoga*, is the one book that gives you the most articulate and intellectually the most satisfying statement. All the questions that you may have regarding the truths, principles, powers and processes of the divine realisation on the earth, all that has been addressed in fullness. Even that fullness is not yet full in this book. If you read the whole book you will find towards the end that it is incomplete. Thereafter there are thirteen volumes which are called *Mother’s Agenda* — *L’Agenda de Mère* — and Mother herself has said these Agenda books are the continuation of *The Synthesis of Yoga*. It is very large, very intricate, detailed, extremely scientific, microscopic — just as when you see under a microscope you can see things much enlarged, the minute things are seen, similarly these two volumes of *The Synthesis of Yoga* and the thirteen volumes of the *Mother’s Agenda* are the long canvas before us.

But the first Chapter gives you what you need to know. That is a great solace that we have everything here. If you read this Chapter very carefully and then you proceed on the way then other things will follow very easily. That is why I am slowly entering into this Chapter without any haste so that every word is grasped as fully as possible.

So, the first instrument of yogic realisation is the knowledge of the truths, principles, powers and processes of yoga that leads to realisation. “Next comes a patient and persistent action on the lines laid down by the knowledge, the force of our personal effort...” Even if you know what is the process, that will not lead you to realisation unless you make an effort yourself. And effort of what kind: patient and persistent. Do not have the ambition of realizing now at this moment — be patient. Don’t say: Twelve years I have been doing *sadhana* and nothing happened. Don’t worry, thirty-six years is a minimum. Does not matter. Even seventy years is not enough. So patience. But if you have no ambition, you will find every time sufficient signs of your progress which will give you a push to move forward. There is no need to be disappointed in this process. If you feel disappointed it means

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that you do not know how to be patient. When you feel disappointed remember that you are too impatient. Remember that you have too great an ambition. And in this process you should have no ambition. Let us do at every moment what is to be done, as perfectly as possible, and in due course everything will be fulfilled. So patience is a very important word.

And that is not enough: persistence. Constantly you have to make an effort, whether awake or in sleep, whether you are tired or you are in a great heat. In every state there should be a persistent effort and the minimum of the effort is the simplest thing: aspire. Aspiration is the minimum of the effort. You just aspire: "I want the Divine Life". This is the aspiration. I simply want, "I want Divine Life", go on saying this. Even when you are tired you simply say: "I want the Divine Life". Even when you are not making an effort, does not matter, say simply: "I want Divine Life on the earth". Persistent, all the time with one *mantra*: "I want the Divine Life on the earth." This is called in Sanskrit *Utsaha*. *Utsaha* is actually enthusiasm. We should feel fired. Even when you don't feel enthusiastic the only effort to make is: do not give way, do not fall down. And even if you fall down you will say: "Even fallen, I am God". And you rise again and again and again. That is the second factor. Knowledge of the truths, principles, powers and processes, which govern the realisation, supported by a persistent effort, a patient effort.

Then intervenes a third factor: "*Uplifting our knowledge and effort into the domain of spiritual experience...*" When your knowledge is increasing, even when your effort is increasing your life, is uplifting; you have lifted up your whole being. You have to imagine that we are in a pit and you are making a lot of effort to rise up from the pit. Then there is somebody who pulls you — this is a tremendous assurance, there is always somebody around you who is ready to pull you up. Only on one condition that you should put your hand upwards. That is, uplifting your effort there is somebody to pull you up. What is it that pulls you up? Three things: direct suggestion, example and influence of the teacher. There is always a teacher around you and he comes in time — always ? be sure of that.

When Arjuna wanted a teacher he found right there that the charioteer was his teacher. When he came on the chariot to the battlefield he did not know that Sri Krishna who was the charioteer was going to teach him. He only knew that Sri Krishna would drive his chariot. He did not know that a crisis would come to him, that a big question will arise in his mind, but he found, when the question arose he had just to turn to his charioteer and there was the answer. This is one assurance in Yoga. Always, always, always a teacher stands near us. We may not be aware of him but when you rise with a question, when you uplift yourself you will find the teacher just near you and he will uplift you.

There are three ways of uplifting. Direct suggestion. If you read the *Bhagavad Gita* it is a story so you will know very easily how Sri Krishna gives a suggestion, orally, and then he gives his own example, and then he makes an influence by his presence. It is like mesmerism, ? Charisma, he is so attractive, the Master is so attractive that he becomes irresistible. And you have to follow him ? that is the Master. So he gives you a suggestion, he gives an example of himself as to how he has attained, how he has embodied the realisation himself and then, he gives you such a power of attraction that you are uplifted. This is the third factor: the Teacher. In Sanskrit the word teacher is called *guru*. First is *shastra*, second is *utsaha* and third is the *guru*.

Now remains only the fourth factor. What is the fourth factor? Already Sri Aurobindo has given the fourth factor when he used the word: patient. Be patient. It is a question of time. Time is the fourth factor. "*Last comes the instrumentality of Time...*" The word time in Sanskrit is called *kala*. Why *kala*, why time? Sri Aurobindo explains: "...for in all things there is a cycle of their action and a period of the divine movement." If you sow a seed in the soil, you have to wait for sometime before it sprouts. You cannot sow a seed and immediately it starts sprouting. It sprouts and then it gives flowers and then it gives fruits. It takes time. In every thing there is a different time limit. Somethings give immediate fruits while certain things take a long time. Everything has a rhythm. So you must know for everything how much time it will take. Accordingly you should move forward. The whole science of Time is to be understood by a yogi, by any one who moves forward towards realization.

This is all that Sri Aurobindo says in the whole Chapter and in the whole book. In all the thirteen volumes of the *Agenda* also. These four things come again and again and again. If you know these five lines you know the secret of the whole yoga. All that we shall now do is a summary, a long summary, of these four elements.

Now to repeat ? as I told you I'll go back again and again and again. I shall read again.

"Yoga-siddhi, the perfection that comes from the practice of Yoga, can be best attained by the combined working of four great instruments. There is, first, the knowledge of the truths, principles, powers and processes that govern the realisation — *shastra*. Next comes a patient and persistent action on the lines laid down by this knowledge, the force of our personal effort — *utsaha*. There intervenes, third, uplifting our knowledge and effort into the domain of spiritual experience, the direct

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suggestion, example and influence of the Teacher — guru. Last comes the instrumentality of Time — kala; for in all things there is a cycle of their action and a period of the divine movement.”

Now we shall close the book and we shall come back again to it after a little while.

The very first word which is given in this paragraph is *yoga-siddhi*. It is a very important word. *Siddhi* means perfection. Perfection that comes by Yoga. *Yoga-siddhi* is a compound word. *Yogena siddhi*: the *siddhi* that comes by yoga. There are many *siddhis* which you can get without yoga but you don't get that *siddhi* of divine life. The divine life on the earth can be attained *only* by a process of yoga. That is why the necessity of yoga. You cannot avoid yoga. Even those people who want to avoid yoga secretly do a yoga. As Sri Aurobindo says, “*All life is yoga*” whether you know it or not whether you like it or not. Mother was once asked the question: “Why should we teach yoga to the students?” This question arises because it was very often said that you should teach yoga only to those who want to do yoga. Don't pull anybody into yoga. Don't tell somebody: now do yoga and practice it, whether he likes it or not. It is a very wise thing, never to pull any body. So the question arises: If you have decided to do yoga then of course you teach yoga but if you have not decided to do yoga why should you be taught yoga? The answer is that every body in this world is secretly doing yoga. Everyone. But he does it slowly, unknowingly, tardily, with a great delay. When you say I don't want to do yoga it means that you do not want to do yoga consciously. It only means that you don't want to do it fast. It only means that you want to linger on the route, you want to waste your time. That is the only meaning when you say: I don't want to do yoga. But anybody who wants to move fast, anybody who wants perfection even if he may not know the word yoga, it does not matter, the moment you are making an effort to move upwards, you are doing yoga.

In fact I examined this question myself before taking up this book. I asked whether you wanted to do yoga or not. For six months I have been waiting. And I observed whether you really wanted to do yoga and I got enough answers from each one of you that you wanted to do yoga. In one way or the other. Not that every one has answered in the same way with the same kind of intensity but every one of you is striving for perfection. This is what I found in all your activities. Every one has been doing intensely. So because I am sure that each one of you is striving for perfection and there is an inner demand for it in your being therefore we have taken this up. In any case, as I told you, whether you make a demand or not every body has to practice yoga. There is a justification in any case. All life is yoga therefore to know about yoga, to learn about yoga, to do yoga is simply a normal, automatic thing to do. But in your case it is more special because consciously you are striving for perfection. And this perfection cannot come without the knowledge of yoga, without the *shastra* of yoga. However much you try if you do not know the *shastra* of yoga you cannot attain to the perfection.

Of course, there are people who come to know about yoga little by little. In the *Upanishads* there was one process of learning yoga. The disciple used to come to the teacher and would say: “Teach me.” Then the teacher used to give only one formula. A little sentence, not teach the whole yogic principle, not the entire book of yoga. And then he would say: “Now you meditate on it.” Years passed only on one sentence. Realisation came and then he went to the teacher again and said: “Now teach me.” Then again the teacher gave another sentence to reflect on, to meditate upon, to practice it. That is another way of learning yoga.

We have the facility of books; at that time there were no books. So we make use of the facility. Because the whole book is available, it is possible for us to read it at one stroke. Or as much as we can. That is why we take the big step to study this entire book. We shall read this in a ten year time. That is our programme: ten year programme for *The Life Divine* and ten years programme for *The Synthesis of Yoga* both combined together. Patience, do not worry if there is lot of time still to be spent on this. It is worth spending. These ten years of study are very important.

In India there was a system if you went to a teacher and said: “Teach me”, normally the teacher would say no. There used to be lot of testing to see whether you can really learn, you are worthy of learning or not. The teacher, even when he would say: “Alright I'll teach you”, sometimes he used to test. I don't know if you have read *The Story of Initiation*. It is a story told by the Mother in a class.

It is a story of a disciple who wanted to learn. Yusuf was the student. Junjun was the teacher. And the student went to the teacher and said: “I want to learn.” The teacher did not even look at him. For months he went on and on staying near the house of the teacher. And one day the teacher said to the pupil: “I have some work to give you.” Actually it was a test on the part of the teacher. He said: “I have a friend who lives on the other side of the river and I want to give him a small box. Keep it very safely, he said, be very very careful and give it intact, as it is.” The pupil was very happy that at last the teacher had said something to him and trusted him with something. And he took the box, went on his way. By noon it was very hot, so he rested a little while. While resting — the mind as you know is

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like a bazaar, a market place, so many ideas come and go —he began to think of what was contained in the box. This very simple question arose in the mind. Can I see what is contained? And he remembered that the teacher has said: “Keep it intact.” So it meant that he should not open it. It was to be kept intact, absolutely. He forgot about it and again went to rest. Again the question came to his mind. “What is in the box?” Again he argued within himself: “Can I open it? Just open it. Just have a look. I’ll do nothing. I’ll keep it intact absolutely. I won’t touch anything. I’ll just open it for a second and put it back.” Then he said: “No, no who knows, my teacher will be very displeased.” He argued pros and cons, thesis and antithesis, dialectical argument. Then again he went to rest, but this time he jumped up: “Let me just see, nothing more. Why are these arguments coming all over again? I will be free from these arguments the moment I see once. Beside the box is not locked, and if the teacher didn’t want that I should open it he would have locked it. So it means that the teacher had already given a kind of permission to me, and I can open it.” And this young man just opened the lid, only for a second and to his horror he found a small rat which jumped out and ran away. Now you can see the condition of this man. How could he keep the box intact? There was a small rat in it. It could not wait one second to remain intact. As soon as the lid was opened the rat fled away. He was so sorry, so sorry. Why did he do it? Why did he open it? With a fallen crest he went to the friend of his teacher and gave the box which was not intact. And the teacher’s friend opened the box and immediately understood what the pupil had done and he said: “My dear Yusuf you have lost a big chance. Your teacher wanted to teach you. He wanted to teach you but you cannot keep even this little thing intact. You became so impatient. You began to have this mill in your mind, so powerfully. If you can’t keep this little rat inside then this knowledge, which is such a big treasure, how will you hold it in your mind? Therefore you have failed. I feel very sorry that you have failed. But do not be despondent. It is only a first test and many more tests will come. Go back, practice patience, practice to keep your mind under control. You should not go again to the market place. Make your mind very, very quiet.” He went back to his teacher who said nothing. And again he started waiting, waiting, and waiting. He learnt the lessons of patience; he learnt the lessons of quieting the mind. A lot of *tapasya* he did. At last the teacher was pleased and gave him the knowledge. It is a true story. Yusuf became one of the great mystics in his own life. He himself became a teacher ultimately.

There are five things which every teacher asks in India. No yoga book can be read without this practice. So you should practice these five things patiently, persistently. This is your *utsaha*. This is your effort. What are these five things?

Truth	<i>Satya</i>
Non-violence	<i>Ahimsa</i>
Self-control	<i>Brahmacharya</i>
Self-limitation to minimum	<i>Aparigraha</i>
Non stealing	<i>Asteya</i>

Every Indian student of yoga knows these five words. Every student of yoga is asked to practice this for years and years and years. This is not a small thing that you can practice for a short time; it takes a lot of time. You must have seen some of the statements of the Mother regarding Auroville. Even while writing a letter, Mother had said at the end you write: Truth. Every person in Auroville is asked before signing his name to write Truth. That is because Mother gives the condition of yoga in Auroville. Auroville is a place of yoga whether you like it or not. It is a conscious yoga. The very fact that you are born in Auroville means that you have decided that you want to practice yoga. Therefore Truth is the fundamental and the first principle.

Ahimsa is a word which is equivalent to unflinching good will. You must have seen that Mother herself had said that all people of goodwill are invited to come to Auroville. This is the second principle of Indian yoga that Mother had put down for Auroville. To practice goodwill is a very difficult practice. Unflinching goodwill. Our human nature is so narrow; it gets affected so much by narrow circumstances, there is too much combativeness in our nature, we have to turn it into a great fight for goodwill. Under every circumstances we should have goodwill, unflinching goodwill. As a result you don’t injure anybody. A lot of compassion, kindness. In speech you should not injure anybody. In action you should not injure anybody.

Then comes *brahmacharya*. All of us have a tremendous power of impulses. Yoga implies that you should be able to see your impulses, control your impulses, master your impulses, eliminate your impulses so that only the Divine Will remains. What remains behind the impulses is the divine’s Will. All impulses are distortions of the divine Will. So when you can control and master your impulses, and you can eliminate them, what remains which can never be eliminated because it is always there

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eternally is the divine Will. That is the meaning of brahmacharya. Control of the impulses, mastery over the impulses and elimination of impulses. Three things. That is brahmacharya.

Then the fourth thing is to limit yourself to the minimum. Your needs should be the minimum. Your wants should be minimum. *Aparigraha*. *Parigraha* means collecting. You go on collecting. Why do we collect too many things? Because we want more and more and more, therefore we go on collecting. But you keep your needs to the minimum, you should be like a traveler, not too much of baggage, because if you have too much of baggage you cannot travel easily. Remember all of us are travelers here. Travelers build a home of a very different kind. When we speak of a divine life on the earth that is the home that we want to build. A home of divine life. In the mean time we are making a long, long journey, so don't carry too much of baggage, keep it to the minimum. You should be able to give up everything, in a moment if necessary. If you are asked to live in a small cottage you should be able to do it. If you are asked to live in a big palace you should be able to do it. Because in either case you don't need anything except the minimum. It is very easy to live in a palace if your needs are very minimal. You can enjoy the palace very well. But if you don't know how to keep your needs to the minimum even if a palace is given it will be incomplete. Not enough. You will find that there is not enough here and not enough there. Some deficiencies you will go on finding. You won't enjoy the palace, the freedom of huge place. So keep your needs minimal. *Aparigraha*. You don't need to collect; you don't want to carry big baggage anywhere.

Last thing is non-stealing. We are constantly in need of what others possess. That is our normal human nature and this is the weakness of human being. We covet what others have; we want that which others are enjoying. If I have two cars why should I not have three? Not that you need the three cars but you simply want to possess. Therefore that tendency has to be controlled. Usually people steal in order to possess. They are many kinds of stealing. If you examine your nature you will find in how many ways you are constantly stealing from outside; for *parigraha*, so that you collect. Even if you don't need you collect. That is why in the *Upanishads* there is a very nice sentence: "*Ma gridhah kasya svid dhanam*" It is a Sanskrit sentence which I would like you to remember because it is connected with the last statement. *Ma* means do not, *gridhah* means desire, *kasya svid* whosoever's, *dhanam* means wealth. Do not desire whosoever's wealth — including yours. Even your own wealth do not desire.

It is said that if you practice these five things all problems of yoga will come up in your life, you will need to know how to resolve those problems and you will have *siddhi*, you will realise the aim of Yoga. This is now proposed for all of us. We shall practice these five things through out our study of *The Synthesis of Yoga*.

This is the first part of my introduction to the first paragraph of this Chapter.

There is second part that I want to introduce which is very important for the practice of Yoga. This is connected with the *shastra* of yoga. The first aid is *shastra*. It is the knowledge of the truths, principles, powers and processes that govern the realisation. I told you that we should imagine that we are in a pit and we want to come out of it. This is the basic idea of all yoga. We may not know that we are in a pit, many people don't know that they are in a pit, but yoga becomes meaningful when we know that we are in a pit. How we have gone into a pit, how we can lift ourselves out of the pit that is the truths, principles, powers and processes that govern the realisation. Mother has said that when you have a feeling that wherever you look around you feel barred, like a bird in a cage, wherever it turns it looks at the sky but it is barred, it can't fly, it is arrested. So whenever you feel that you are barred and there is a great feeling in you to fly that means that you are ready for conscious yoga. Everybody is doing yoga in any case. Unknowingly we are all trying to fly from the cage but when you really feel that you are barred then you realise that you are now fit for yoga. You want to fly, you want to be free. Again I'll give you a Sanskrit word which is very important: *mumukshutva* — desire to be free, that is the meaning. The word *moksha* means liberation. The desire to be liberated is called *mumukshutva* — the desire to have *moksha*. You need to be free. You desire to be free. Why because you feel bound, when you feel that you are in a cage, that you are barred, then there is a desire to be free.

The question is: how did you get into bondage? How did you get into the cage? Such a cage from which you cannot escape. The answer to this question gives you the truth of yogic realisation. If you know how you got bound then you will know also how to be free. There is only one word that you should remember in this connection; it will give you the key to the whole yoga. That word is: exclusive concentration of consciousness. This is the word which takes you through the whole of process of yoga. It is a key. We are bound because of exclusive concentration of consciousness. I gave the story of Yusuf, when he was resting he could have thought of hundred and one things, but no! He was exclusively concentrated upon the box. Even while trying to forget about it he was returning back to

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the box. What is in the box? He could not be free from this question. It is one simple example of exclusive concentration of consciousness. He had such a concentration on the box that everything else was excluded — therefore exclusive. He came back again and again and again to the box. What is in the box? We are all barred; we are all bound because we are all concentrated upon our small little field.

If you examine yourself you will find that we are all the time gazing outward. What captures you all the time are the sounds, the sights, the smells and the touches that you have. We are constantly attracted by them. Again I give you a Sanskrit word which is very important — *bahirmukha*. *Mukha* means towards, oriented towards. *Bahir* means outward. *Bahirmukha* means oriented towards outside. We are so much exclusively concentrated upon outside that we don't even suspect that there is something inside. So the first word of yoga is: there is inside. As long as you are occupied with the outside you are bound to feel barred, you cannot escape. You are in the pit and you cannot come out of it because you go on round and round and there is no solution there. The solution is above and you can come out only at the top. You have to turn into what is called *antarmukha*. *Antarmukha* means oriented towards inside.

The first step of yoga is to turn inward. The truth is that we are turned outward so the truth of yoga is you turn inward. You lead an inner life where normally we are leading an external life. Then you begin to lead an inner life. There is no yoga *siddhi* without inner life. You have to live inwardly. Our concentration now is outward. Yoga means you turn inward. Just turn within. In the beginning when you turn within you find almost darkness or nothing, emptiness. It is only the first preliminary experience. But when you do it again and again... go on, you will find that there is so much inside which you did not even suspect earlier. The discovery of that is the discovery of the yoga. Yoga is the discovery of the inner realms of existence. There are realms and realms, so much to be known, so much to be learnt. So you might say that the device of yoga, the process is to turn inward. That is the only process: turn inward. But then, there is a further process. Turn inward and connect again with the outward. Merely turning inward you might lose what is outside, that is also a reality. We should not lose either. But you will find the more you turn inward the greater is the power you gain for controlling the outside. This is the minimum, elementary process of yoga. Turn inward and then connect the inward with the outward. Control and master outward with inward so that you are concentrated inward so as to master the outward concentration. You develop what is called integral concentration. That is another important word: integral concentration. When you are able to concentrate integrally that is *siddhi*. That is yoga *siddhi*, the perfection that comes by the practice of yoga. This attainment of integral concentration is the subject matter of the entire *Synthesis of Yoga*. The whole book — how to attain integral concentration. In the first chapter of *The Life Divine* we have heard the word Supermind. And one of the definitions of Supermind is: it is a power of integral concentration.

Now you have basically everything that needs to be known and you don't need any further lessons at all. If you practice those five things — *satya*, *ahimsa*, *brahmacharya*, *aparigraha*, *asteya*, — and if you turn inward so as to achieve integral concentration, all that you need to know is known. In fact this is all that I want to say in my very first talk to you on this subject. If you were living in the time of the Upanishads I would have said: "Now come after two years. We have finished. You have now got everything that needs to be told at this stage. Practice it for two years then we shall meet after." But because we are living in an age where books are available — if the books were not available it would be enough — we shall go through the process of books.

II.

We shall read this paragraph first. It is one of the most inspiring passages among the writings of Sri Aurobindo.

"The supreme Shastra of the integral Yoga is the eternal Veda secret in the heart of every thinking and living being. The lotus of the eternal knowledge and the eternal perfection is a bud closed and folded up within us. It opens swiftly or gradually, petal by petal, through successive realisations, once the mind of man begins to turn towards the Eternal, once his heart, no longer compressed and confined by the attachment to finite appearances, becomes enamoured, in whatever degree, of the Infinite. All life, all thought, all energising of the faculties, all experiences passive or active, become thenceforward so many shocks which disintegrate the teguments of the soul and remove the obstacles to the inevitable efflorescence. He who chooses the Infinite has been chosen by the Infinite. He has received the divine touch without which there is no awakening, no opening of the spirit; but once it is

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received, attainment is sure, whether conquered swiftly in the course of one human life or pursued patiently through many stadia of the cycle of existence in the manifested universe."

There are so many treasures in this paragraph and we need to dwell upon it in many ways. So we shall stop and look into the treasures. We shall first only note down all the important words which are used and then pursue each one of them in detail.

The first word is *supreme Shastra*. Not only shastra but *supreme Shastra*. That is an important word. The other word is *Integral Yoga*, not yoga but *Integral Yoga*. The next is *eternal Veda*, then are *eternal knowledge* and *eternal perfection*, after we have *Eternal and Infinite, teguments of the soul*, then the next is one full sentence: "*He who chooses the Infinite has been chosen by the Infinite.*" Then comes *attainment is sure*. These are the words or expressions we shall dwell upon.

Let us see *supreme Shastra*. We have already seen the meaning of shastra in the first paragraph. So we shall go back and revise this word shastra. Shastra is the knowledge of the truths, principles, powers and processes that govern the realisation. It is a scientific body of knowledge, of the truths, principles, powers and processes of yoga. Yesterday I told that there are many shastras of yoga: *Veda, Upanishads, Bhagavad Gita* are shastra. Then there are many other shastras like the shastra on yoga written by Patanjali. Patanjali is a very great philosopher of India whose very philosophy is known as yoga philosophy. He has written in small phrases the whole yogic system. And there are many others. We have to distinguish between all these shastras and the *supreme shastra*. It is *supreme shastra* because it belongs to *Integral Yoga*. The word *Integral Yoga* is referred to specially to explain the word *supreme*. The *Integral Yoga* is the theme of this entire book *The Synthesis of Yoga*. So the word *supreme shastra* and *Integral Yoga* are inter-related. And the third word which is inter-related is *eternal Veda*.

There is the Veda ? four Vedas: *Rig Veda, Yajur Veda, Sama Veda* and *Atharva Veda*. These are called *vedic samhitas*. *Samhita* means anthology, collection. Collection of a number of verses is called a *samhita*. It is only an anthology therefore that means there must be a much bigger collection. It is even said *anantaha vedaha*. *Anantaha* means limitless are the Vedas. Even the four books of the Veda that we see physically are only a small selection. There is much more which has not been collected; and they are limitless, in the sense that you cannot even collect; limitless because they contain the knowledge of the infinite. Infinite being infinite the knowledge of the infinite also is infinite and therefore the Vedas are also infinite. The infinite is eternal and therefore the knowledge of the eternal is also eternal. Therefore that Veda is eternal Veda.

Why we do use the word *Integral Yoga*? First we must know what is Yoga. Actually this is a question we should have raised right at the beginning. But I deliberately did not do it because very often when we study a subject we allow it to be understood roughly, as a pedagogical way of understanding, you take for granted that you know ? in what ever way you may know it. When I used the word Yoga, I knew you had heard the word and I assumed it would make a figure in your mind ? it is only later that we entered into the subject and now one must polish ones understanding of it. Yoga is a Sanskrit word but a word which has become quite common now in a number of languages. In any case in English, French and all international languages the word yoga is used as a native word, but originally the word is Sanskrit. It comes from the root *yuj* which means to join, to unite. The concept means, it assumes that there is a process of joining. Yoga is a process of joining. Joining of what, of whom? Joining of that which is separated. That which was separated is to be joined now.

I come to a definition of yoga which Sri Aurobindo has given in full (page 2): "*For we mean by this term a methodised effort towards self-perfection by the expression of the secret potentialities latent in the being and the union of the human individual with the universal and transcendent existence we see partially expressed in man and in the Cosmos.*" It is a difficult sentence, but yoga is a difficult matter and we have agreed to do a difficult task so we shall not be defeated by any difficulty.

"*For we mean by this term a methodised effort...*" a methodised effort is an important word. There can be efforts which are not methodical. We do lot of works in the world haphazardly. We sleep in a haphazard manner, we walk in an haphazard manner, we eat in an haphazard manner, we talk in an haphazard manner, even when we do a labour of any kind, we do it in a very unorganised and very irregular manner, unpunctually; but yoga is none of this. As long as we are irregular, unpunctual, haphazard it means that we have not done any yoga. Yoga means a methodised effort. It is an effort which is methodised, a methodical procedure. This is a very distinguishing feature. You remember when we were defining definition we had said that definition implies differentia; you should have one word in your definition which is a differentia. We go back to our definition of definition. We had said, "Definition is a statement in regard to a term in which we give reference to a term larger than the term which is in question." When we say *man is an animal*, man is a term to be defined; when you say animal, animal is a larger term than man because cat also is an animal, the word animal includes

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many-many things including man. In a definition you should have a term larger than the term you are defining. Man being defined as an animal is a correct way of defining because you are given a term larger than the term you are defining. But that is not enough, there should be something more, a term larger than the term to be defined in addition to differentia which indicate the exact distinction from the larger term in regard to this term. When we say, man is a rational animal, the word rational distinguishes man from all other animals. If you say man is an animal it is not a complete definition, but when you say that man is a rational animal or an ethical animal or man is an asthetical animal, then you are defining him properly. Similarly if you say, yoga is an effort, it is a good movement towards the definition, but not yet enough. Yoga is a methodised effort, it is distinguished from many kind of efforts. You can see that Sri Aurobindo statements are so precise, that everything is done perfectly well. Yoga is a methodised effort, so the distinguishing feature, the differentia is methodised. Effort is a larger term; a larger term is called genus. There should be in every definition something in it specific from all others.

"For we mean by this term a methodised effort..." but this is not enough, differentia still continues. It is a methodised effort because there are many kinds of methodised efforts in the world. When you keep accounts in your office it is also a methodised effort. How to distinguish yoga from so many methodised efforts? So Sri Aurobindo gives further differentia and he says, *"methodised effort towards self-perfection..."* This is the important word. The word perfection itself is a very difficult word to understand. When you say this is perfect what does it really means? There are many things that you can call perfect. It is not complete, so Sri Aurobindo goes forward: *"... self-perfection by the expression of the secret potentialities latent in the being..."* You can be perfect in dressing yourself and say that it is perfect. Your dress is perfect, but if you make yourself perfect by dressing that is not yoga because it is not an expression of the potentiality latent in you. And even if dressing is a part of your aesthetic feeling it is not enough. All the potentialities of your being are to be led towards perfection. Whatever is potential in you, whatever are the possibilities in you, you develop them to the highest possible degree and then you have satisfied the condition of yoga.

Let us repeat. By yoga we mean *a methodised effort towards self-perfection by the expression of the secret potentialities latent in the being*. This is half the definition as yet. We still have to go to the other differentia. *"... and ... a union of the human individual with the universal and transcendent Existence..."* Now we have three terms here: the human individual, universal existence and the transcendent existence. When these three are united by means of a methodised effort then you have the yoga. The last phrase is simply adjectival because if somebody asks the question: "What is universal existence, what is transcendental existence?" then Sri Aurobindo's answer is that we see both of them *partially expressed in man and in the cosmos*. If you want to understand what is universal and transcendental existence the answer is that you can know them partially, to some extent, because it is expressed partially in man and in the cosmos.

"For we mean by this term a methodised effort towards self-perfection by the expression of the secret potentialities latent in the being and a union of the human individual with the universal and transcendent Existence we see partially expressed in man and in the Cosmos." We should come back to this definition again and again, perhaps thousand times, because the whole book being a book on yoga we shall have to come back to this word again and again. But what is important to note is that yoga is, first, a methodised effort. That is the distinguishing feature of yoga. The second is the goal of this effort is self-perfection and that this self-perfection is effectuated by development of the potentialities which are already in us. Whatever is latent in us, whatever is potential; whatever is possible you develop those potentialities to the highest perfection. This is one part of the definition. Methodised effort towards self-perfection by the expression of the potentialities latent in man. The second part of the definition is: it is a methodised effort towards the union of the human individual with the universal and transcendent existence. When these three terms are united that is the completion of yoga. When there is an effort towards it, it is also yoga. Yoga is both the process and the result. When you unite completely, that is yoga completed, it is called *yoga siddhi*, but the process is also yoga. That is why Sri Aurobindo utilises the words *effort towards*. The word towards is very important because even the process, when you are moving towards it is also yoga. These are the words to be remembered for yoga.

Having understood this, Sri Aurobindo has used the words *Integral Yoga*. What is *Integral Yoga*? The fact is that *Integral Yoga* integrates different yogas. There are many systems of yoga. Every yoga has three elements in it. This is the best way of understanding the Integral Yoga on one side and other yogas on the other. Let us at least give some names to different yogas. It will be easier for us to understand.

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There is a system of yoga which is called *Hatha Yoga*, then there is *Raja Yoga* (*Raja* means royal, it is a Royal Yoga), then there is *Karma Yoga* (yoga of works), then there is *Jnana Yoga* (the yoga of knowledge), then there is *Bhakti Yoga* (yoga of devotion). These are the main systems of yogas. There are many others but we shall restrict ourselves only to five. Whenever you hear the word yoga, to understand that particular yoga best, you should ask three questions, so you can grasp every yoga very easily.

What is the goal of the yoga, the object, the aim of the yoga? This is the first question you should ask. The second question you should ask is: What is the instrument by which the goal is sought to be achieved? The third question you should ask is: What is the process by which the instrument is exercised so that the goal is achieved? If you ask these three questions with every system of yoga then you will get a precise idea without much difficulty.

What I am telling you which is so simple I took five years in my own life to arrive at this conclusion. You can see how Sri Aurobindo makes it so easy. I used to ask this question from the age of sixteen: What is yoga? And so many people I met and so many questions I put to them and such confusing answers I was given that I was totally blind in regard to this question what is yoga. Only when I came to Sri Aurobindo and read this book I found he taught us how to answer to this question, 'what' is yoga, in a very precise manner. And he has stated here that every yoga has three aspects. In the first place I did not even know that there are many yogas because people speak of yoga in a very general way. That there are many systems of yoga. Everyone who speaks of yoga, speaks as if there is only yoga and there are no other yogas at all. This was a big question in my mind. Somebody says yoga is this, somebody says yoga is that, and there is such confusion that it took me five years to clarify my mind on this question. You get it very easy in five minutes. That is called the progress, the benefit of coming later in life. Others have laboured and you get the fruits very easily but that is the privilege of everybody. You have now the privilege of knowing the key by which you can get a precise idea of different systems of yoga. First of all you come to know that there are different systems of yoga and then if you ask these three questions you get a precise idea. Let us now take Hatha yoga.

What is the aim of Hatha yoga? The aim of Hatha yoga is a methodised effort by which you can attain the perfection of the body. This is the minimum aim of Hatha yoga. The perfection of the body is not sought after by Raja yoga, nor by Bhakti yoga, nor by Jnana yoga, nor Karma yoga. But Hatha yoga insists upon the perfection of the body. It is yoga because it aims at perfection. What is the instrument? The instrument is the body itself. The body has potentialities and possibilities and Hatha yoga proposes to use the potentialities of the body so that you can arrive at its total perfection. The next question is: What is the process? The process is *asana*. Hatha yogis have found out the means of perfecting the body by a process. If you sit in special and different kinds of postures then various potentialities of the body develop. This is the secret knowledge found out by hatha yogis. Hatha yogis found out that merely by sitting in a particular posture certain faculties and capacities of the body develop. There is another process called *pranayama*. Pranayama is the control of breath. If you breathe in a particular manner it develops the faculties of the body. This is now known very well. In fact, all over the world when they speak of yoga they mean only asanas and pranayama. They only refer to Hatha yoga. That there are many other yogas is even not told to people. People are simply told yoga is breathing exercises and asanas. There are many kinds of postures for the body and the greatness of this yoga is that they discover so many, intricate processes of postures. To make a study of Hatha yoga itself is a long process and if you practice Hatha yoga it is a very-very long process.

And the results, the aims of Hatha yoga are known. It gives you tremendous health, even if muscle power is not developed. Hatha yogis are not muscle men but their health is extremely great. They can bear any kind of cold, any kind of heat. The body has become so powerful that even in winter they can go into the Ganges and swim without any difficulty at all. We have heard the story of the yogi Dayanand Saraswati who every night used to go to the bank of Ganges almost naked and sleep on the cold sands even in mid-winter without any effect of cold at all. This is only one of the potential achievements of the body. The body can achieve this perfection. The processes are only two: pranayama and asana. So, the instrument is the body and pranayama and asana are methodised. The minimum method of pranayama is inhalation and exhalation — but methodically. Normally we breathe just like that but in yoga you make it a methodised effort. You breathe in a certain process and there is a time limit given: your inhaling is half the time of exhaling, and then there is what is called Kumbhaka when you keep the breath steady in your body neither exhaling or inhaling and you slowly increase this time so the breath reaches every part of the body.

Normally we exhale and inhale so fast that the breath does not reach all parts of the body. Keeping the breath in the body is very important. There are many results that come such as strength and other capacities. Many methodical methods have been found out by hatha yogis as the result of

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which you get tremendous capacities of the body. There are many hatha yogis who attain such strength they can bend steel merely by puffing up the breath in the breast; the body can be made as light as possible, like a feather; it can be made as heavier as an elephant. These are the potentialities which have been tested, verified. I have myself seen an hatha yogi in a big conference where the yogi lay on the floor and said, you lift me now. And four muscle-men came forward and they couldn't lift him. It was a very heavy body. After sometime he said, now lift me again, and he was so easily lifted, like a feather. It is only a question how you breathe, and the power of breathing, as the result of which you can be heavy or very light. The hatha yogis can even live without breathing. The yogi can be put down in a cave of earth where no oxygen moves, it is purely solid, and the yogi can remain for hours and when you open the soil afterwards he comes out as alive as you and I are. These are proven facts, it is not as if these are stories or fictions. In many part of India you have hatha yogis who can manifest these powers. They can prolong their life for an indefinite period. I have met a yogi in Uttar Pradesh called Devariya Baba. A very famous name. How old he was nobody knew, but it was said that he was at least four hundred old and he used to remain absolutely naked in summer and in winter. When I met him it was winter and he was sitting far and when I went there he himself told to his disciple to call me. There were many people, it was a big crowd but from far he spotted me and said, call him. He said some very nice things about me and then he said: "Now I want to swim." His platform was on the banks of Yamuna, the water was absolutely cold, and he just jumped into the water, naked, and swam in the water for quite sometime and then he came out. I have seen a man of this kind myself. His eyesight was perfect at this old age; he could spot me from such a long distance; he could speak very nicely, there was no sign of any feebleness in his voice, only his body looked quite old, that is a fact. But he was more than a hatha yogi, he was doing also a lot of other yogas. In India you have many extraordinary feats of Hatha yoga and these results are not imaginary: they can be verified. It is a proof that yoga is a scientific process, as in a laboratory you can see the results, even so by the practice of yoga you can produce effective results.

Let us now summarise. Hatha yoga is a process of breath control and posture of the body by means of which the potentialities of the body are developed to their highest possible perfection. The aim is perfection of the body; the instrument is the body; and the method is asana and pranayama.

Let us now study *Raja yoga*. The aim of Raja yoga is to attain to the perfection of mental powers and secondly the discovery and realisation of the Immobile Individual distinguished from all which is mobile. In our normal experience we see only that which is mobile. Even what is immobile, like matter, stone, even that is in some way mobile. Even the stone gradually becomes dust, may be after thousands years, because it is mobile. As you now every material piece consists of electrons and protons which are in constant motion. Therefore even the so called stable things are really mobile. Raja yoga aims at the discovery of the Immobile Individual as distinguished from the mobile. It is a discovery because normally you don't find something immobile. That which is mobile is called Nature. All nature is mobile. In Sanskrit the world nature is called *Prakriti*. The Immobile individual is called in Sanskrit *Purusha*. One special attribute of Purusha is it is immobile. It may be mobile but also it is immobile. This is an important point. The way by which you can distinguish between Purusha and Prakriti is that while Prakriti is always mobile Purusha is in any case immobile ? even though it is mobile also but it is also immobile. But according to Raja yoga Purusha is immobile ? it is never mobile. When you go further in Integral yoga you will find that Purusha is also mobile. But Raja Yoga only gives the realisation of the immobile Purusha as distinguished from mobile Prakriti. And when this happens, when you discover the immobile Purusha you have an experience of release. The teguments, the ties, that you have with your body, with what is mobile, they seem to be broken. The ties are supposed to be your bondage, the ropes of bondage by which you are tied. According to Raja yoga the aim is to give the discovery of the immobile individual ? the Purusha ? in an experience in which the individual feels that the teguments by which he is tied to the mobility vanishes. It is also called the experience of liberation; we feel liberated. Nothing, nothing, nothing touches you thereafter. Sorrow does not touch you, happiness does not touch you, relations does not touch you, body does not touch you. Even when body is in pain Purusha is experienced to be immobile. It is an extraordinary experience that you gain. That is the aim. It is two folds: perfection of the mental powers, and release of the immobile Purusha from the ties of the mobile Prakriti.

The mental powers of a Raja yogi are tremendous. There is one full chapter given by Patanjali in his book on yoga in which the powers of the mind are described. One of the powers of the mind is to know the language of the birds and if you practice the Raja yoga you can understand the language of the birds. You can know what is happening thirty thousand kilometres away and you can see the objects very clearly regarding that subject. As in Hatha yoga, there are the powers of the body, there are numerous powers of the mind. There is a very interesting chapter in *Collected Works* of

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Vivekananda... Swami Vivekananda has given lots of lectures as you know and one of the lectures was on the powers of the mind. He has described his encounter with a yogi who had developed many powers of the mind. One of the experiences when he went to meet this Raja yogi was: That yogi gave him a piece of folded paper and said: "Don't open it." So, Vivekananda put this piece of paper in his pocket and there was long talk and afterward the yogi suddenly said: "I can tell you what is your mind. Think of an idea.. So he thought of an idea, a very difficult idea and that too in a language which Vivekananda thought this man will never know. Then he wrote down that sentence and gave it to the yogi. Then the yogi said: "Now please open the piece of paper which I gave you when you came in." It was exactly the sentence which Vivekananda wrote much after coming into the room and he said: "I had decided that you will think of this when I ask you to think." This is an example given by Vivekananda of his own personal experience. It is not a fiction. This is the power of the mind. Raja yoga can develop extraordinary powers of the mind. There is a special chapter in the Patanjali yoga which is called *Yoga Sutra*. Sutra means aphoristic expression. In that chapter there is a part called *Vibhuti Pada* ? *vibhuti* means extraordinary powers. You can read this chapter one day.

Now the question is what is the instrument? Just as in Hatha yoga the instrument was the body, similarly in Raja yoga the instrument is the mind. Raja yogis don't do all kind of asanas excepting one or two, Raja yogi concentrate upon the mind. Mind is the instrument, the conquest of the mind.

What is the process? The process is a gradual movement of the mind by which it attains to concentration in the state of stillness. The mind is used for developing a capacity of concentration to such a degree that in the state of concentration there is complete stillness, complete silence of the mind. This is the process, gradual process and gradual movement.

In Raja yoga there are eight steps of the process. The first two steps are the longest. They take a very long time, years and years. The first step is called *yama* and the second *niyama*. In Raja yoga you cannot attain to the stillness of the mind unless you practice this for years and years. Yesterday I spoke to you of five *yamas*: *satya*, *ahimsa*, *brahmacharya*, *aparigraha*, *asteya* ? truth, non-violence, self-control, self-limitation to the minimum, and non-stealing. These are the five great *yamas*. In Raja yoga you cannot attain to the stillness of the mind unless you practice this for years and years. Then mind becomes controlled a little when you do this practice for years. Be truthful always, be non-violent, control your senses again and again and again in all different circumstances. And then *niyama*: you must follow rules of daily life. You should have first cleanliness, be absolutely clean every day, then have contentment, no grudges, no grumblings. Whatever happens you bear, endure and be contented. It is a very difficult task to be contented. Then comes *swadhya* ? study regularly. Regular means exactly at the right time you should read, not at irregular times ? ten thirty means that at ten thirty you must be here and study by yourself, it is free progress, not imposed upon you, on your own you want to study, even if it is difficult you will study. Then comes *Ishwara pranidana* ? submission to the Divine. These are what are called *niyamas*, regular practices in every circumstances for many-many years. When you have done this then you do *pranayama* or you can do simultaneously *pranayama*, breathe control and *asana*, but not as in Hatha yoga. Simple *pranayama*, exercises of inhaling, exhaling and retaining. *Puraka Rechaka Kumbhaka* In Hatha yoga these three processes are long processes, various kinds of retaining for long-long hours. In Raja yoga it is just enough, comfortable. There is no insistence that you must be a great controller of your breath. And *asana*. In the case of Hatha yoga there are various kinds of *asanas*, scores of them. But in Raja yoga any posture in which you feel comfortable is enough, but you should be able to sit in one posture for hours. It is one condition. Normally we sit in a comfortable position then we change it after sometime, become again comfortable and again change it. In Raja yoga normally what is proposed is that your back should be straight and erect. The spinal chord should be straight, your head must be erect not drooping down, absolutely straight and you should be able to keep your feet crossed but comfortably. For many people that is not easy. In India, of course, most of the children right from childhood sit in cross legged form, so there is no problem. But it is not imposed that it should be only one kind of posture, whatever posture you decide. You can even lie down, it is also a posture but lie down completely still — not tossing about in the bed which is not *asana*. *Asana* means seated in a still form, really seated. To be able to live in one place for years is also *asana*. Human beings have the habit of loitering, going from one place to another but according to Raja yoga you should be able to live in a place for years and years and years. But the minimum is one comfortable posture and for quite sometime you should be able to keep it. Once you are comfortable in one posture and remain in that posture for quite sometime then you begin the real practice of Raja yoga. All this is preliminary. Now comes the real process.

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The real process is the withdrawal of the mind from everything else excepting one object which you chose. You can choose any object as you like, a book or a stone or the tip of a flame, you may even keep as object a word such as *aum*; just keep your consciousness upon the letters of the word; any object you concentrate upon, the condition is that you withdraw your mind from everything else. That is a difficult task. The mind runs after many-many things particularly when you want to centralise your attention on one object. To withdraw the mind from all the other objects excepting one that you have chosen is the fifth step of Raja yoga. The first step is yama, the second is niyama, third step is *asana*, the fourth is pranayama then the fifth is *pratyahara*. The meaning of *pratyahara* is to withdraw the mind from all other objects excepting the one that you have chosen. The emphasis is upon withdrawal. Whenever the mind runs you just withdraw it, it is like horses running and you control them. And the sixth step is when you can fix the mind on that object for sometime at least. Having withdrawn your mind from all others your mind should be able to dwell, at least for sometime, on the object that you have chosen. You should not be deflected at that time, remain absolutely on that spot, at least for sometime. This is called *dharana* in Sanskrit. Then comes the next step, when you can dwell upon that object for a long time. That is called *dhyana*. It is the seventh step of Raja yoga. Dhyana is a concentration, called either meditation or concentration. Concentration has two varieties, meditation and contemplation.

Then comes the eighth step: *samadhi*. The word samadhi is very famous all over the world. Samadhi means the absorption of the mind in the object. There is no difference between your mind and the object, the idea and the object become one. And in that state the object becomes luminous. All that is in the object become known to you, the object reveals itself. You don't need to read the books; this is the secret of Raja yoga. Swami Vivekananda has written somewhere ? you must know a lot about Vivekananda because he did yoga in a very extraordinary manner in the short time of his life. He says: "If I knew in my childhood the power of yoga, the power of concentration of the mind I would have spent my time in developing concentration rather than reading books because if you know concentration then any knowledge that you want can be acquired, even without reading books." This is the secret that Raja yoga has discovered. By external knowledge you can get a good deal, by reading, by hearing, you can get lot of knowledge that is true, but even without reading, without hearing if you just concentrate upon an object the knowledge automatically blooms in you. This is the discovery of Raja yoga ? an extraordinary discovery. You can command knowledge. Therefore a Raja yogi if he wants any knowledge he just concentrates upon the object and the knowledge flows. This may look like magic but this is the claim of Raja yoga. If you concentrate upon any object the object reveals itself. The concentration has such a power. Even when you read you will find that if you don't attain concentration you don't understand. It is a fact. That is why people say read with concentration because concentration is the real means; if you don't concentrate, knowledge will not grow in you. So, even when you use external methods the real method of knowledge is concentration. Only when you concentrate you gain knowledge. These are the eight steps. This is the process of Raja yoga.

The aim is, as I told you, perfection of the mental power and the discovery of the immobile Purusha freed from all mobility of nature. The instrument is the mind and the method, the process is eight-fold: *yama, niyama, asana, pranayama, pratyahara, dharana, dhyana, samadhi*.

Tomorrow we shall deal with Karma yoga, Jnana yoga, Bhakti yoga and you will see in each yoga the aim is specific, the instrument is specific and the process is specific. Once we gain the knowledge of all the yogas then we shall be in a position to understand the word *Integral yoga*.

III.

I don't know if you have read the story of the Life of Vivekananda. Have you? No... We could keep one day for that purpose because Sri Aurobindo quotes Vivekananda from time to time in *The Synthesis of Yoga*. Now let me read to you *The Powers of the Mind*. This is in connection with the Raja Yoga of which I have spoken yesterday. How do you develop the mental powers, what kind of powers are they. This is a lecture given by Swami Vivekananda in California on January 8, 1900.

You may remember, for those who don't know his life, that Swami Vivekananda went to America in 1893. He attended the Parliament of Religions. It was the first Parliament of Religions. When he went from India to America he was only told that there is a Parliament of Religions and his

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friends said: "Why don't you go and address it there?" He had no warm clothes. The king of Khetri gave him a shawl as a gift. It was the only woolen thing that he had with him. He had no pass to present himself at the Parliament of Religions. He was not sent by any Institution in India. He went on his own, he even did not enquire that how he will be able to speak there. He was so innocent. In America he had to sleep the first night in a small box on a pavement because he had no house, no place to go to, in that cold. Later on some professor came to know him and then he took him to the Parliament of Religions' office for registration. And the man who was registering said: "What are your credentials? On whose behalf do you want to address in the Parliament of Religions?" In the meantime the professor was so impressed by Vivekananda that he said: "To ask credentials from this man is to ask the sun to give credentials for its light." It is a tremendous tribute that was paid to Vivekananda, a young man, by this man. That is how he was allowed to enter into the Parliament of Religions. And the lectures began. One by one the speakers spoke and finally somebody asked him to speak. And he was so shy that he could not even get up and speak a word. Only five minutes were left for the time to close the day's session. And he was summoned: "Now you speak." He stood up and he spoke only three words: "Sisters and brothers of America." Just three words he spoke and the entire audience was so surcharged that they all stood up and gave a standing ovation, they clapped only on hearing these three words. He spoke only for five minutes, but the next day in all, the papers in America he was in the headlines. None other, only this young man. This proves the truth of what he himself says here, that a man comes, speaks only a few words and the whole mass becomes influenced. This is the power. It is because when one speaks it is not the mouth that speaks, it is not the words that speak, it is the man who speaks, the spirit that is there: the tapasya that he has done — so much tapasya he had done. He had walked round the whole of the country absolutely without any possession — *aparigraha*. And all the time moving up and down with only one thing: let my country awake, let my country be great. All the time offering his country to the feet of the Lord. There was nothing else in his life. It is this tapasya. And the words that came out were not incidental words. The formula: "Sisters and brothers of America..." All of India is in the sense of universality. And that universality was born on his tongue as it were. When he said "Sister and brothers of America" there was no difference between Indians and Americans so that universality manifested in three words. It is that which produced a tremendous effect. In fact one of the greatest events of the last century was the visit of Vivekananda to America. He went as a young man, without any possessions, without knowing how to present himself to the Parliament of Religions and he was turned into the greatest orator, the best representative of the Parliament of Religions. This is the proof of what he says here.

"All over the world there has been the belief in the supernatural throughout the ages. All of us have heard of the extraordinary happenings, and many of us have had some personal experience of them. I would rather introduce the subject by telling you certain facts which have come within my own experience. I once heard of a man who, if any one went to him with questions in his mind, would answer immediately; and I was also informed that he foretold events. I was curious and went to see him with a few friends. We each had something in our minds to ask, and, to avoid mistakes, we wrote down our questions and put them in our pockets. As soon as the man saw one of us, he repeated our questions and gave the answers to them. Then he wrote something on paper, which he folded up, asked me to sign on the back, and said, "Don't look at it; put it in your pocket and keep it there till I ask for it again." And so on to each of us. He next told us about some events that would happen to us in the future. Then he said, "Now, think of a word or a sentence, from any language you like." I thought of a long sentence from Sanskrit, a language of which he was entirely ignorant. "Now, take out the paper from your pocket," he said. The Sanskrit sentence was written there! He had written it an hour before with the remark, "In confirmation of what I have written, this man will think of this sentence." It was correct. Another of us who had been given a similar paper which he had signed and placed in his pocket, was also asked to think of a sentence. He thought of a sentence in Arabic, which it was less possible for the man to know; it was some passage from the Koran. And my friend found this written down on the paper.

Another of us was a physician. He thought of a sentence from a German medical book. It was written on his paper.

Several days later I went to this man again, thinking possibly I had been deluded somehow before. I took other friends, and on this occasion also he came out wonderfully triumphant.

Another time I was in the city of Hyderabad in India, and I was told of a Brahmin there who could produce numbers of things from where, nobody knew. This man was in business there; he was a respectable gentleman. And I asked him to show me his tricks. It so happened that this man had a fever, and in India there is a general belief that if a holy man puts his hand on a sick man he would be

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well. This Brahmin came to me and said, "Sir, put your hands on my head, so that my fever may be cured." I said, "Very good; but you show me your tricks." He promised. I put my hand on his head as desired, and later he came to fulfil his promise. He had only a strip of cloth about his loins, we took off everything else from him. I had a blanket which I gave him to wrap round himself, because it was cold, and made him sit in a corner. Twenty-five pairs of eyes were looking at him. And he said, "Now, look, write down anything you want." We all wrote down names of fruits that never grew in that country, bunches of grapes, oranges, and so on. And we gave him those bits of paper. And there came from under his blanket bushels of grapes, oranges, and so forth, so much that if all that fruits was weighed, it would have been twice as heavy as the man. He asked us to eat the fruit. Some of us objected, thinking it was hypnotism; but the man began eating himself ? so we all ate. It was alright.

He ended by producing a mass of roses. Each flower was perfect, with dew-drops on the petals, not one crushed, not one injured. And masses of them! When I asked the man for an explanation he said, "It is all sleight of hand."

Whatever it was, it seems to be impossible that it could be sleight of hand merely. From whence could he have got such large quantities of things?

Well, I saw many things like that. Going about India you find hundreds of similar things in different places. These are in every country. Even in this country you will find some such wonderful things. Of course there is a great deal of fraud, no doubt; but then, whenever you see fraud, you have also to say that fraud is an imitation. There must be some truth somewhere, that is being imitated; you cannot imitate nothing. Imitation must be of something substantially true.

In very remote time in India, thousand of years ago these facts used to happen even more than they do today. It seems to me that when a country becomes very thickly populated psychical power deteriorate. Given a vast country thinly inhabited, there will, perhaps, be more of psychical power there. These facts, the Hindus, being analytically minded, took up and investigated. And they came to certain remarkable conclusions; that is, they made a science of it. They found out that all these, though extraordinary, are also natural; there is nothing supernatural. They are under laws just the same as any other physical phenomenon. It is not a freak of nature that a man is born with such powers. They can be systematically studied, practiced, and acquired. This science they called the science of Rāja Yoga. There are thousands of people who cultivate the study of this science, and for the whole nation it has become a part of daily worship.

The conclusion they have reached is that all these extraordinary powers are in the mind of man. This mind is a part of the universal mind. Each mind is connected with every other mind. And each mind, wherever it is located, is in actual communication with the all world.

Have you ever noticed the phenomenon that is called thought-transference? A man hear is thinking something, and that thought is manifested in somebody else, in some other place. With preparations ? not by chance ? a man wants to send a thought to another mind at a distance, and this other mind knows that a thought is coming, and he receives it exactly as it is sent out. Distance makes no difference. The thought goes and reaches the other man, and he understands it. If your mind were an isolated something here, and my mind were an isolated something there, there were no connection between the two, how would it be possible for my thought to reach you? In the ordinary cases, it is not my thought that is reaching you direct; but my thought has got to be dissolved into ethereal vibrations and those ethereal vibrations go into your brain, and they have to be resolved again into your own thoughts. Here is dissolution of thought, and there is a resolution of thought. It is a roundabout process. But in telepathy there is no such thing; it is direct.

This shows that there is a continuity of mind, as the Yogis call it. The mind is universal. Your mind, my mind, all these little minds, are fragments of that universal mind, little waves in the ocean; and on account of this continuity, we can convey our thoughts directly to one another.

You see what is happening all around us. The world is one of influence. Part of our energy is used up in the preservation of our own bodies. Beyond that, every particle of our energy is day and night being used in influencing others. Our bodies, our virtues, our intellect, and our spirituality, all these are continuously influencing others; and so, conversely, we are being influenced by them. This is going on all around us. Now, to take a concrete example. A man comes; you know he is very learned, his language is beautiful, and he speaks to you by the hour, but he does not make any impression. Another man comes, and he speaks a few words, not well arranged, nor grammatical perhaps, all the same, he makes an immense impression. Many of you have seen that. So it is evident that words alone cannot always produce an impression. Word, even thoughts contribute only one-third of the influence in making an impression, the man, two-thirds. What you call the personal magnetism of the man ? that is what goes out and impresses you.

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In our families there are the heads; some of them are successful, others are not. Why? We complain of others in our failures. The moment I am unsuccessful I say, so-and-so is the cause of the failure. In failure, one does not like to confess one's own faults and weaknesses. Each person tries to hold himself faultless and lay the blame upon somebody or something else, or even on bad luck. When heads of families fail, they should ask themselves, why it is that some persons manage a family so well and others do not. Then you will find that the difference is owing to the man ? his presence, his personality.

Coming to great leaders of mankind, we always find that it was the personality of the man that counted. Now, take all the great authors of the past, the great thinkers. Really speaking, how many thoughts have they thought? Take all the writers that have been left to us by the past leaders of mankind; take each one of their books and appraise them. The real thoughts, new and genuine, that have been thought on this world up to this time, amount to only a handful. Read in their books the thoughts they have left to us. The authors do not appear to be giants to us, and yet we know that they were great giants in their days. What made them so? Not simply the thoughts they thought, neither the books they wrote, nor the speeches they made, it was something else that is now gone, that is their personality. As I have already remarked, the personality of the man is two-thirds, and his intellect, his words, are but one-third. It is the real man, the personality of the man, that runs through us. Our actions are but effects. Actions must come when the man is there; the effect is bound to follow the cause.

The ideal of all education, all training should be this: man-making. But, instead of that, we are always trying to polish up the outside. What use in polishing up the outside when there is no inside? The end and aim of all training is to make the man grow. The man who influences, who throws his magic, as it were, upon his fellow-beings is a dynamo of power, and when that man is ready, he can do anything and everything he likes; that personality put upon anything will make it work.

Now, we see that though this is a fact, no physical laws that we know of will explain this. How can we explain it by chemical and physical knowledge? How much of oxygen, hydrogen, carbon, how many molecules in different positions, and how many cells, etc., etc. can explain this mysterious personality? And we still see, it is a fact, and not only that, it is the real man; and it is that man that lives and moves and works, it is that man that influences, moves his fellow-beings, and passes out, and his intellect and works are but traces left behind. Think of this. Compare the great teachers of religions with the great philosophers. The philosophers scarcely influenced anybody's inner man, and yet they wrote most marvellous books. The religious teachers, on the other hand, moved countries in their lifetime. The difference was made by personality. In the philosophers it is a faint personality that influences; in the great prophets it is tremendous. In the former we touch the intellect, in the latter we touch life. In the one case, it is simply a chemical process, putting certain chemical ingredients together which may gradually combined and under proper circumstances bring out a flash of light or may fail. In the other, it is like a torch that goes round quickly, lightening others.

The science of Yoga claims that it has discovered the laws which develop this personality, and by proper attention to those laws and methods, each one can grow and strengthen his personality. This is one of the great practical things, and this is the secret of all education. This has a universal application. In the life of the householder, in the life of the poor, the rich, the man of business, the spiritual man, in every one's life, it is a great thing, the strengthening of this personality. There are laws, very fine, which are behind the physical laws, as we know. That is to say, there are no such realities as a physical world, a mental world, a spiritual world. Whatever is, is one. Let us say, it is a sort of tapering existence; the thickest part is here, it tapers and becomes finer and finer. The finest is what we call spirit; the grossest the body. And just as it is here in microcosm, it is exactly the same in the macrocosm. The universe of ours is exactly like that; it is the gross external thickness, and it tapers into something finer and finer until it becomes God.

We also know that the greatest power is lodged in the fine, not in the coarse. We see a man take up a huge weight, we see his muscles swell, and all over his body we see signs of exertion, and we think the muscles are powerful thing. But it is the thin thread-like things, the nerves, which bring power to the muscles; the moment one of these threads is cut off from reaching the muscles they are not able to work at all. These tiny nerves bring the power from something still finer, and that again in its turn brings it from something finer still ? thought, and so on. So, it is the fine that is really the seat of power. Of course we can see the movements in the gross; but when fine movements take place, we cannot see them. When a gross thing moves, we catch it, and thus we naturally identify movements with things which are gross. But all the power is really in the fine. We do not see any movement in the fine, perhaps, because the movement is so intense that we cannot perceive it. But if by any science, any investigation, we are helped to get hold of these fine forces which are the cause of the expression,

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the expression itself will be under control. There is a little bubble coming from the bottom of a lake; we do not see it coming all the time, we see it only when it bursts on the surface; so, we can perceive thoughts only after they develop a great deal, or after they become actions. We constantly complain that we have no control over our actions, over our thoughts. But how can we have it? If we can get control over the fine movements, if we can get hold of thought at the root, before it has become thought, before it has become action, then it would be possible for us to control the whole. Now, if there is a method by which we can analyse, investigate, understand, and finally grapple with those finer powers, the finer causes, then alone it is possible to have control over ourselves, and the man who has control over his own mind assuredly will have control over every other mind. That is why purity and morality have been always the object of religion; a pure, moral man has control of himself. And all minds are the same, different parts of one Mind. He who knows one lump of clay has known all the clay in the universe. He who knows and controls his own mind knows the secret of every mind and has power over every mind.

Now, a good deal of our physical evil we can get rid of, if we have control over the fine parts; a good many worries we can throw off, if we have control over the fine movements; a good many failures can be averted if we have control over these fine powers, So far, is utility. Yet beyond, there is another higher.

Now, I shall tell you a theory, which I will not argue now, but simply place before you the conclusion. Each man in childhood runs through the stages through which his race has come up; only the race took thousands of years to do it, while the child takes a few years. The child is first the old savage man ? and he crushes a butterfly under his feet. This child is at first like the primitive ancestors of his race. As he grows, he passes through different stages until he reaches the development of his race. Only he does it swiftly and quickly. Now, take the whole of humanity as a race, or take the whole of the animal creation, man and lower animals, as one whole. There is an end towards which the whole is moving. Let us call it perfection. Some men and women are born who anticipate the whole progress of mankind. Instead of waiting and being reborn over and over again for ages until the human race has attained to that perfection, they, as it were, rush through them in a few short years of their life. And we know that we can hasten these processes, if we be true to ourselves. If a number of men, without any culture, be left to live upon an island, and are given barely enough food, clothing and shelter, they will gradually go on and on, evolving higher and higher stages of civilisation. We know also, that this growth can be hastened by additional means. We help the growth of the trees, do we not? Left to nature they would have grown, only they would have taken a longer time; we help them to grow in a shorter time than they would otherwise have taken. We are doing all the time the same thing, hastening the growth of things by artificial means. Why cannot we hasten the growth of man? We can do that as a race. Why are teachers sent to other countries? Because by these means we can hasten the growth of races. Now, can we not hasten the growth of the individuals? We can. Can we put a limit to the hastening? We cannot say how much a man can grow in one life. You have no reason to say that this much a man can do and no more. Circumstances can hasten him wonderfully. Can there be any limit then, till you come to perfection? So, what comes of it? That a perfect man, that is to say, the type that is to come of this race, perhaps millions of years hence, that man can come today. And this is what the Yogis say, that all great incarnations and prophets are such men; that they reached perfection in this one life. We have had such men at all periods of the world's history and at all times. Quite recently, there was such a man who lived the life of the whole human race and reached the end ? even in this life. Even this hastening of the growth must be under laws. Suppose we can investigate these laws and understand their secrets and apply them to our own needs; it follows that we grow. We hasten our growth, we hasten our development, and we become perfect, even in this life. This is the higher part of our life, and the science of the study of mind and its power has this perfection as its end. Helping others with money and other material things and teaching them how to go on smoothly in their daily life are mere details.

The utility of this science is to bring out the perfect man, and not let him wait and wait for ages, just a plaything in the hands of the physical world, like a log of drift-wood carried from wave to wave and tossing about in the ocean. This science wants you to be strong, to take the work in your own hand, instead of leaving it in the hands of nature, and get beyond this little life. That is the great idea.

Man is growing in knowledge, in power, in happiness. Continuously, we are growing as a race. We see that is true, perfectly true. Is it true of individuals? To a certain extent, yes. But yet, again comes the question: where do you fix the limit? I can see only at a distance of so many feet. But I have seen a man close his eyes and see what is happening in another room. If you say you do not believe it, perhaps in three weeks that man can make you do the same. It can be taught to anybody.

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Some persons, in five minutes even, can be made to read what is happening in another man's mind. These facts can be demonstrated.

Now, if these things are true, where can we put a limit? If a man can read what is happening in another's mind in the corner of this room, why not in the next room? Why not anywhere? We cannot say, why not. We dare not say that it is not possible. We can only say, we do not know how it happens. Material scientists have no right to say that things like this are not possible; they can only say, "We do not know." Science has to collect facts, generalise upon them, deduce principles, and state the truth? that is all. But if we begin by denying the facts, but can a science be?

There is no end to the power a man can obtain. This is the peculiarity of the Indian mind,, that when anything interest it, it gets absorbed in it and other things are neglected. You know how many sciences had their origin in India. Mathematics began there. You are even today counting 1, 2, 3, etc. to zero after Sanskrit figures, and you all know that algebra also originated in India, and that gravitation was known to the Indians thousands of years before Newton was born.

You see the peculiarity. At a certain period of Indian history, this one subject of man and his mind absorbed all their interest. And it was so enticing, because it seemed the easiest way to achieve their ends. Now, the Indian mind became so thoroughly persuaded that the mind could do anything and everything according to law, that its powers, and all that were nothing extraordinary, but a regularly taught science, just as the physical sciences they had taught before that. Such a conviction in these things came upon the race that physical sciences nearly died out. It was the one thing that came before them. Different sects of Yogis began to make all sorts of experiments. Some made experiments with light, trying to find out how lights of different coloured cloth, lived under a certain colour, and ate certain coloured foods. All sorts of experiments were made in this way. Others, made experiments in sound by stopping and unstopping their ears. And still others experimented in the sense of smell, and so on.

The whole idea was to get at the basis to reach the fine parts of the thing. And some of them really showed most marvellous powers. Many of them were trying to float in the air or pass through it. I shall tell you a story which I heard from a great scholar in the West. It was told him by a Governor of Ceylon who saw the performance. A girl was brought forward and seated cross-legged upon a stool made of sticks crossed. After she had been seated for a time, the showman began to take out, one after another, these cross-bars; and when all were taken out, the girl was left floating in the air. The Governor thought there was some trick, so he drew his sword and violently passed it under the girl; nothing was there. Now, what was this? It was no magic or something extraordinary. That is the peculiarity. No one in India would tell you that things like this do not exist. To the Hindu it is a matter of course. You know what the Hindus would often say when they have to fight their enemies, "Oh, one of our Yogis will come and drive the whole lot out!" It is the extreme belief of the race. What power is there in the hand of the sword? The power is all in the spirit.

If this is true, it is temptation enough for the mind to exert its highest. But as with every science it is very difficult to make any great achievement, so also with this, nay more. Yet most people think that these powers can be easily gained. How many are the years you take to make a fortune? Think of that! First, how many years do you take to learn electrical science or engineering? And then you have to work all the rest of your life.

Again, most of the other sciences deal with things that do not move, that are fixed. You can analyse the chair, the chair does not fly from you. But this science deals with the mind, which moves all the time; the moment you want to study it, it slips. Now the mind is in one mood, the next moment, perhaps, it is different, changing, changing all the time. In the midst of all this change it has to be studied, understood, grasped, and controlled. How much more difficult, then, is the science! It requires rigorous training. People ask me why I do not give them practical lessons. Why, it is not a joke. I stand up upon this platform talking to you and you go home and find no benefit; nor do I. Then you say, "It is all bosh." It is because you wanted to make a bosh of it. I know very little of this science, but the little that I gained I worked for thirty years of my life, and for six years I have been telling people the little that I know. It took me thirty years to learn it; thirty years of hard struggle. Sometimes I worked at it twenty hours during the twenty-four; sometimes I slept only one hour in the night; sometimes I worked whole nights; sometimes I lived in places where there was hardly a sound, hardly a breath; sometimes I had to live in caves. Think of that. And yet I know little or nothing; I have barely touched the hem of the garment of this science. But I can understand that it is true and vast and wonderful.

Now, if there is any one amongst you who really wants to study this science, he will have to start with that sort of determination, the same as, nay even more than, that which he puts into any business of life.

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And what amount of attention does business require, and what a rigorous taskmaster it is! Even if the father, the mother, the wife, or the child dies, business cannot stop! Even if the heart is breaking, we still have to go to our place of business, when every hour of work is a pang. That is business, and we think that it is just, that it is right.

This science calls for more application than any business can ever require. Many men can succeed in business; very few in this. Because so much depends upon the particular constitution of the person studying it. As in business all may not make a fortune, but everyone can make something, so in the study of this science each one can get a glimpse which will convince him of its truth and of the fact that there have been men who realised it fully.

This is the outline of the science. It stands upon its own feet and in its own light, and challenges comparison with any other science. There have been charlatans, there have been magicians, there have been cheats, and more here than in any other field. Why? For the same reason, that the more profitable the business, the greater the number of charlatans and cheats. But that is no reason why the business should not be good. And one thing more; it may be good intellectual gymnastic to listen to all arguments and an intellectual satisfaction to hear wonderful things. But, if any one of you really wants to learn something beyond that, merely attending lectures will not do. That cannot be taught in lectures, for it is life; and life can only convey life. If there are any amongst you who are really determined to learn it, I shall be very glad to help them."

The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda - The Power of the Mind
Talk delivered at Los Angeles, California, January 8, 1900

It is one of the great lectures of Vivekananda.

We are dealing with yoga and this is an introductory lecture on yoga: the powers of the mind that can be studied scientifically. You can learn something by practicing this with a great patience — as he said for thirty years even to touch the hem of the garment. Yoga is defined, what you can do in many, many years, by practice of yoga you can do in a short time. You can shorten, you can accelerate and you can attain to perfection. Therefore the book that we have started a few days ago, *The Synthesis of Yoga*, is such a tremendous thing. Very few people have the chance to read it and you are so fortunate that you are reading it.

I was telling you about the integral yoga and I told you about Hatha Yoga and about Raja Yoga and now I will tell you about the third one: Karma Yoga. The Yoga of works.

As I said you should ask three questions regarding any yoga. What is the aim? What is the instrument? What is the process? Let us ask these three questions regarding Karma Yoga.

What is the aim? The aim of Karma Yoga is to discover the Supreme Will and to allow that Will to work through us. To be an instrument of God's Will. Not only to discover the Will of God, the Will of the Divine but also to be the instrument of the Divine's Will. This is the aim of Karma Yoga.

What is the instrument? The instrument is that which is the most elementary/rudimentary aspect of will in us, just as the body is the instrument of Hatha Yoga, mind is the instrument of Raja Yoga, the instrument of Karma Yoga is desire because in our life all that we will is through desire. So you take that instrument and what do you do with that instrument?

What is the process? We can say in three words what takes many, many years to practice. First give up the desire for the fruits of action. This is the first part of the process of Karma Yoga. Second, perceive that what you think is your action is not really your action. Constantly observe your action and see, when you analyse any action you are doing, that its origin is elsewhere. You think it is your action. But it is a mistake. So correct that mistake by seeing that your action is not really your action. Then comes the third part. To discover the real origin of action you make a practice. You offer your action to the Divine. Whatever you are doing you offer it to the Divine like a gift. Whatever you think you are doing you think it is like a flower which you are offering to the Divine. This is called *sacrifice*. Sacrifice your action to the Divine. And when you sacrifice a miracle happens. It is the fourth part of the process. When you give to the Divine you are able to touch the Divine. If you give me a flower you can touch me by giving a flower. And when you touch the Divine, the Divine touches you. You touch the Divine from your side and the Divine touches you at the same time because as you touch Him he touches you. And the moment he touches you His action enters into you, His vibration enters into you. As soon as that vibration enters into you His action begins in you and you discover what is His action, what is His will. And by discovering this will of the Divine you also find that he is already vibrating in you. The moment you touch Him he begins to vibrate in you. So you begin to be the instrument of the Divine Will. And then whatever you do is actually the Divine himself doing it through you. These are the processes of Karma Yoga.

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I repeat now. You take the desire as instrument and the first thing is that whatever you desire — normally you desire the enjoyment of the fruits of action — this Yoga says that first you do not enjoy the fruits of action. You may have the fruits of action but give up the enjoyment of the fruits of action. Still continue to work. Normally when you are not to enjoy the fruits of action you cease to work. Karma Yoga says don't do that. Do your work, whatever you are doing, but do not enjoy the fruits of action. It is a mastery over it — a mastery of your enjoyment. Usually we work with desire, we do everything for enjoyment. The first lesson of Karma Yoga is: do not enjoy the fruit of your action. That gives you great austerity in your being, makes your personality. The personality, which simply does something for enjoyment, is a very weak personality. That personality can be won over very easily, can be tempted very easily. But the strong personality is one who does not care for enjoyment. This is the starting point of a real development of personality. Do not enjoy the fruits of your action. The second part of the process is: see that your action is not your own. Normally we always think 'this is my action', that we are doing it. There is a very beautiful line of a Gujarati poem which simply says: "I do, I do: that is the ignorance." It is like a dog which is moving under a cart and thinks "I am carrying the cart." It thinks that the cart is moving because of him. As if the burden of the cart is upon his back and the whole cart is moving because of him. See how this line of the poem gives a complete light to this ignorance. Whenever you think "I am doing it, I am doing it", think that you are like a dog walking under a cart thinking that the cart is moving because of it. This is the second part of the process of the Karma Yoga. And this is tremendous because normally all of us think that we are doing. And Karma Yoga says that this is a false proposition. Psychologically you are under an illusion, you are mistaken. Just as a dog would be mistaken if it thinks that the cart is moving because of its force when it is itself only moving under the cart.

The third part of the process of Karma Yoga is that when you are thinking that you are doing — as it is very difficult to rub out this idea that you are doing, Karma Yoga says, to make it easy, think that you are doing but offer it to the Divine. This is a process, a kind of trick you might say, a device. Continue to think that you are doing, fine, but having done it you say to the Divine: "This is for You". You give it as a gift. And when you give it as a gift a miracle takes place because when you offer it, the Divine touches you as you touch the Divine. And as soon as he touches you, you come to know that everything proceeds from Him. He is the real doer. The Supreme Lord is the doer. And the moment you discover this he begins to move in you. To discover the Divine Will and to be the instrument of the Divine Will takes no time. Between the two there is no interval. To know the Divine Will and to be the instrument of the Divine happens simultaneously because he already works in you. This is the Karma Yoga, in very brief terms. You have the whole book here (*The Synthesis of Yoga*) of Karma Yoga but I have told you the fundamental principles so that very briefly you can grasp them.

The aim of Karma Yoga is to discover the Divine Will and to become its instrument. The instrument is desire. You touch your desire, concentrate upon your desire and work on your desire. For working the first thing is to say: "I do not want to enjoy the fruits of my action." So it touches the desire, actually you will find that your desire becomes very weak. Ultimately the desire is completely wiped out. When you follow the whole process first they become weak. But do not therefore drop the action because normally this is what happens. When we do not desire the fruits of action we drop the action also. But don't do that, Karma Yoga says: continue the work. It is a very difficult task. Not to desire the enjoyment of the fruits of action and yet to continue to work is very difficult but gives tremendous strength of action. It is said: action for the sake of action. Because action in itself is right to do. The right action is to be done for the sake of action because it is right. I may fail: doesn't matter, I succeed: doesn't matter. I may enjoy doesn't matter, I may not enjoy doesn't matter. This is called a strong personality. This comes when as the first process you take your desire and then begin to chop off the head of the desire. The head of the desire is the fruits of action. If you examine the desire you will find that the head of the desire is the enjoyment of the fruits of action. If you chop off that head very often you feel that you are dead, you can do no work at all. But Karma Yoga says still continue to act. When you do that then you realise that every time you act there is in you the sense that you are doing. So Karma Yoga says whenever you say, "I am doing" think that you are like a dog which is moving under a cart — this is an illusion. You are not the doer. Find out really who is the doer. In Sanskrit it is said: *Aham Kartasmi* I am the doer. *Aham* means: I; *Karta* means: the doer. And when you really examine you will find that you are not at all the doer. All actions and energies are moving the Universe and you are a small little pebble in it and all the winds are blowing around you and you are blown by the winds. You are not blown by yourself you are blown by all others. This is the truth that you perceive when you begin to concentrate upon it. But our psychology is so obstinate that even when you see that you are not the doer, still your mind continues to believe that he is the doer. Therefore Karma Yoga says, at the third stage, think that you are doing but offer it to the Divine. And

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the moment you begin to offer to the Divine the Divine enters into you and gives you the knowledge that He is the doer. Then you discover His Will and you become the instrument of His Will.

Now we come to the next one: Jnana Yoga. Again we ask three questions. What is the aim, what is the instrument, what is the process?

What is the aim of Jnana Yoga? The aim of Jnana Yoga is to know the Being of God. In Karma Yoga the aim was to know the Will of God. There is a difference between the Will of God and the Being of God. Being is much larger, Will is only an expression. But the Being is the very stuff, the very heart, the very soul, the very self. So the aim of Jnana Yoga is the knowledge of the Self, the Supreme Being, the Supreme Self. And to become that very Being yourself. Just as in Karma Yoga the aim was to discover the will of the Divine and also to be the instrument of the Divine Will. Similarly in Jnana Yoga you discover the Supreme Being of the Divine and to become identical, to be one with that Being. That is the aim.

Now comes the question of the instrument. The instrument is the intellect. You take hold of the intellect as instrument. In Raja Yoga we said that the instrument is the Mind. In Jnana Yoga we are using the word Intellect. There is a difference between the two. Normally we say that mind and intellect are the same. But yoga tells us that there is a difference. Intellect is that part of the mind which distinguishes, which is capable of distinction, which makes a distinction between the Truth and the False. Between what is right and what is wrong. Between what is really real and what simply appears to be real. It distinguishes between reality and appearance. It is that part of the mind which distinguishes between right and wrong which is taken as an instrument in Jnana Yoga. That is why many people think that Jnana Yoga is a difficult one. Because already you must have intellect, you must be aware of intellect, so already you must be sufficiently developed. Hatha Yoga is easier because bodily existence is very easily seen by us and we can manipulate it easily. Desire is much more easy also to see and to manipulate. But intellect already requires a great degree of development. That is why many people think that Jnana Yoga is the most difficult one. Later on we shall examine if this question is easier or not. But anyway it is true that unless intellectually you are aware you cannot practice Jnana Yoga. You must know the instrument of intellect. You must develop the mind up to a certain extent so that it is able to decide, to judge. That much capacity you must already have. That is why all the people who are asked to practice Jnana Yoga are given a long practice in the process of intellect. Intellectual development is the first process. In all process of Jnana Yoga the individual is told to realise intellect first. And for that the process is to think. Thinking is the real starting point of Jnana Yoga.

You might say that from the time that I came to you we have started Jnana Yoga because I gave you many subjects for thinking and you have been put into the practice of thinking. You are already doing Jnana Yoga. We defined many things. And when you define you decide what is real and what is not real. Whenever you define anything you are already judging what is real and what is not real. You are defining exactly what the subject is. We defined what is philosophy, what is science therefore we distinguished between what is philosophy and what is not philosophy, between what is science and what is not science. Your intellect already begins to develop and to decide what is right and what is wrong, what is real and what is appearance. And when you study philosophy — there are many ways of learning philosophy but if you are a Jnana yogi, if you are doing the process of Jnana Yoga, study of philosophy can be by deciding or discriminating what is ultimately real and what is ultimately unreal. This is a true philosophical training.

The first step, the first process in Jnana Yoga is to think. The second process is to think what is right and what is wrong to discriminate between the truth and falsehood, right and wrong, real and unreal, reality and appearance. The third process is to distinguish between ultimately real and ultimately unreal. This is a very long process. It may take ten years. Unless and until you are able to think what is ultimately real and what is ultimately not-real you are not entering into the real gates of Jnana Yoga.

But having done it the prescription is — now comes the real Jnana Yoga, before were only preliminaries — think what is ultimately real and what is ultimately unreal again, and again, and again... and still again and again further. This is called *manana* in Sanskrit. When you think again and again of what is ultimately real and what is ultimately unreal — there can be many exercises. In India so many exercises have been discovered or created so that they may become a great help to you to think again and again.

After, comes the next step. The next step consists of a double movement: a negative movement and a positive movement. The negative movement is to say: "I am not unreal." The positive movement is to say: "I am real." Normally I think that I am the body. Realise first you are not the body. You have a body, not that you are the body. It is a mistake to think that you are the body. You have a

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body. So between unreal and real you see the distinction now. The reality is that you are more than the body and you have a body but you are not yourself the body. This is a first meditation you might say. Think of it again and again and again... Whenever you think "I am the body", remember that you are not the body. You have a body, you are not the body. You are real, this body is only a part of it, this body is only something, you are much more. You are the real Self, the Supreme Self. Remember that you are the Supreme Self, you are not this. As long as you think: I am the Supreme Self you are also wrong because 'you' is only referring to your body, to your little self. But that is not the real self. You are neither the body nor the life nor the mind. These are the three great illusions in which we live. We always think that I am the body, I am the life, I am the mind. These are unrealities. There are false ideas. You are not the body, you are not the life, you are not the mind. You have the body, you have the life, you have the mind. But you are not yourself the body or the life or the mind. This is the negative meditation. I am not the body, I am not the life, I am not the mind. Repeat it a thousand times, ten thousand times, one million times.

Then you go to the positive side: "I am the Supreme Self." But when you say: "I am the Supreme Self", remember that we should precede it by saying: "I am not I." What I think is myself is also not myself. Don't think that the Supreme Self is what you think you are. That is also false. You have to realise that you are not yourself. What I think is myself is not myself. It is only the ego — *Aham bhava*. You are not the ego. When you say *you* or *I* it is not the ego it is the Supreme Self. I am vast. Sri Aurobindo had used the words: "union of the human individual with the universal and transcendent". Your individuality has to be united with the universal and with the transcendental which is even more than the universal. That Supreme Being is more than the universe. And that is yourself. In which there is no *I* and no *You*. It is only One. There is only one reality, one Self, one Supreme Self. Even the statement "I am that Self" is also wrong. There is only the Self. That is all. There is only the Supreme Self. That is the real Reality. So meditate upon this: "I am the Supreme Self", then cut it out and say: "There is only one Supreme Self". That is the real reality. There is only one Supreme Self. Having done this, now you say: "This Supreme Self manifests as a universe, manifests as the individual, manifests itself as the mind, as the life, as the body." When you have done this whole circuit then you have the aim of Jnana Yoga achieved. It is a long programme, a difficult programme but that is what Jnana Yoga aims at. And it is said there is nothing as pure as this knowledge. This knowledge is the purest. If you want to be the purest, as we all should be, then we should remember that there is only one Supreme Self. This very perception delivers you from every impurity.

Bhakti Yoga: Again we put these three questions: What is the aim, what is the instrument and what is the process?

The aim of Bhakti Yoga is to discover the Divine Love. Not love, as we understand it but the Divine Love, the Divine Bliss. Because the origin of Divine Love is Divine Bliss — *ananda*. The aim of Bhakti Yoga is to discover the Divine Ananda and to enjoy the Divine Ananda. In Karma Yoga we saw that we normally like to enjoy the fruits of our action. So there was an element of enjoyment. But we were told not to enjoy. Now in Bhakti Yoga we are told: enjoy. Our aim is to enjoy; but to enjoy what: not the fruits of action but to enjoy the Divine Love. To be in the embrace of the Divine for ever and ever... That is the aim of Bhakti Yoga — to enjoy. That is true enjoyment. That is why in the *Isha Upanishad* there is a very nice sentence: "*Tena tyaktena bhunjita*" "By renouncing it you enjoy it." You renounce this enjoyment of the fruits of action and then you enjoy the Supreme Divine. You renounce this enjoyment and when you do that properly you will enjoy the Divine Love. The aim of Bhakti Yoga is to discover the Divine Love, the Divine Bliss and to enjoy that Divine Love and Bliss. This is the aim of Bhakti Yoga.

Bhaktas are supposed to be mad men. Because when they really realize there is a madness and ecstasy because of the joy which is so immeasurable. The brain itself begins to be completely quiet. The brain has no place in that joy. One dances and dances and dances. That is why many real bhaktas cannot but dance cannot but create. All kinds of artistic creations come out of this great love. In fact all artists are basically bhaktas. All of you are artists, I know, and therefore you are actually following the path of bhakti. All of you are in search of the Divine Creation. Your little artistic pieces are only a little effort but when you reach the culmination of it you can create the whole universe because the Divine creates the universe out of His great ecstasy. As Sri Aurobindo says: "The whole world is the laughter of Shiva." He laughs and the whole world is created. The whole world is a laughter. It is to discover this and enjoy it that is the aim of Bhakta Yoga.

What is the instrument? The instrument is emotion. Not the body, not the mind, not the desire, not the intellect, but emotion.

What is the process? Our emotions which are at present tied to small little things — this relationship or that relationship, this little thing to be enjoyed or that little thing to be enjoyed — all

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these emotions should be turned to the Supreme object of Love. The One that is really worthy of love. All other things are only tidbits of life. The real thing to be enjoyed is the Supreme, Supreme Krishna, the Delight of delight, the Universal and the Transcendental, the One Being, source of all joy and inexhaustible joy. To turn all your attention from these little things and pour all your love, all your emotions... If you are angry be angry with the Lord, if you are happy be happy in the company of the Lord. If you are in a mood to fight, fight with the Lord. If you want to obey somebody, obey the Lord. If you want to serve somebody, serve the Lord. All your emotions, whatever emotions you have, just pour them on the Supreme Object of Love. By doing this you find the Divine responds and this is the miracle. It is not only your part of thinking of God and loving him, you find that he loves you much more than you love him. Much more passionately. As Sri Aurobindo says, "The bhakta discovers that the Divine pursues him more passionately than he pursues Him." He loves you so much that nobody in the world can love you so. And this is not an illusion it is a real fact. He himself manifests. If you read the poems of Mirabai for example. The dance that burst out in her body when she sees Sri Krishna and finds Sri Krishna in passionate love of Mirabai herself, that love, imperishable love, unfailing love. You then realise that all we call human love is bitter at the end. That is Sri Aurobindo's words. All human love is basically, ultimately bitter. Although while drinking it, it is very sweet but when you analyse it and go to the depth of human love it is bitter as long as it is human, unless you turn it to the Divine — if you turn the human love to the Divine then it is immortal. Bhakti Yoga consists of turning human love into Divine love. It is the real process.

In this process there are three basic steps. Straining yourself towards the Divine — striving. Second, the experience that you are separated from your beloved. You do not find Him, you are striving up to Him. You do not find Him. Sometimes He appears but just for a little while. But that little while is so powerful that all other moments you feel that you are separated from Him and everything becomes dry. That moment when the Divine appears and touches you the ecstasy is so great that all other moments are felt to be a dry desert. So the process of Bhakti Yoga consists of striving even in that condition and ultimately comes the union. You receive Him, you obtain Him, you attain Him. You allow that love to manifest to you. You become the brazier of that love, the power, instrument of that love. Thereafter, wherever you see, everything is love. There is nothing which is bitter. Even bitterness itself becomes the Divine. It is said of Mirabai that she was sent a glass of poison. Her brother-in-law was very much opposed to her. To get rid of her one day he sent to her a glass of poison and as usual for Mirabai everything had to be offered to the Divine. She did not know that it was a glass of poison. She offered it to the Divine and said, "First you drink and then I drink". That was the sadhana of bhakti. And when she drank she danced. Poison had become nectar. The touch of the Divine love was the touch of nectar. This is the power of the Divine love. When you reach that stage, even if poison is poured on you it becomes nectar. Because everything in this world is the Divine nectar. That is the power and magic and efficacy of Divine love. That is why many great bhaktas were able to bear torture, great tortures. Because they see the Divine embrace in every torture. And that is really a fact. This is the process of Bhakti Yoga. In a sense there is no process. To strive and strive again and to be mad after the Divine. And then to enjoy the madness of the Divine. That is the process. That is Bhakti Yoga.

We have now done all the important systems of Yoga. Now we shall see what is Integral Yoga.

Allright. All this was to explain only one word in the first line of the second paragraph of *The Synthesis of Yoga*.

IV.

First we will revise a little. We were on first line of the second paragraph, of the first chapter: *The Four Aids*.

"The supreme Shastra of the Integral Yoga is secret in the heart of every being."

Because it is a very important sentence I am reading it several times so that it may be printed in your heart. It is already there therefore I am saying reprinted. And I was explaining the word Integral Yoga and in that context I was speaking of the different systems of yoga. Integral Yoga means yoga integrated. Different yogas, when they are integrated become the Integral Yoga. So unless you know what are the different yogas you won't understand what is integration of yogas. Thus I explained to you the different systems of yoga. And I told you that yoga is a methodized effort and that effort aims

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at two things: development of the faculties towards a perfection and union of the individual with the cosmic and the transcendental existence. Keeping this in mind as a general definition of yoga we can apply it to all the systems of yoga. And then I told you at least of five yogas: Hatha Yoga, Raja Yoga, Karma Yoga, Jajna Yoga and Bhakti Yoga. There are many other systems of yoga but these five are enough for our present purpose. At least you know that there are many systems of yoga and these are five major examples of them. I told you that in regard to every yoga you should ask three questions. And if you get the answer to these three questions you know everything about that yoga. These three questions are: what is the aim; instrument; and process?

I told you that in Hatha Yoga the aim is perfection of the body. The instrument is the body and the processes are asanas and pranayama. To sit with steadiness and there are a number of asanas.

The aim of Raja Yoga is the perfection of the mind, perfection of the mental powers, the instrument is the mind and the processes are *yama* and *niyama*. There are five yamas as I said to you: *satya*, *ahimsa*, *brahmacharya*, *aparigraha*, *asteya*. Yama means principle of control. Five principles of self-control: truth, non-violence, non-stealing, self limitation and self-control of the impulses. Yama are principle of self-control, *niyama* are ordinary principles by which you conduct your life or daily routine. These are cleanliness, contentment, study, and submission to God's will. Then come asanas and pranayama, but not in detail, ordinary asanas and ordinary pranayama. Next comes the principle of withdrawing away from the scattered movement of the mind. Then to concentrate upon one object, dwell upon that object, finally merge into the object and become one with it ? *pratyahara*, *dharana*, *dhyana*, *samadhi*.

Now comes Karma Yoga. What is the aim of Karma Yoga? To discover the Will of the Divine. The instrument is desire. The process is to get rid of the desire by giving up the desire for the enjoyment of the fruits of actions, secondly to give up the idea that you are the doer of action. Then comes the process of offering your action to the Divine and as the result of that the Divine Himself enters into you and He works out His Will through you.

Then comes Jnana Yoga. The aim of Jnana Yoga is to know the Being of God. What is He like? What is His stuff? If you eat Him how does He taste? You will discover that He tastes of *satchidananda*. So the knowledge of *satchidananda* is the aim of Jnana Yoga. If you taste Him everywhere you will find delight bursting out of Him, that everywhere there is consciousness, complete consciousness and everywhere you feel the stuff of Him, like holding matter. Similarly when you hold the Divine ? Divine is not ethereal. There are many people who think that God is in some way an ethereal being. No! God is even much more substantial than matter. Matter seems to us to be the hardest. *Mahato mahiyam*. It is even greater than the greatest. That is the nature of the Divine. When you touch Him you feel a tremendous pressure of the Solid. In Sanskrit the word is *chitghana*. *Ghana* means the absolute solid and *chit* is consciousness. Consciousness which becomes so dense that all other densities are nothing in comparison with that density. That is the experience you get with the Divine. Jnana Yoga aims at the knowledge of the Being of the Divine. The instrument is the intellect. The process is to find out what is real ultimately as distinguished from the unreal. The process is to discriminate between the real and the unreal. All the appearances have to be discriminated from that which is real. And for that there are negative processes and positive processes. The negative processes are to meditate: "I am not the body, I am not the life, I am not the mind, I am not the ego." The positive processes are to meditate: "I have the body, I have the life, I have the mind, I have the ego But I am the Self. I am not the body, I am not the life, I am not the mind but I am beyond the body, beyond the life, beyond the mind, beyond the ego. I am the Supreme Self." And then further: beyond even that is the Supreme Self. Even I, "I am the Supreme Self" is still a lesser thing. There is One Supreme Self. So meditate upon this and by this meditation you will arrive at the knowledge of the ultimate Real.

Now we go further. The aim of Bhakti Yoga is to discover and to enjoy the Divine Love. The instrument is the emotions. The process is to turn all the emotions towards the Divine. There are many emotions: emotion of joy, emotion of sorrow, emotion of relationships of various kind, tenderness, affection, intensity, even anger is an emotion, the pain of separation is also an emotion. All of them have to be turned towards the Divine. Even if you become angry, anger has to be turned towards the Divine. You can be angry with the Divine instead of being angry with petty things. And then you find that you can never be angry with Him. All the causes of anger are really the ploys by which the Divine simply takes you into His arms. So where is the question of being angry with Him? To suffer the pain of separation from the Divine, then a striving to be united and then the union with Him. The process of Bhakti Yoga is very simple.

Now we come to the question of Integral Yoga.

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Integral Yoga is the integration of the aims of all the systems of yoga. Second, you integrate all the instruments. And thirdly you integrate all the processes. But if you unite all the processes of the different yogas it will be such a long process that it may not be finished in one lifetime at all, it will take many, many, many lives. Therefore it would seem that integration is impossible. There must be some other method. This is what Sri Aurobindo made a deep study about: how to integrate all the objects, all the instruments, all the processes? It is a very difficult question. Then he found out that all the processes whether they are from Hatha Yoga, Raja Yoga, Karma Yoga, Bhakti Yoga or Jnana Yoga have one thing common to all of them: this is concentration. You don't need to do individually all the processes, which are appropriate to every yoga. He found that the common principle in all the yogas is concentration. Then he found that concentration become perfect when you undertake two other processes. One is a process of purification. And the second is a process of development. You develop your faculties and you purify them. The more you purify the greater will be the concentration.

What is the meaning of purification? Purification consists of removing mixtures. You find that everything is mixed. Even if you want to think in purity you will find that in the time of thinking emotions will interfere, will interfere, desires will interfere. So you should have a process of dispassionate thinking. This is a process of purification. Very often when you want to will it becomes a mixture again. Will gets mixed with doubt. How can you will when there is a doubt? You have to purify your will and allow no doubt to interfere with your will. Then you can will properly ? unmixed. When you have great emotion ideas begin to flicker in the emotions. So pure emotion is obstructed. Even while loving you doubt, intellectual doubts come. Your love also is affected. There should purity of love, there is no mixture, love for the sake of love and nothing else, Then the love become powerful. First of all there is a removal of mixtures of the functioning of your faculties. You take every faculty and you purify it. When you exercise one faculty another faculty should not interfere. This is one process of purification. It is a long exercise but if you do this with regard to all the faculties, you have Integral Yoga. In the case of other yogas only one faculty is taken up and purified, others are only silent, they are not purified, they are just not allowed to function at all. If you are doing Jnana Yoga only the intellect is purified, but will and emotion are simply put aside. They are not purified, they are not developed. Therefore the result is only limited. But in Integral Yoga you purify your will, your emotions, your intellect, your body and your mind. It is an integral purification. If you know the process, then whenever there is a movement ? if you are thinking, purify your thoughts, if you are having emotions, purify your emotion, if you are willing, purify your will at the same time, simultaneously. All this takes a shorter time. And each purification helps the purification of the other. If you purify the intellect, emotions also are purified, will also is purified. This is one aspect of purification. The mixture of functioning of different faculties is removed. Every faculty is tuned; purified. This is one process.

Second process is ? there is always another mixture in our consciousness, mixture of ignorance with everything. We will ignorantly, we think ignorantly, we love ignorantly. Ignorance is a great mixture. With everything and anything you do ignorance is present ? in all the activities. Therefore in all activities, act with knowledge. Instead of ignorance illumine. Illumine everything, illumine your heart, illumine your mind, illumine your will, illumine your emotions. When you put a flame everything is purified. Even physically when you put something in a fire it is purified. You have to put the fire of illumination, you have to think rightly, will rightly, love rightly. One general principle is Truth. The fire of Truth is the great power of purification. Burn, burn, burn all the time. A little spark will become then a seven ton fire ? this is the image of the Veda. In that purification, in the process of that fire, everything is thrown, all the impurities and they are burnt away. And you emerge pure, golden, and absolutely perfect. Sri Aurobindo has said that this purification means removal of mixtures and mixtures are of two kinds: mixtures of faculties and mixtures of all functionings with ignorance. That means integral purification. When all the faculties are clarified in their distinctions; when all the faculties are burnt with the power of the Truth ignorance is destroyed, then you get an integral purification and multiple tons of fire begin to burn in your being. That is a very important process and when you do this your concentration is perfect. When there are no mixtures or no ignorance, concentration is automatic. You don't have to sit down hours and hours and hours like the *kurma*, the tortoise which withdraws to be able to dwell, it takes such a long time. We have a very easy process. This is what Sri Aurobindo discovered: if you purify yourself integrally your concentration becomes integral, perfect concentration.

The second process: development. Along with the process of purification you should have also a process of development. Development of your intellect, development of your mind of your emotions, of your will, will-power. If you develop all your faculties concentration is automatic afterwards. What you are doing now in this process, when you sit in this class you are developing your mind and your intellect very sharply. If you examine what you were six months ago and now you will

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find a tremendous upward movement that you have taken in the mind, everyone of you. How much your intellect has developed. Similarly you have to have exercises of development of the will. That also you should do. Whenever you have to will ? I must study for five hours at a stretch, have the will and sit down and see who can disturb you for five hours of study with concentration. Develop this will. You decide that you will do it, again and again and again. You decide and having decided you hold to the resolution ? Yes I will do it. It must be done. No excuse at all. I must not fall ill because very often our body is a very tricky thing. If it does not want to attend to something the body fall ill. Even if illness comes the body must say: "Even if I fall ill I will do it." That is the power of the will. "In spite of everything and anything I will do it."

Similarly, the emotions. Intensity of emotions. Very often people dry up the emotions. In our yoga all emotions are purified ? not dried ? intensified, so much intensified that all emotions become divine. It is by intensity. If you have a friend, the sense of loyalty in friendship, loyalty at any cost — that is called intensity of friendship. If you love you love intensely without reserve, deeply, no bargaining at all which often happen in love ? I love you therefore you must do something for me. Not at all, no bargaining. If you love, love truly, intensely and you will find that it becomes Divine love. The human love is transformed into Divine love if you truly love. Don't dry it away. Drying is the process by which you weaken; whereas you must develop the intensity. Purify and develop, purify and develop. In love there are lessons of jealousy, which is a horrible thing, so therefore it has to be sacrificed. Love without jealousy, that calls for the intensity and purity of love. Not like Othello who is a wrong example of love.

Develop the body to the fullest extent: health, strength, and agility of the body. All these three things should be achieved. You can add also the beauty of the body. If you stand before the Divine you should be beautiful, even physically.

So these two processes: purification and development. Along with these two is the concentration. Concentration is the main thing and purity and development are the two instruments by which you can increase that concentration. Purification on the right side, development on the left side and at the center is the concentration. With this triple method you take all the instruments and apply the three methods, that is the secret of *Integral Yoga*. Instead of only one single faculty put all the faculties together. Then you don't need to do so many exercises as in Hatha Yoga or in Raja Yoga, all other processes can be eliminated. Keep only these three processes: purification, development and concentration. Integral purification, integral development and integral concentration are the secret of Integral Yoga. Sri Aurobindo uses the word: "all receiving concentration". In every process of concentration whether you are studying or playing or simply watching, receive the Divine all the time. The Divine is always pouring on you, that fact you must remember all the time. The rains of heaven are already on us. Only we are closed, we have opened umbrellas, so we don't receive the pouring of the rains of the Divine. If you remove your umbrella and become absolutely open, it will become an all receiving concentration. The Divine will come to you from all the sides. The Divine will come to you through your will, your emotions, your intellectual discrimination, your body, your mind, through everything. Whatever you do, offer it to the Divine, remember the Divine, be with the Divine. This is the simple and the very complex process of an all receiving concentration. This is Sri Aurobindo's discovery after years. For us it is now easy because we have the advantage of Sri Aurobindo's great labor to find out what is the essence of every yoga and what can be eliminated so that in one life we can achieve the highest results. He found out that an all receiving concentration is the one formula.

And then you get the integral Divine. The aim will be to realize the integral Divine. In the case of Karma Yoga you know only the Will of God, in Jnana Yoga you know only the being of God, Bhakti Yoga you know only the love of God but if you want to know all the three together ? the being of God, the will of God, the love of God ? then Integral Yoga is necessary. When you do Integral Yoga you know all the three together. If you don't know all the three together it is only because your process may be half way in one case, half way in another case and half way in the third case, in different proportions. You may be a great Karma yogi but very little a Jnana yogi then you will know the will of God but not the stuff of God, or know it only partly. But if you do Karma Yoga, Bhakti Yoga and Jnana Yoga together ? as Sri Aurobindo says, if you ride a chariot of three sets of wheels at the same time, simultaneously then you can see the speed with which the chariot will run and achieve the goal.

All that I have spoken to you is written in the Chapter 4 and 5 of the Introduction of *The Synthesis of Yoga*. I am reading to you a paragraph from page 37:

"The synthesis we propose cannot, then, be arrived at either by combination in mass or by successive practice." You cannot do each yoga one by one. First you do Hatha Yoga, then you do Raja Yoga, then you do Jnana Yoga, etc. If you do them like that in succession it will be such a long process that it can never be finished. So Sri Aurobindo say that it cannot be done by successive

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practice nor by combination in mass. Simultaneously you do *pranayama*, *asanas*, *pratyahara*, *dharana* it won't also be possible. Synthesis cannot be achieved either "by combination in mass or by successive practice. It must therefore be effected by neglecting the forms and outsides of the Yogic disciplines" You neglect all the details of each yoga. "...and seizing rather on some central principle common to all ..." I told you the common principles are purification, development and concentration. Sri Aurobindo says if you seize "on some central principle common to all which will include and utilise in the right place and proportion their particular principles," You seize "... and on some central dynamic force which is the common secret of their divergent methods and capable therefore of organising a natural selection and combination of their varied energies and different utilities. This was the aim which we set before ourselves at first when we entered upon our comparative examination of the methods of Nature and the methods of Yoga and we now return to it with the possibility of hazarding some definite solution."

How to arrive at a synthesis, integration of yoga? If you can seize upon one common principle, one dynamic power which is common to all Then you will solve the problem.

Now we go to page number 40. This paragraph gives you that central secret when everything can be combined together. "The method we have to pursue, then, is to put our whole conscious being..." These words *whole conscious being* are very important: will, intellect, body, mind emotions, everything. "...being into relation and contact with the Divine and to call Him..." The reign of the Divine should pour upon you, so call Him "... in to transform our entire being into His." We should be drenched with the waters of the Divine. Remove all obstructions by which we close our mind and body and life. If you open completely to the Divine then you should be drench by the waters of the Divine. "...to call Him in to transform the entire being into His. Thus in a sense God Himself, the real Person in us, becomes the sadhaka of the sadhana..." If He enters into us much of our labour is gone because He will do the sadhana Himself. That is a great secret discovered, to allow the Supreme Himself to enter into us and do the sadhana. So that "in a sense God Himself, the real person in us, becomes the sadhaka of the sadhana as well as the Master of the Yoga by whom the lower personality is used as the centre of a divine transfiguration and the instrument of its own perfection." This is polished way of saying that you become drenched by the Divine. You become a *centre of a divine transfiguration*. Our lower personality, our head and body, all are drenched by the Divine waters, it becomes *the instrument of its own perfection*. This is the answer to this question.

If you do this ? we are now coming to the end of the whole idea: what is Integral Yoga? Integral Yoga is the integration of all the aims, the instruments and the processes of the different systems of yogas, but in an integrated manner. Integrating manner is three fold: development, purification and concentration of all the faculties, of the whole being. Putting all the three into contact with the Divine, invite the waters of the Divine, be drenched then He will do everything else. If you do this on your part He will do the rest. That is the system of Integral Yoga. In one single life you can do all the processes. You can attain to the highest perfection if you follow this process.

Now there are three features of Integral Yoga. In this yoga there is no strict or rigid sequence. This is a very important statement. In Hatha Yoga first you do asanas and when you master this you do pranayama. In Raja Yoga you do first yama and niyama, then asanas, then pranayama, then like the tortoise, withdrawal from all the outside influences, then dwelling, then dwelling further, then absorption. In every yoga there is a sequence. In the Integral Yoga there is sequence but there is no rigid sequence. If you ask: "What is the first thing I should do in this yoga?" There is no straight answer. If at all you insist a few things can be told but even there you find that you can do whatever is convenient to you. There are of course broad lines of development. You cannot jump straight to the Supramental. That you can't do, supermind will come at a latest stage, but even there you can make jumps from one to the other, depending upon what your capacities are, what your state is. There is sequence but no rigid sequence. Whatever is convenient to you to start with, that you should do. If it is not easy for you to study, you will be allowed in this yoga. Don't study. What do you like to do? Whatever you can do easily, whatever is your inclination concentrate on that, purify that and develop that. Then gradually a sequence will be built up. Once you take this up there will be sequence developed but even there the sequence will not be rigid. If after sometime you say that you want to do something else that also is allowed. That is the real principle of free progress. In a rigid system of education first you must do this, then you must do this, it is a fixed syllabus. In the free progress system the syllabus is not fixed. Whatever you feel like doing you do it. After sometimes if you want to do something else do that. Integrate it with what you have done so far or don't integrate go to the third step. Allow your natural being to flow. Gradually you develop your faculties. The ultimate aim is to bring all your faculties into the picture. If this is not done ultimately you lose everything. Your aim

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should be all, everything should be developed, everything should be transfigured. This is the first characteristic of the Integral Yoga.

In this Integral Yoga there is no rigid sequence. There are people who are so active they cannot meditate at all. To them the answer is: don't meditate, go on doing your work and offer your work to the Divine. That is a meditation of a different kind. Offering your work to the Divine is another kind of meditation. Do that kind of meditation; don't sit quietly at one time half an hour, one hour. Don't do that. There are some people who are incapable doing a lot of work. Their energies are not tuned to action. They like to meditate, reflect, contemplate, withdraw, retire, be quiet, silent. For them that is the method, they start with that. For other remembering the Divine, to sing the songs of the Divine, to praise the Divine, to live all the time in love of God, will be much easier for so many people. So they start with that. There is no rigid sequence that you must start with this or this or this. You start whenever you are, whatever you are. It is to such an extent that every individual will have his own system of yoga because every individual has his own combination of mind, life and body.

Therefore everybody will have appropriate to himself his own method. Synthesis of Yoga, Integral Yoga is one in which every individual will have his own system. There are millions and millions of ways of Integral Yoga; not just one. Therefore Integral Yoga cannot become a religion. Religion is a system in which one method is prescribed, one principle is introduced and you have to follow that one principle. Integral Yoga cannot become a religion because everyone is allowed to develop his own method so there is no religion at all. That is why Mother has said that it is impossible to make Sri Aurobindo's teaching a religion. You cannot make it a religion if every individual has his own method of development. You cannot prescribe that everyone should do this. In religion all those who believe have to follow one method. In the Integral Yoga everyone has his own method, his own way of development. There are no two identical persons having the same system of yoga in Integral Yoga. For each individual the yoga develops as he moves forward. His method develops depending upon what is now prominent, what is easy, what is demanded by the force of your action and you go on growing on that side. Gradually all of them, like branches of a tree, will intertwine. Ultimately you become a beautiful lotus with all the petals growing together in a perfect manner. That is the aim. This is the first characteristic.

"There are three outstanding features of this action of the higher when it works integrally on the lower nature. In the first place it does not act according to a fixed system and succession as in the specialised methods of Yoga, but with a sort of free, scattered and yet gradually intensive and purposeful working determined by the temperament of the individual in whom it operates..." These are very important words: *free, scattered and yet gradually intensive and purposeful*. This is the method, the special feature of Integral Yoga. It is determined by the temperament of the individual, according to the temperament of the individual, whether you are active or emotive or contemplative or a muscular man trying to do muscle building all the time. It depends on your inclination. Nothing is compulsory in this yoga. Ultimately everything is included but nothing is compulsory in the process

"... the helpful materials which his nature offers..." You have to find what is helpful in your nature. If it is easy for you to contemplate then that is your method. It is easy for you to love then that is your method. It is easy for you to work then that is your method. Depending upon your temperament what are the elements in your temperament.

"... the helpful materials which his nature offers and the obstacles which it presents to purification and perfection." Purification and perfection come by development. Purification, development, concentration. These three methods are always present but where you apply them depends where your obstruction is, where your helpful material is.

"In a sense, therefore, each man in this path has his own method of Yoga." This is the most important sentence. In Integral Yoga there is a different path for every one. There is one beautiful sentence in the *Bhagavad Gita*: *"As they approach Me so do I deliver."* "If you approach the Divine with love, He returns to you with love. If you want that the Divine should increase your power of work, He pours work in you. If you contemplate on Him He gives you a lot of peace and silence. *Ye yatha mam prapadyante tan tathaiva bajamayaham.*" "As they approach Me so do I respond to them." If you think the Divine is angry with you He is angry with you; if you think the Divine is pleased with you He is pleased with you. You decide. Both are good. If you need the hand of Kali, think the Divine is angry with you and Kali will come and will break all your obstructions on the spot. If you want a soft, step by step process the Divine will do all the things that have to be done very softly, very tenderly, very affectionately. It depends on you, as you approach Him so He will deliver, so He will respond. And there are million ways of approaching the Divine. That is why it is said: Integral Yoga has a million ways, there is no one-way.

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"Yet are there certain broad lines of working common to all which enable us to construct not indeed a routine system, but yet some kind of Shastra or scientific method of the synthetic Yoga." Although outwardly it may look scattered but behind it there is a method ? not a rigid method but a sequence. There are three basic steps of this yoga. You may start anywhere but you have to pass three basic steps. Sri Aurobindo has spoken of them as the *Triple Transformation*. Psychic, spiritual and supramental. Even there the process overlaps. It is not a rigid process. Even while you are in the psychic stage of development Supramental stage also can intervene suddenly. Or spiritual stage can intervene. You may go first to spiritual and psychic may develop later. We shall see all this later on but still in a general way the basic thing is you develop the psychic then spiritual then Supramental. That kind of succession is not entirely impossible. In fact, it is very much in the picture. This is the *shastra* of Integral Yoga which is already written in your heart. It is the *shastra* of psychic transformation, spiritual transformation and Supramental transformation. Such is the scientific method of Integral Yoga.

V.

The supreme Shastra of the integral Yoga is the eternal Veda secret in the heart of every thinking and living being." We had just stopped here and we were discussing the word *Integral Yoga*. And we went on a good voyage describing what is yoga, describing different yogas such as Hatha Yoga, Raja Yoga, Karma Yoga, Jnana Yoga and Bhakti Yoga. We asked then the question how *Integral Yoga* is arrived at by a synthesis. We came to the conclusion that the synthesis of yoga is arrived at by synthesizing the objects of all the different yogas by synthesizing the instruments of all the yogas and by synthesizing the processes of all the yogas. We described a little how we synthesise the objects, instruments and processes, but the whole book is here before us and in due course we shall do all that in detail. Now we have some idea to start with of what is Integral Yoga. But the statement itself is a very startling statement. You will see the wonder of the statement when he says: "You don't need to read the book." Such is the first answer to that statement. If this statement is understood properly, it means you don't need to read the book. Because he says: *"The supreme Shastra of the integral Yoga is the eternal Veda secret in the heart of every thinking and living being."* It is already in your heart, in my heart, in everybody heart, secretly present.

You know there is a very interesting statement of Sri Aurobindo where he says: *the first principle of teaching is that nothing can be taught*. You must have heard this statement quite often. The reason is that everything that is to be learnt is already in you. There is a knowledge which is called *Veda* — *Veda* is nothing but a book of knowledge — and Sri Aurobindo says it is the *eternal Veda*. It was not written yesterday, it has not been written today, it will not be written tomorrow. It is eternal. What is the reason for making this statement? At the outset it may seem very, very difficult to accept. There must be a story behind it as to how can we say the supreme *Shastra* of *Integral Yoga* which you may take years and hundreds of years to understand ourselves is however already written in the heart of everyone. So there must be a story when it was written. Then only can we say that it is already secret in the heart of everyone. The story is that first of all each one of us is eternal. Although our body is born now or then, but each one of us is eternal. That means we have some kind of immortality. Just as the Supreme Lord is eternal, so are we. Because each one of us is nothing but the image of the Lord himself. It is if you draw a picture of the Supreme, suppose you make a figure of the Supreme, and put his head here and then you put another head here, this one will be almost identical with the Supreme image. Each one of us always exists. The Mother had put it in very nice words: "We are objective forms of the Lord." If you take a mirror and look into it, it is yourself, but you find that your object in the mirror looks at you; although you are looking at the mirror, the result of objectivation is that the mirror looks at you. And because it looks at you there is a dialogue between you and the image as if that image is different from you — seemingly. The story of the world is simply the story of the Lord objectivised, resulting in a dialogue. Since you are yourself an image of the Lord all that is in the Lord is in you; If the Lord is omniscient so too are you. Therefore all that is known, all that constitutes knowledge is already secret in us. You have forgotten perhaps — indeed we have — but it is secret. It is present. Since it is present you simply have to recover it. So all learning is recovering.

There is a beautiful story of Plato. Plato wrote many dialogues. Western philosophy is supposed to be footnotes to Plato. If you know Plato, in a general way you know all that is in Western philosophy. Just as in the case of India the whole of Indian philosophy is footnotes to the Veda. If you know the Veda Indian philosophy is known to you. Everything that is in India is easy to understand.

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That is why I started with the Veda with you at one stage. Although much of it may be forgotten it does not matter. There is a definition of learning. Learning is what remains after you have forgotten all that you have learnt. I have spoken to you about the Veda at length, so if you forget it and then what remains that is what you learnt. At the least, if somebody uses the word Veda you will not stand as a stranger. You have some acquaintance; you have heard there is something like the Veda in the world that is what remain behind and much more which you might not be able to recollect. Similarly, one day I want to deal with Plato.

Plato maintained that all knowledge is remembrance. Whenever you learn something it is only an act of recovering. Remembering: "Oh! Now I remember, yes." It is a recognition. All knowledge is remembrance. And to prove his theory he has written a short dialogue in which the main character is Socrates. Socrates was discussing with a great philosopher, in this dialogue, and he was discussing that all knowledge is remembrance. And the other philosopher argued bitterly against it. Socrates said: "Let us make an experiment." He said: "Here is a slave of yours." In Greece at that time there were slaves, there was some people who were bought and they were lifelong slaves. Usually these people used to be very ignorant, obscure, uneducated, but laborious workers. They cannot refuse to do anything that you ask them to do. So Socrates said: "You call your slave — his name was Mino — and surely he does not know the theorem of Pythagoras" Pythagoras as you know was a great geometrician, a great mathematician and there is a very famous theorem of Pythagoras. "Surely your slave does not know Pythagoras, does not know his theorem. He has even not heard the word geometry. He is ignorant." "Yes sure". So Socrates said: "I will demonstrate to you that he knows the theorem of Pythagoras. Not only knows but he will prove to you the theorem of Pythagoras." It was a surprising statement. The slave was called and Socrates began to ask questions little by little by little, like a good teacher. And then he elicited the answers from the slave — it depends how you ask the questions. You start with an assumption that he knows already and you put questions in such a way that he remembers. He has forgotten and he is only helped to remember. Ultimately he was able to prove the theorem of Pythagoras. Socrates demonstrated that the slave knew, he only now remembered it. It is a very famous dialogue of Plato, called *Meno*, which he demonstrated that all knowledge is remembrance because all knowledge is secret already in you.

Sri Aurobindo says Integral Yoga is known to every one of us. We know already. Therefore Sri Aurobindo says: *"The lotus of the eternal knowledge and the eternal perfection is a bud closed and folded up within us."* Just as in a bud the whole of the flower is included. It is a fact. The entire flower when it blooms out was already present in the bud. Similarly this knowledge is also a bud in the heart of everyone. That bud: *"It opens swiftly or gradually..."* Both ways are possible: it can open swiftly at one stroke or it can open slowly, *petal by petal*. This is our normal procedure; this is what we are doing now. All of us are in the process of opening this bud little by little, petal by petal, *"through successive realisations..."* The word realisation means that you realise what you already have, what is real in you, you realise. All achievement is realisation, is remembrance *through successive realisations*. *"...once his heart, no longer compressed and confined by attachment to finite appearances, becomes enamoured, in whatever degree, of the Infinite."* This is the only condition, we just have to turn — turning is the secret. As long as you don't turn it will remain closed but the moment you turn towards it in the mind and in the heart, then it will open either swiftly or gradually. *"All life, all thought, all energising of the faculties, all experiences passive or active, become thenceforward so many shocks which disintegrate the teguments of the soul and remove the obstacles to the inevitable efflorescence."* Once your mind turns to the Infinite then all your experiences, whatever happens to you, is only a shock by which you are reminded. What you have forgotten is remembered. And as a result all the teguments, all the obstacles, all the ties which are preventing you to remember are cut asunder. And then you remember, you recover.

Then comes one of the greatest of all historical statements of the world: one short sentence: *"He who chooses the Infinite has been chosen by the Infinite."* So even there you have an assurance that it is He, the Infinite Himself, who will choose and the sign of his choosing you is that you will choose Him. The moment you say: "Now I want to know the Divine," it means the Divine has chosen you to know Him. The starting point is not you the starting point is He. He is the Lover and the moment he beacons you, you turn to Him. So *"He who chooses the Infinite has been chosen by the Infinite."* Therefore it is always better on your part to choose because it will be the sign that you have been chosen. *"He has received the divine touch without which there is no awakening,"* It is like Socrates who calls Meno and says, "Come" and then Meno is asked questions. Without Socrates, Meno could not have recovered his knowledge of Pythagoras. Once the Divine chooses, all kind of questions will come up to you in your life and as you begin to answer these questions the Divine will be revealed,

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you will remember the Divine and you will achieve the perfection. But once it is received, attainment is sure.

You remember we started *The Synthesis of Yoga* because of one question which was raised. When we did the first Chapter of *The Life Divine* we came to the conclusion that we are now rationally convinced that aspiration for God, Light, Freedom, Bliss and Immortality is rationally justified. Granted this is so. The question was: "How should we realise it?" "How shall we attain to God, Light, Freedom, Bliss and Immortality?" This is the answer to that question basically. Although afterwards the answer is long but this is the basic answer, namely: the very fact that you ask the question in the class means you have chosen already and you chose it because He has chosen it. That is the sign otherwise you would not have raised this question at all. The very fact that you ask this question means the Divine has chosen that now you should know. You have reach the very important stage of being chosen. "...but once it is received attainment is sure." This is the great assurance given to us. You have started, be sure it will be done. There is no stopping now. "...whether conquered swiftly in the course of one human life or pursued patiently through many stadia of the cycle of existence in the manifested universe." If you so choose or if he so chooses you can attain within this life itself. Again when you decide that it has to be done in one life, remember: He has chosen that it should be in one life. But it may take a longer time it doesn't matter — attainment is sure.

Now comes the next paragraph, the very first sentence of which is an elucidation of the first line of the paragraph that we just read. This first line of the third paragraph is a repetition of the first line of the second paragraph but in other words. *'Nothing can be taught to the mind which is not already concealed as potential knowledge in the unfolding soul of the creature.'* If that knowledge was not concealed in your soul then nothing could be taught. If it can be taught it means: if you can learn, if you understand, it is because it was already in your soul, folded and it has now become unfolded. This is because we are nothing but an objective form of Him. All that He is so we are, only in the objective form, only in the mirror. But he is the original. We are a copy. We are only a reflection. Nothing can be taught to the mind which is not already concealed as potential knowledge in the unfolding soul of the creature. *'So also all perfection of which the outer man is capable, is only a realising of the eternal perfection of the Spirit within him. We know the Divine and become the Divine, because we are That already in our secret nature. All teaching is a revealing, all becoming is an unfolding. Self-attainment is the secret; self-knowledge and an increasing consciousness are the means and the process.'*

"...Self-attainment is the secret; self-knowledge and an increasing consciousness are the means and the process." The more you go inward, the more you know yourself the more is the self-attainment. Usually we try to know by going outward. Here Sri Aurobindo says, go inward and the more you know yourself, within, you will know truly and even what is outer will be also known because of your knowledge of yourself. These last two sentences are extremely important for the entire life of everybody. All teaching is a revealing, all becoming is an unfolding. When you become teachers, in your life you remember this sentence. You arrive at a point where all that you say becomes a revelation. *"All teaching is a revealing, all becoming is an unfolding. Self-attainment is the secret; self-knowledge and an increasing consciousness are the means and the process."*

These two paragraphs — the second and third paragraph — give you the whole *shastra* of the *Integral Yoga*. If there were no written books one could have said: "My dear friends what was to be told has been told, nothing more is needed to be told. Reflect on it, meditate on it and all that you want to know will be known." But because there are written books we have the facility, we go ahead, we do not stop here and we have more and more elucidation. But what is told is told, fully. Everything is there. In fact these two paragraphs are all that has to be learned in the life. You do not need anything more than this. This was the style of the *Upanishads*. The student used to sit near the teacher, the teacher used to speak a few words and then say: "Now you meditate. Realise what I have told you." This was the practice. But now such teachers are not available and they don't have that capacity of revealing so we have to write long long books. And you have to repeat and elucidate and further elucidate...

Now comes the elucidation. If you were able to sit at the feet of Sri Aurobindo directly then perhaps this elucidation will not be necessary. He would look into your eyes and knowledge is given. That was the power of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother. They could look into you and give you, without speaking even. There is a beautiful sentence in the *Upanishads*: "Here are the teachers. When the teachers are young and the pupils are old. And the teacher teaches without speaking." In complete silence, what is to be given is given. This is the right method of learning and teaching. The teachers are always young whatever their age, why? Because where there is knowledge there is freshness. Where there is freshness there is youth. Pupils are obscure and ignorant therefore they are old. There is no freshness. But even the old become young. This is the promise of the teacher: the old become

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young. Because when knowledge is poured they flower. Youth comes, they bloom. All life begins to course. You become powerful. That is what happens, when you read Sri Aurobindo particularly, you find this electric effect upon you being. So now let us read.

"The usual agency of this revealing is the Word, the thing heard." You must read these sentences of Sri Aurobindo with the same silence with which they have been uttered. When there is a complete silence and even a small sound — one little sound is the word. Sri Aurobindo does not say books and words, he only says *Word*. *"The usual agency of this revealing is the Word..."* That is a concession given to us. We are so old, we are so deaf, so unseeing, so weak, so feeble that although every thing can be told to you in a silence you cannot hear. It is not revealed because we are so old, we cannot receive the revelation. So a concession is made by the teacher. But the concession is made only by uttering one word. That gives you a vibration. *Brahman*. Many teachers in the *Upanishads* speak only one word: *Brahman*. *Brahman* means the Supreme. Or they use the word *Aum*. It is only one word: *Aum*. And that is enough. It is that which unseals the ears, ears which have become deaf. And this deafness is removed by the word *Aum*. And there is such a tremendous awakening. It is said: "Whether you believe in God or not the moment you are told: 'God exists' your life cannot be as before." Simply you are told "God exists", simply — no argument, no embellishment, no repetition. If somebody tells you: "God exists" after hearing these words your life cannot be as before. You are troubled. The moment you are told, "God exists" you have to prove that God does not exist. You cannot rest where you are. And the moment you try to prove that God does not exist you are caught more and more into God. You have to be concerned with God. You have to wrestle with God. You have to deny him, reject him and you have to make a great effort to reject him. How can you reject him? Wherever you look around there is *Brahman*. How much will you reject? What will you reject? Whatever you say: "That does not exist" still that exists. It mocks at you, it laughs at you at every moment. Everything in the world reveals God. Even if you say that he does not exist, there in itself who is saying "He does not exist"? If you say: "You are saying", who are you? You are nothing but the image of Him. If you analyse yourself when you say: "I deny God" who is this I? The moment you deny God, you have to say: "I am denying God" and the moment you say: "I am denying god" who is this I? I is He — the objective figure of Him. You cannot be without Him. In every denial He is present. So the moment you hear the words: "God exists" this is called in India *sruti*. The power of *sruti*. You hear. *Sruti* means that which is heard. It is also called *sruta*. The agency of revealing to you is the Word, even if you are not totally aware, even if you don't become awakened. The beginning of awakening starts with one word: *Aum, Brahman*.

"The Word may come to us from within..." Sometimes it happens in the complete silence of your being the word is suddenly heard. It may not happen to many but there are many people for whom the word is heard from within. It may come to us from without. This is more often ? somebody tells us. *'But in either case, it is only an agency for setting the hidden knowledge to work.'* Hidden knowledge, forgotten knowledge. You begin to remember. The moment the word comes to you, you can no more remain what you were before. The work of revelation starts immediately. Once you hear: "God exists" finished! You are caught already. Either to affirm or to deny in either case you are caught. And the dialogue starts and you will not rest until He is known.

"The word within may be the utterance of the inmost soul in us which is always open to the Divine; or it may be the word of the secret and universal Teacher who is seated in the hearts of all." Either your own soul speaks out or the Lord who is seated in us — he tells you. These are mystic experiences in which you hear and if you learn how to be very, very, very quiet you will be able to hear. At the right moment the right word will come. For that we have to learn to be very, very, very quiet. *"The teacher who is seated in the hearts of all."* The Universal Teacher is called *jagat guru* — *guru* means the teacher, *jagat* means of the world. There is a *jagat guru* who is the teacher of all. You don't require a human teacher. If a human teacher is required it is only a concession. Just as the word is a concession because without the word, through silence, the knowledge can be revealed. But the word is a concession; we are so deaf that sometimes shouting is necessary. So the word is heard. Similarly the teacher is always present in you. You don't need an outer teacher and if an outer teacher is needed it is only a concession. Because you are not able to see the Universal Teacher seated in you, therefore the outer teacher who represents him may come and teach you. It is a concession. Before in India there was a system to have no teacher but to regard the Universal Teacher as your teacher. There is an Eternal Teacher in us; there is a Universal Teacher, for all of us the same teacher. He is a master who knows everyone because everyone is nothing but himself. So he knows everyone and he knows how to deal with each one. So at the right moment he gives the right word. Sometimes there are good disciples who go to an outer teacher just as a concession. They don't need an outer teacher. But for the sake of obeying the tradition that you must go to a teacher, they go to a

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teacher. There is an interesting story of Sri Krishna. It is said that Sri Krishna knew the Universal Teacher seated within himself but because tradition said that you should go and seek a teacher he went to a teacher. His name was Ghora — *ghora* means intense. And he said: "Give me knowledge." And the teacher spoke only one line. It is written: "The teacher spoke one line and Krishna knew." All knowledge was revealed — one line!

Udwayam tamasaspari swaha pashyanta uttaram devam devatra surya maganma jyotir uttamam" (*Rig Veda*) This is the one line that was uttered by Ghora. "We went beyond the darkness and saw the higher light and then we went still farther and gained the Supreme knowledge." This is the meaning of this sentence. The moment Krishna was told it all knowledge was remembered; everything was known. This is what the *Chandogya Upanishad* tells us. It is a short story but extremely important, very interesting. How Krishna, who knew already, followed the tradition to go to a teacher, so that the teacher may teach him and the teacher simply uttered the word and he knew. There was no need for him to learn further.

Sri Aurobindo went to a teacher called Lele. A short conversation took place with the teacher and the teacher simply said: "Thoughts come to you from outside. When they assail you throw them back." That is all. And Sri Aurobindo knew. It is simply something like that which happened to Krishna. Thoughts are like higher knowledge and you go beyond them and get the highest knowledge. You go beyond darkness to higher knowledge and then you come to the highest knowledge." This is all that Lele told him. "Thoughts come to you from outside. When they come into you throw them back." And Sri Aurobindo says, He just sat down, saw the thoughts coming from outside, and as they began to enter into the brain he sent them back! And the mind became utterly silent. Thereafter he had no approach to any teacher in his life. The Supreme Teacher taught him everything. It is what Sri Aurobindo himself has described. Going to Lele was also a concession for him. And the teacher gave him only one line. That is all. There was no volume of lectures or anything; only one line and Sri Aurobindo knew. All that is written here in *The Synthesis of Yoga*, Sri Aurobindo says: "I have written in a state of silence of the mind." Nothing is written by thinking, the whole ocean of knowledge poured into him, sometimes little by little, sometimes in torrents. So this is the way in which the Word is received. One word is sufficient. If you are a good student one word is sufficient. But we are most of us bad students so we require lots and lots of lectures. Doesn't matter. As we are made so shall we do the best ourselves.

"*There are rare cases in which none other is needed...*" The Universal Teacher himself is enough, no outer teacher is needed at all. "*... for all the rest of the Yoga is an unfolding under that constant touch and guidance; the lotus of the knowledge discloses itself from within by the power of irradiating effulgence which proceeds from the Dweller in the lotus of the heart. Great indeed, but few are those to whom self-knowledge from within is thus sufficient and who do not need to pass under the dominant influence of a written book or a living teacher.*" There are a few people who are capable of this but we do not come under that category, we need a long influence, a long association with the teacher.

"*Ordinarily, the Word from without, representative of the Divine, is needed as an aid in the work of self-unfolding; and it may be either a word from the past or the more powerful word of the living Guru. In some cases this representative word is only taken as a sort of excuse for the inner power to awaken and manifest...*" Even when you go to an outer teacher sometimes it is just a little touch and all the rest is then obtained by you from within. "*...it is, as it were, a concession of the omnipotent and omniscient Divine to the generality of a law that governs Nature. Thus it is said in the Upanishads of Krishna, son of Devaki, that he received a word of the Rishi Ghora and had the knowledge. So Ramakrishna, having attained by his own internal effort the central illumination, accepted several teachers in the different paths of Yoga, but always showed in the manner and swiftness of his realisation that this acceptance was a concession to the general rule by which effective knowledge must be received as by a disciple from a Guru.*" Because the tradition says that you must be a disciple, you must go to a teacher, so you give a concession to that rule although you don't need it. Ramakrishna did not need to go to so many teachers; he got the central illumination without going to any teacher by his own effort. Because the Teacher was already working in him openly. But he gave a concession saying "Oh, you know, Alright I want to learn from you." It was as if he was doing some kind of grace to his own teacher, so the teacher might not be disappointed. It is a kind of concession given to the teacher that "You want to teach me, fine. I will be your disciple. Please teach me." But the way in which he learnt showed that it was hardly necessary. The swiftness with which he learnt showed there was no comparison between the teachings of the teacher and the learning by the pupil. The pupil learnt so swiftly and so voluminously that the trickle from the teacher became an ocean pouring. This can happen only when you don't really need a teacher, the Universal

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Teacher is awake within you and you are able to learn from him directly. These are basic truths of Yoga.

The question is: "How do we realise?" And this is the basic answer. You realise the Divine, God, Light, Freedom, Immortality by this agency. First through silence. Then as a concession given to you, a word should come to you. That word may come from outside or from within. Rare are the people who do not require more than this. But mostly, generally, we require a long association with a living teacher, we require long books, long contemplations, long periods of understanding. As we are so we accept without pretence. We did not say that we are rare individuals. Does not matter. As we are made so we are. If you need a long association we accept it. That also is joy of life.

"But usually the representative influence occupies a much larger place in the life of the sadhaka. If the Yoga is guided by a received written Shashtra, — some Word from the past which embodies the experience of former Yogins, — it may be practised either by personal effort alone or with the aid of a Guru." If it is by *Shashtra* — if you happen to receive this book, this is a *shashtra*, and once you have received this book and you read it you can practice by yourself, you don't need anything more. But sometimes you may need a living *Guru*, a living teacher. Even if the book is there, even if you read it you need the help from a living teacher. That is the usual method ? to go to a living teacher, to live with him day by day, year after year, decade after decade and you learn. But attainment is sure. Remember, once your feet have been put on the road, the end is certain, you will go to the end. Why? Because He has chosen you. Therefore you are bound to go to the end.

"The spiritual knowledge is then gained through meditation..." The word *meditation* is very important. What is meditation? Meditation is a process, which has been discovered, it is a great discovery, it is a magic as it were, a magical key like the lamp of Alladin or *open sesame*. You just utter the word *open sesame* and the door opens. So meditation is magic. You just think of the Divine and the Divine comes to you. Just think of him. But this produces the reality of God himself. This is the connection which was discovered. The Divine who you may not see, the Divine who you don't know you are told: "Just think of him ". By thinking of Him a magic will happen. He will come. If you want to know the Divine just think of Him. Meditate, means basically thinking. So the real process of all yoga is thinking. And we have known that yoga is a methodized effort. Think methodically of the Divine. So meditation is a methodical thinking of the Divine. Don't think of Him in a haphazard manner. One minute I think and then I forget afterward. This is not thinking, this is not methodized thinking. Think as a constant practice of the Divine.

VI.

Yoga is practical psychology. When you are studying yoga you have to remember that you are basically studying psychology and you are also going one step further to applied psychology. You go into the depth of the human mind, human consciousness in search of practical application. And this search is methodical. You remember we had defined yoga as *a methodized effort*. It is a methodical study and therefore it is a scientific study. You are not required to have any basic dogma. There is no dogma in Yoga. There is no preconceived idea. Just as you make a study of steam in physics: how you can produce steam, how steam works. You may see a kettle of water on a stove which is burning and you suddenly see the lid being thrown open because steam is a force and by the pressure of the force the lid is opened up. It is the natural tendency of steam: it always pushes. Having seen this you may then apply it. If you want to push anything you know that steam can be produced and can push. We all have seen railway trains and some railway trains are moving by virtue of steam engines. Have you seen a steam engine? In steam engines you have plenty of water, a lot of coal which is ignited and becomes the fuel with which water is heated to such an extent that it can push. A small illustration of a kettle with steam pushing on the lid can be applied on a large scale and can produce such a big effect that huge trains can be moved and pushed by the power of steam. This is the result of the application of this knowledge of steam — that steam can be produced and can be used to push big loads of weight in the direction that you want. You can choose what direction you want. Similarly you discover that consciousness is like steam. It is not very evident, when you think you don't feel any kind of movement or of pushing. Because normally our thinking is very limited — like a limited amount of water, producing a limited amount of steam which can push only a little thing. But if you can produce a huge amount of steam then big things can be pushed forward. Similarly Yoga has discovered that there is consciousness and consciousness can be made to move, it is a power. And with the result of this power which is generated you can move forward. You can generate this power by methodize

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effort. You make an effort but in a methodized manner and as a result you can produce a tremendous amount of power of consciousness and with that power if you want you can move mountains. All this by the power of consciousness. Like electricity. Electricity is also a force. The method by which you can produce steam is not the same method by which you can produce electricity. There are other methods. Normally we see electricity as lightning in the sky when the clouds collide and suddenly you find a streak of electricity, a light flashing out. If you study how that lightning is produced, you can create methods by which whenever you want you can produce electricity. If you study how electricity is produced suddenly in nature you can then apply it and then electricity is produced. Similarly in case of yoga you can produce electricity in consciousness. Actually electricity exists in our body. You know our nerves are all electric nerves. Normally we don't see electricity working in our body but our body is very electrical. Quite naturally there is electric force running all the time. Sometime some people become paralyzed and you ask the question: What is paralysis? It is nothing but the stoppage of the electric current in the body. It is basically the stoppage of the electric force which is normal. All our organs are moving because of electric force. And often this electric force runs automatically. When you touch an object an electric force is produced. And as a result there are reactions which are also generated by electric force. It is found that, if you know psychology, if you know what is consciousness, you can learn when consciousness can produce the electricity or a greater electricity, greater force than even electricity. What are the methods which can turn the consciousness in us which is simply like a small stream into an ocean? How do you do that? The knowledge of consciousness and the method by which this consciousness can be developed methodically that is the *shastra* of Yoga. *Shastra* means science. It is this subject with which we are dealing now.

As Sri Aurobindo says, that *shastra* is already in us. But we have forgotten it. It is potentially present in us and we can open it up. But as Sri Aurobindo says, sometimes you need a word to open up. It is also part of *shastra*. A mere word can unseal the blockage of consciousness. In fact this is happening to us all the time. Whenever you hear something, there is a vibration, our consciousness is affected. Many people, knowing the effect of words on consciousness have developed the art of advertisement. You see so many advertisement all over the world — huge letters, short sentences — and they are relayed onto our mind. And advertisers know that if publicity, advertisement is successful, thousands and millions of customers will run to the shops. It is a power. It is a very small utilisation of the knowledge of consciousness. They know that words can move the consciousness. And if that word is relayed at a particular place it is very important. Put in a place where they can reach a larger number of people and also the way in which the words are used they can be made to move millions of people. These are ordinary uses of the knowledge of consciousness.

Yoga is a much greater, much vaster understanding of word and the effect it can produce in the psychology of human beings. I would like you to read two or three sentences on page number 3. "*Yogic methods have something of the same relation to the customary psychological workings of man as has the scientific handling of the natural force of electricity or of steam to their normal operations in Nature.*" There are normal operations of steam and electricity but when you scientifically deal with them the uses of steam and electricity have a tremendous impact. Similarly there are psychological workings in man and these working, if you study them — these workings which seem to be very small, almost ineffective, but if you know how to handle them scientifically tremendous consequences can be produced. Take for example a simple handling of psychological working. It happens sometimes when suddenly your mind stops thinking. Sometimes suddenly the mind stops thinking. You find for example when you are falling asleep the mind begins to stop thinking. The result however is that when the mind stops thinking your body relaxes and when you get up next morning you are refreshed. This is the minimum little thing that we see. If the mind stops thinking what happens? Secondly when mind stops thinking very often you begin to have dreams. This is also a psychological effect. We normally do not give much importance to all this. But if you make a scientific study and see what happens if you can stop thinking without going to sleep. It is a scientific study: don't go to sleep and yet stop thinking and if you can do that it is a scientific handling. You find that things which are not known can be known. You gain a great experience. Now, what are the conditions in which the mind can stop thinking? That also has to be learnt. Of course when you are very tired then your mind stops thinking for a short while. When you are extremely happy your thinking stops. When you deeply admire somebody, thinking stops. You notice a beautiful scene, the thinking stops. A great explosion takes place; you are stunned, thinking stops. These are the normal ways by which thinking stops. But this stoppage of thinking is only for a short while. If you make a scientific study, you can ask the question: Is it possible to stop thinking for a long time?

Yogis are like scientists, practical psychologists. They made a great study and they said that we have in our consciousness many elements — elements of thought, elements of will, elements of

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emotions, traits of your personality, your normal psychological likings and dislikings, your attractions, yours repulsions. There are so many elements in our psychology. You make a scientific study of them and see how you can recombine them. In our own psychology there is one kind of combination. Your thinking, your emotion, your willing. These three are the basic operations of the mind and many subordinate operations. In every individual you find a different combination. Every human being has a special way of combining his thinking, willing and feeling. If your thought becomes very powerful, feeling becomes diminishes. Therefore, very often the thinkers don't have heart. They have a big mind but they have not very much heart. Those who have a big heart very often they don't have mind, the power of thinking is very limited. Those who think a lot very often you find that in practical life they are great failures. This is true of many many good thinkers. When they come to apply something in life they are totally incapable. They can give long lectures but when they come to life, application of knowledge, they are very poor. These are different combinations and there are millions of combinations, not one or two. Every human being has a certain kind of combination.

Yoga therefore asks you to study your particular combination. It says first you study your own combination. How much is your thought power, how much is your will power, and how much is your feeling power. Having known this you begin to apply true knowledge, how to combine, how to recombine. You become like a medical doctor, you become an alchemist, a chemist. This is what has been done in Raja Yoga. And Raja Yoga tells you that if you want to stop your mind it is not first of all an easy thing. First proposition: do not think; stopping of your thinking — remaining conscious is an easy thing. While falling asleep of course you can stop your thinking. But this has not much result excepting refreshing your body, it does not have many more effects. They found out that if you can remain conscious and yet you can stop your thinking it has tremendous effects. It is like steam pushing on the lid of your kettle and a steam which can push a huge train. If you know how to stop thinking without falling asleep then your power of consciousness will be so great that any knowledge that you want to possess can be possessed. This is the great connection with mind stopping and attaining the knowledge, because knowledge already exists — this was the discovery of the yogis. Knowledge already exists but if knowledge is not already working in you now it is because of a blockage and this blockage is caused by a constant movement of your thought. It is vibrating so it does not allow the knowledge to come to the surface. So they pointed out that if you want to stop thinking without falling asleep then you can recombine your consciousness in various ways. It takes a long time but you can do it. It is not a dogma that you must believe, no. You can practically do it. You can arrive at a real concentration of consciousness, at a real stoppage of thought and you can increase the time during which you can remain quiet.

Sri Aurobindo says: *"Rajayoga, for instance, depends on this perception and experience that our inner elements, combinations, functions, forces, can be separated or dissolved, can be new-combined and set to novel and formerly impossible workings or can be transformed and resolved into a new general synthesis by fixed internal processes."* (Page: 3 of *The Synthesis of Yoga*) You do some internal processes by which you can recombine; you can even change your entire mentality. You become a new person. Similarly in Hatha Yoga: *"Hatha Yoga similarly depends on this perception and experience that the vital forces and functions to which our life is normally subjected and whose ordinary operations seem set and indispensable, can be mastered and the operations changed or suspended with results that would otherwise be impossible and that seem miraculous to those who have not seized the rationale of their process."* The Hatha yogis have proved that you can live without breathing for hours and hours and hours, that you can survive even when the heart beat stops.

Just as in Raja Yoga the mind stops thinking; in Hatha Yoga even the heart can be stopped and yet one can survive, one can live. These results may seem miraculous but the methods are actually very simple in a certain sense. You should know how to sit; you should know how to breathe — both very simple processes. They discovered that breathing and sitting have a tremendous effect. If you know how to sit properly and breathe you can increase your capacity of breathing and while sitting you can inhale and you can stop your breath. First for a little while and then for a longer time and for a longer time. And what are the results? The breath which has been inhaled can go on circulating in the whole body, and to certain portions of the body which do not receive oxygen in our normal breathing, which is very fast, oxygen can reach and regenerate them. Your body becomes very fresh because the oxygen which was not going to those places in the body begins to receive it. So bodily power begins to develop in a way which is normally unimaginable.

Such are all yogic systems you take for example Jnana Yoga: when the intellect ceases to doubt, a new force of consciousness begins to operate. We do not know how much we actually doubt in our life and how much that doubting prevents the full growth of consciousness. Very often you are told not to doubt as a dogma: "Take it for granted, don't doubt!" That does not have that much effect.

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You must really arrive at a destruction of the doubt by a conscious effort. The yogis found out, that if philosophy is pursued, if you study philosophy, with the purpose of destroying doubts, then through that method, when the doubt is finished, the intellect begins to perceive reality. Not only reality of life as we see it but what is called cosmic consciousness can arise suddenly in you. Transcendent consciousness can arise also. Simply by destruction of doubt. These are the discoveries of the yogis: Doubt disturbs you so much that your consciousness is limited to a small circle in which it is revolving round and round. And all your energies are wasted. Jnana Yoga says, take the doubt itself into your purpose. On what you are doubting concentrate. Study philosophy by means of which the doubt can be resolved. Not by dogma, not by belief, not by creed. You really destroy the doubt by philosophical method, by questioning everything, by doubting fully, exhaust your doubt completely. And when the doubt is exhausted you can see the power of consciousness that rushes out.

Similarly in Karma Yoga. Our activities are so small. Our actions are normally minor actions. We are not capable of what can be called mighty actions. Why? Because there is an obstruction. Obstruction on account of desire. Just as doubt is the blockage in the field of intellectual knowledge similarly desire is a big obstruction in the field of action. Because we go on desiring and desiring, our actions become so small and therefore we are incapable of mighty actions. Supposing you want to change the course of history. Not only arranging your household which is a small action but you want to rearrange the whole world, then Karma Yoga tells you that if you give up desires then you will gain such a power by which you can reorganize the world. Sri Aurobindo when he started yoga — it is short story of Sri Aurobindo's life ? his younger brother, Barin Ghose was suffering from fever. One yogi came to the house of Sri Aurobindo and he saw his younger brother suffering from fever and he simply asked for a glass of water and then he crossed the water symbolically, he recited a mantra and said to Barin "Drink this". Barin drank the water and was cured. This may look like a miracle. Now what is it that produced these results? Sri Aurobindo seeing this, felt that there was something tremendous in yoga and it was not a belief. Here was an operation done by a yogi and it produced a result. So he came to the conclusion: by yogic method you can gain power. You can gain and produce results. At that time Sri Aurobindo wanted freedom of India. He said, why not to generate the power by which India can become free? He decided to practice that yoga by which India could be free. It was the starting point of Sri Aurobindo's yoga, to create a power by which all India could be reorganized. To create a mighty will, a mighty power. For example we say that Auroville should be changed. We are complaining, we are grudging, we are under a great stress. But if you apply yoga, as we can now because we are all students of yoga, if you apply a great force, not only can Auroville be reorganized but we can reorganize the whole world on the pattern of Auroville. This is the power available to us. If we can really do this, and we ought to do it, in fact we are there for that, not only for ourselves but also for the whole world. The world is sick. The world is filled with maladies. And if the world is to be changed Auroville should be changed. And if Auroville changes — we are like yogic practitioners here. If you do yoga rightly you can produce such a mighty results that we will also be surprised to see what results it can produce. Karma Yoga for that is necessary and Karma Yoga means you dissolve your desires. If your desires are dissolved then a mighty Will can be produced. There is a mighty will in us, it is potential in us. But that will can be produced if this desire, which is a small little thing constantly whirling around and preventing us from willing, is dissolved. A time must come when you will and it is realised. Not desire, if you desire you sometime achieve a little result after tremendous efforts. But if you dissolve desire — it is a psychological element in us — and Will... There is a very beautiful sentence of The Mother: "Awake and will." Not desire. Desire is that you want to enjoy the fruits of action. That is desire. You want to enjoy the fruits of action or you want to experience "I did, I am the doer" like the dog under the cart. This is our normal way of desiring and acting. But if these two things are eliminated, the desire for enjoyment of the fruits of action, and secondly the idea that you are the doer, that you did it — you want to prove to the world: "Look I can do it!" Don't desire this, just will. If you do this you will see the consequences, action will be released, a tremendous force will be released. This is the *shastra*.

This *shastra*, Sri Aurobindo says, is present in every one of us. If you really have a great aspiration to know it, you can know it by yourself, you don't need anybody. By internal processes of observation and experimentation you can discover it. And therefore many people who are really powerful don't need the help. They discover by themselves or one word is enough. There is the story of Kabir. Kabir was a great poet and a great yogi. He lived in Benares. It is said that as a young boy he has no house, he had to sleep on the steps of a *ghat* near the temple, near the river Ganga. One day a yogi, in the early morning before the sunrise, pitch darkness, simply went down the steps of that *ghat*, and unknowingly put his foot on the body of Kabir who was sleeping. And he simply said the name of God and as he uttered this word Kabir awoke but awoke with a new consciousness. One

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word was enough, the name of God was enough and he himself became a yogi. He did not go to any teacher afterwards. In one second by one word he was awakened. The very fact that even after hundreds of years we are now remembering him at this moment and his poems are read and re-read and recited by millions of people of India shows that he attained such a tremendously high consciousness and affected the people. He brought Muslims and Hindus together in harmony. This is one of the great works he did in his life. So this yoga is already present in us, the *shastra* is present in us. And sometimes it can be unsealed even with one word.

There are many ways by which this knowledge can come. There is a very interesting paragraph in Chapter II (p.63). Sri Aurobindo tells us how you can enter into yoga, what are the different ways to enter into yoga. *"All Yoga is in its nature a new birth [It is a tremendously powerful statement]; it is a birth out of the ordinary, the mentalised material life of man into a higher spiritual consciousness and a greater and diviner being. No Yoga can be successfully undertaken and followed unless there is a strong awakening to the necessity of that larger spiritual existence. The soul that is called to this deep and vast inward change, may arrive in different ways to the initial departure."* The starting point may come from different sides. You are entering into yoga with one method now and there are different people who can enter with different ways and now Sri Aurobindo gives the different ways by which you can enter. *"It may come to it by its own natural development which has been leading it unconsciously towards the awakening;"* by gradual, natural development. Many people don't have a sudden awakening like Kabir had. It may come by a natural rhythm of a long period of life, thirty, forty years one leads an ordinary life, but gradually it grows and then comes the period of awakening. *"...it may reach it through the influence of a religion or the attraction of a philosophy; it may approach it by a slow illumination or leap to it by a sudden touch or shock; it may be pushed or led to it by the pressure of outward circumstances or by an inward necessity, by a single word that breaks the seals of the mind or by long reflection, by the distant example of one who has trod the path or by contact and daily influence. According to the nature and the circumstances the call will come."* This is how one enters into yoga — by many methods. This is by way of introducing what we are reading up till now in the first Chapter. We have read: *"Ordinarily, the Word from without"* is necessary; a word should be revealed to you by somebody. It is the normal method.

"But usually the representative influence occupies a much larger place in the life of the sadhaka. If the Yoga is guided by a received written Shastra, — some Word from the past which embodies the experience of former Yogins, — it may be practised either by personal effort alone or with the aid of a Guru. The spiritual knowledge is then gained through meditation on the truths that are taught and it is made living and conscious by their realisation in the personal experience..."

Reading the word *meditation* we had made an excursion and we were just about to understand what is meditation when we suspended the class. So now let us go back to that part of this book where meditation is explained.

What is meditation? (p.307) *"Concentration is of two kinds: meditation and contemplation"*. These are two words. There is a process called meditation and a process called contemplation. Some concentrations are meditative and some concentrations are contemplative. Even in ordinary life we do meditation and contemplation. But as we do not examine the powers of meditation or of contemplation we don't derive much result. But if like psychologists we know what is the secret of meditation and of contemplation we can derive a tremendous result. Sri Aurobindo analyses what is the secret of meditation.

"This concentration proceeds by the idea". This is a very important word: *idea*. Without idea you cannot have meditation. Meditation is ideative in character. You should have an idea. An idea using thought, form, name. Three things: thought, form and name. We ask what is in a name? But name sometimes is very important for opening the gates. As I told you last time there is something like a magic in the process of yoga. Outwardly it looks very simple but if you go into the depth of it, a miraculous result will come. So thought, form and name — very ordinary things. We have plenty of thoughts in our mind, it is not as if we have to go far to seek. There are many forms in us, there are so many names hovering around in our consciousness but the secret lies in catching one thought out of so many, one name, one form. That is where the scientist comes into the picture. Whatever is running about in our consciousness, pick up one thing, which thing? That only the psychologist will tell you, that is, the yogi will tell you. So *"it proceeds by the idea using thought, form and name as keys which yield up to the concentrating mind the truth that lies concealed behind all thought, form and name"*. There is a discovery of the Truth. We have said yoga is the discovery of the Divine Being or Divine Love or Divine Will or all the three. The central knowledge is the knowledge of the Divine Being, the Divine Truth. So if you want to know the truth, the key to the truth is in seizing upon a thought, form and name and piercing through it so that truth is seized. *"It is through the idea that the mental being*

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risers beyond all expression to that which is expressed, to that of which the idea itself is only the instrument." It is a key by which the lock can be opened. *"By concentration upon the idea"* this is an important point — you take an idea and *"by concentration upon the idea the mental existence, which at present we are, breaks open the barrier"*. If you just concentrate upon the idea then the barrier between you and the truth breaks down. And you arrive at a state of *"consciousness, a state of being, a state of power and bliss of the conscious-being to which the idea corresponds and of which it is a symbol, movement and rhythm."* You select that idea, out of so many ideas you may have, of which you want to know the truth.

Take for example, you want to know what is equality. A word which we use very often. You want equality. Then you take that idea, concentrate only upon the idea of equality, all other ideas are abolished. Just concentrate upon equality for hours and hours and hours... You will arrive at the state of equality. When you awake from this meditation your mind will be equal to all things in the world. You arrive at that stage simply by concentrating upon the idea of equality. Or take the idea of brotherhood. How to feel that all human beings on the earth are brothers and sisters? How to feel, automatically, spontaneously, not artificially, not for greeting purposes, but for the real purpose, for real experience? How to do that? You take that idea of brotherhood, concentrate upon it until all other ideas are abolished from the mind and you will rise up in a state of a real brotherhood. You will not have to make any effort. Like Vivekananda when he spoke in the Parliament of Religions in 1893, when he said: "Brothers and sisters of America..." he spoke from *that* consciousness. He really felt that all humanity is one brotherhood. He was in the state of brotherhood that is why there was a tremendous response. It is the power of your idea. Because he was in the state of brotherhood. This is the idea, when you pick up any idea the truth of which you want to know, you just keep yourself concentrated on that idea. If you want to know God for example just keep the idea of God in front of you. Reach a point where no other idea is present. And you will rise in the state of God-consciousness. You don't need to believe in God, it is not a dogma that you must believe in God. No, don't believe; just make a psychological experiment even without any belief.

That is why Yoga is a science it is not religion. In religion you need a dogma, you need a belief; while in yoga you don't need a belief. You may not believe in God but the yogi tells you, if you just concentrate upon the idea of God in such a way that all other ideas disappear except this idea, you arrive at a concentration on it and the state of God consciousness will reveal itself. Now, if you don't believe in this magic, do it, try, experiment! It is like any other experiment, if you are told water can be produced by hydrogen and oxygen put together you may not believe in it. But bring oxygen, bring hydrogen, put them together, see for yourself what happens. You don't need to believe in it.

Sri Aurobindo says: *"By concentration upon the Idea the mental existence which at present we are breaks open the barrier of our mentality and arrives at the state of consciousness, the state of being, the state of power of conscious-being and bliss of conscious-being to which the Idea corresponds and of which it is the symbol, movement and rhythm. Concentration by the Idea is, then, only a means, a key to open to us the superconscious planes of our existence;"* Now Sri Aurobindo gives a little idea of how to concentrate, how to allow this concentration to mature: *"a certain self-gathered state of our whole existence lifted into that superconscious truth, unity and infinity of self-aware, self-blissful existence is the aim and culmination; and that is the meaning we shall give to the term Samadhi."* When you can attain to that state where the idea vanishes and the actual state corresponding to the idea is experienced. That is why meditation is not a thought it leads to an experience. You know because you experience.

Now on page 308 Sri Aurobindo describes in some details the process of meditation. *"To arrive then at this settled divine status must be the object of our concentration. The first step in concentration must be always to accustom the discursive mind to a settled unwavering pursuit of a single course of connected thought on a single subject and this it must do undistracted by all lures and alien calls on its attention."* That is why people who want to meditate go into a silent room so that all the calls which come by sounds of various kinds are avoided to the extent possible. *"Such concentration is common enough in our ordinary life, but it becomes more difficult when we have to do it inwardly without any outward object or action on which to keep the mind; yet this inward concentration is what the seeker of knowledge must effect. Nor must it be merely the consecutive thought of the intellectual thinker, whose only object is to conceive and intellectually link together his conceptions. It is not, except perhaps at first, a process of reasoning that is wanted so much as a dwelling..."* There is a difference between a process of reasoning and that of dwelling. The mind must not only go on fabricating ideas, it must dwell. *"...dwelling so far as possible on the fruitful essence of the idea which by the insistence of the soul's will upon it must yield up all the facets of its truth."* Now Sri Aurobindo gives an example of one meditation: *"Thus if it be the divine Love that is the subject of*

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concentration, it is on the essence of the idea of God as Love that the mind should concentrate in such a way that the various manifestation of the divine Love should arise luminously, not only to the thought, but in the heart and being and vision of the sadhaka. The thought may come first and the experience afterwards, but equally the experience may come first and the knowledge arise out of the experience. Afterwards the thing attained has to be dwelt on and more and more held till it becomes a constant experience and finally the dharma or law of the being." If you attain this meditation process to the end then whenever you speak, you feel it will be only Divine Love that will manifest. It becomes your own, part of your being. It won't be a distant love that is far off somewhere. It will be in the heart and mind of your being in the very bodily vibrations. It is the Divine Love that will vibrate. This is the meditation. Sri Aurobindo says that if it is a *shastra* in a written book — then you meditate upon it. Every line of the *shastra* you meditate upon and by constant meditation the truth of the *shastra* will begin to illumine your mind and heart. *"The spiritual knowledge is then gained through meditation on the truths that are taught and it is made living and conscious by their realisation in the personal experience; the Yoga proceeds by the results of prescribed methods taught in a Scripture or a tradition and reinforced and illumined by the instructions of the Master. This is a narrower practice..."* Narrower because you take the help of a book, the wider way is not to take any book at all, but we, being narrow ourselves we take a narrower method as an aid. *"This is a narrower practice, but safe and effective within its limits, because it follows a well-beaten track to a long familiar goal."* (page 49) Therefore this is one of the easier methods by which the *shastra* of Integral Yoga is known and practiced. If you read this book and follow the practice prescribed here then it will be a safe method because all that is written here has been realised. And if you follow the method like a geographical map — there is a difference between making a map and following a map. If you go to a terrain which you do not know you take a map. And then you must work out wherever you want to go

VII.

Meditation and contemplation. What is the difference between meditation and contemplation? This is best understood when we have attempted both ourselves. But still by reading we may better ask ourselves whether we have ever done what is described here.

Yesterday we read what Sri Aurobindo says about meditation. I told you the next paragraph tells us about contemplation. But let us revise first what we have done yesterday and then we should contrast that with contemplation.

"The first step in concentration must be always to accustom the discursive mind to a settled unwavering pursuit of a single course of connected thought on a single subject and this it must do undistracted by all lures and alien calls on its attention. Such concentration is common enough in our ordinary life..." (p. 308) Very often when we see a film such concentration is available. When you see a good film you don't like any body to disturb, you don't want any other call, you want to be settled on the subject that is important for you. So, it is common enough, *"but it becomes more difficult when we have to do it inwardly without any outward object or action on which to keep the mind; yet this inward concentration is what the seeker of knowledge must effect."*

There is a footnote that Sri Aurobindo has written: *"In the elementary stages of internal debate and judgment, vitarka and vicara, for the correction of false ideas and arrival at the intellectual truth."* This kind of concentration in which ? for example what we are doing now although our eyes are opened and we are talking inward-outward it can be used as the first stage of meditation. Because we are concentrated now upon one fixed subject and that subject is a subject connected with your internal being. It is not a subject regarding what happens here or what happens there, it is concerning the inner understanding. Your object is an internal thought. Meditation is an internal process and we are now discussing that internal process. So, we might say that what we are doing now is already a kind of meditation, the first stage of meditation. In that, some debate also is possible. If there is a judgement that is going on in the mind it is possible as a starting point although ultimately debate must stop and even judgement must stop. But in the beginning even this process is also permissible. But this inward concentration must be effected. It is the first point. Every person who really wants to meditate should arrive at this point: inward concentration, a concentration upon something that is inner. Something that is inward in our being should be the object on which our idea should be fixed.

Then the second condition that is described is *"Nor must it be merely the consecutive thought of the intellectual thinker..."* As I said in the first place, debate is allowed, judgement is allowed. But

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now it must not merely that process. We must go beyond it. It must not *"be merely the consecutive thought of the intellectual thinker, whose only object is to conceive and intellectually link together his conceptions. It is not, except perhaps at first, a process of reasoning that is wanted..."* at first reasoning is perfectly alright, but it must not be limited, we must go beyond the process of reasoning. Instead of a reasoning process there should be another, what Sri Aurobindo calls *dwelling*. There is a difference between a reasoning process and a process of dwelling.

What is dwelling? To dwell is to repeatedly come back to the same point. Instead of developing a reasoning process you dwell upon the same point, this is more difficult. To move forward and backward is easier for the mind but to come back again to the same point is more difficult. And what is wanted is dwelling. So, dwelling as far as possible on the fruitful essence of the idea. There is a difference between understanding an idea, developing an idea, consecutively linking together ideas ? this is one process ? and to go to the essence of the idea ? this is another process. There is a difference between linking together ideas one after the other and the process of arriving at the essence of the idea.

You hear a long lecture for example and after hearing the lecture I ask you: "What is the essence of the lecture?" If you are supposed to report what you heard there can be two kinds of reports. One is that you recount the entire lecture, the different ideas that were put forward ? first he said this, then he said this... ? this is one kind of reporting. It is an account of a consecutive process of thought. But another way is that basically, essentially this is what he said. I may give a long lecture on Karma Yoga and then you are asked what is it that I said ultimately, basically? You can simply say the essence of the idea is: not to desire and to come out of the idea that I am the doer. That is the essence. I may give a long lecture in which I present all the ideas. But if I ask the question what is the essence, in two words it is: give up the desire and secondly liberate yourself from the idea that you are the doer of action. This is the essence of Karma Yoga. What Sri Aurobindo says is that meditation is to be distinguished from a long line of reasoning on the one hand, which can be allowed as a starting point but you should arrive as soon as possible at a point where you ask what is the essence of the idea, or series of ideas, you catch that essence and dwell upon it. Then you go forward, dwelling *"so far as possible on the fruitful essence of the idea which by the insistence of the soul's will upon it must yield up all the facets of its truth."* You catch all of the essence so that all the aspects of the truth of that essence are immediately delivered.

Now Sri Aurobindo gives an example so that we may understand it better. *"Thus if it be the divine Love that is the subject of concentration, it is on the essence of the idea of God as Love that the mind should concentrate in such a way that the various manifestation of the divine Love should arise luminously, not only to the thought, but in the heart and being and vision of the sadhaka"* What is the essence of the idea of God as love? Now let us consider it. Let us ourselves meditate so that it may be easier for us to grasp what is meditation. What is the essence of the idea of God as love? Let us make the exercise ourselves. Let us put together all the ideas that we may have of God as love. And then we shall examine what is the essence of the idea of God as love.

What is love? Basically, that is the question: "What is love?"

Very often love ordinarily means a sensation in the heart which moves out to grasp an object in which there is a great pleasure. It is the minimum that happens in the expression of what people call love. There is a sensation in the heart which impels you to move out of yourself towards an object to grasp it and to enjoy the pleasure that is obtained in grasping. This is what we normally called love. Is this what we mean by God as love?

Let us see another idea of love. Love is an emotion. I am now not using the word sensation but the word emotion. Love is an emotion, an emotion full of joy. Is that enough? An emotion full of joy, shall we call it love? Or something more is needed. From your experience you compare experiences with experiences. I see a beautiful sunrise and there is an experience of joy, emotion of joy. Shall we call it love? No, we don't call it love. So, this definition is not correct. Mere emotion of joy is not love. But joy is a part of love. Wherever there is love there is joy but wherever there is joy there is not necessarily love. So apart from joy there must be something else.

Answer: Unity.

Good! There is a joy of union. In that joy of union, at the human level there is some kind of merchandise, some kind of bargaining. "I am uniting myself with you and I expect a return from you in the same way." This is human love in which there is a union but there is a condition. This is not the case of Divine as love. There is reciprocity but no bargaining. The emotion of unity is not dependent upon the return. It is basically a union in which there is a self-giving, there may be a reciprocity from the other side but not as a condition. It is independent of reciprocity. So the essence of Divine as love is not reciprocity in the experience of union but basically the experience of self-giving. It is an

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outpouring. An outpouring, constantly uniting, constantly informing the object. In every experience of love there is an object and there is an outpouring towards an object but this outpouring has no bargaining. There is the experience of union but not dependant upon bargaining. That is what differentiates human love from Divine love. There is unreserved pouring. There are huge pulsations of love. The joy is of course part of this experience, but more than joy is union, a constant outpouring. The basic experience is of union, not merely of joy.

Now we have arrived at the essence of the idea of God as love where there is unrestrained, outpouring of emotional joy expressing union in which there is total unconditionality. Once you have got the essence of the idea of God as love you meditate on this essence in such a way that various aspects, various manifestations of this love arise luminously in your heart. So, meditation is not thinking about love, it may be only the starting point, a real meditation must ultimately aim at the awakening of an experience of various states, various manifestations ? the Divine's smile is one of the manifestation and you should therefore experience the Divine's smile, the captivating smile of the Lord. That is an experience in which you can dwell. That is: meditation is dwelling. It is not only developing the idea of God as smile, that is only a starting point, but you should be able to dwell in the experience of the Divine smile.

The Divine health is another experience, the Divine outpouring itself into you, uplifting you from your difficulties, even without being asked. It is unconditional. If you experience the Divine uplifting you ? even unasked, you may not even know that you are in difficulty, but He knows that you are in difficulty, so even unasked He simply uplifts you. In every experience of Divine love there is always this experience that this love uplifts you constantly. You are drawn closer and closer away from all the meshes, all the mess that you have made of your life, and He lifts you from the mud. This is another experience which should manifest.

The Divine love also manifests itself as a giver of knowledge. Divine love as the carrier of knowledge; so that when the Divine love manifests all aspects of knowledge begin to develop in you. You blossom. There is a blossoming of your faculties. And as the faculties develop there is no labour in it. It is a joy. It develops with a tremendous experience of self-giving. The faculties develop because they throw themselves forth by the attraction of love. There is strain but this strain is full of joy. That is the special experience of Divine as love. It is like a flower, the sunflower turning towards the sun without any effort. It is a joy and the whole flower blooms. It is also another experience of Divine as love.

There is also the experience of Divine love making a command. But in such a command that is a speciality of God as love in which the command is felt as something to which you want to serve with all your heart. It is not a command in which you feel "My Lord, now this command has come how should I fulfil." That is not a command as the manifestation of God as love. There are states in which God gives you command which you may feel too heavy for you. In Karma Yoga when you are not attempting to reach God as love, this kind of command comes in the process and joy is not a part of it. But here is a command which you really like so much. It is a condition in which you feel "Why is God not commanding me? I am waiting for a command, I want to do, I want to serve, I want to be what He wants me to be." This is the experience of Divine as love. It is a joy to hear the Divine command. There is a dance in your being on hearing that. "This is what He wants and I am here at the feet of the Lord." And you don't mind whether you have the faculties to do it or not. The very fact that you have received the command is such a great joy that you are so grateful and you know that if the command has come He will do it even if you are absolutely incapable of carrying out the command ? He will do it. That is an experience of Divine as love.

Then Divine as your companion. Friendship with the Divine in which you can behave with the Lord as though you can walk with Him. Not exactly as equals but as a companion. The Lord walks with you. That is also God as love. And wherever He walks you find a paradise. To be with God, walking with Him in a paradise. Everything is so beautiful everything is so favourable. The sun does not scorch you; even if there is a tremendous sunlight it gives you coolness. The breezes are all full of scents. All kind of flowers are in the scent of the air. This is your experience when you have Divine as love.

These experiences should arise luminously in the heart. This is called meditation. One after the other all these experiences begin to develop and you dwell upon them. This is called meditation.

Now Sri Aurobindo only comments upon this and says: "*The thought may come first and the experience afterwards, but equally the experience may come first and the knowledge arise out of the experience.*" If you read Mother's book called *Prayers and Meditations* you then learn what are meditations. Every line that is given there is a meditation coming out of the experience. The thoughts which are expressed are only the results of experiences. Ordinary meditation is only thinking, thinking on one subject with concentration. That is only a primary, preliminary meditation. It is only when you

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get the essence of the idea and when you dwell upon the essence of the idea and when the essence of the idea begins to manifest in your heart in various aspects of its experience that you can say, "I have meditated." That is the real meditation. *"Afterwards the thing attained has to be dwelt on and more and more held till it becomes a constant experience and finally the dharma or law of the being."*

When you have meditated for years and years in this fashion then in a second you can walk with God with that love in the paradise. You don't need to make an effort. It has become a part of your being. You can converse with Him. You can receive commands from Him with great joy. Your whole being is constantly tuned to the Divine Will. You know when Mother says that to live in Auroville "One must be a willing servitor of the Divine Consciousness." It means that already you should arrive at that point when you want to do what the Divine wants whatever may be the consequences. Willing servitor. I want to be a servant of the Divine, servant of servants. If anybody else is serving the Divine I want to be servant of that person who is serving the Divine. It is such an experience that you cannot do but this. That is the dharma of your being. You become so much tuned to it that again and again you ask the divine, "I have done this, what more? I still want to pour myself at Your feet. Again and again, endlessly." This is meditation.

Now we come to contemplation. The result of contemplation also is the same as the result of meditation but contemplation is a more strenuous method. Sri Aurobindo says: *"This is the process of concentrated meditation; but a more strenuous method is the fixing of the whole mind in concentration on the essence of the idea only, so as to reach not the thought-knowledge or the psychological experience of the subject, but the very essence of the thing behind the idea."* There is a difference between the essence of the idea and the essence of the thing. In the case of meditation we were told of the essence of the idea, the essential idea and then we were allowed by the help of the essential idea to dwell upon various manifestations of the experience corresponding to that idea. There was as it were a successive movement ? in meditation there is successive movement, every time you get one manifestation of the experience of Divine as Love. Now, here, in the contemplation there is not an attempt to reach the given psychological experience but the very essence of the thing itself. You enter into the heart of God Himself ? not manifestations of God as Love.

"In this process thought ceases and passes into the absorbed or ecstatic contemplation of the object or by a merging into it in an inner Samadhi." In the ordinary life, you often have this experience of contemplation.

Have you heard the story of Shakuntala?

Shakuntala was the daughter of the famous Rishi called Vishwamitra. But brought up by another Rishi called Kanva. Kanva was a Rishi who had a very big ashram ? like Auroville. So many students were studying, boys and girls.

Once upon a time, when Shakuntala had already grown into a maiden, a beautiful woman, the king of the domain, who was in the process of hunting, missing the deer whom he was hunting, exhausted, entered into the ashram. And he was thirsty he wanted to drink water. Three girls were moving about in the garden of the ashram and one of them was Shakuntala. The moment Shakuntala saw Dushyanta, and the moment he saw her there was love at first sight between the two. And thereafter she could not live without the presence of Dushyanta.

Kanva Rishi was at that time absent from the hermitage and Dushyanta and Shakuntala married by one of the processes of marriage (*Gandharva vivaha*), which was a simple ceremony of marriage. Then, Dushyanta was called away by his mother for an urgent work and he promised Shakuntala that he would return or send his great chariot to take her back as queen to his kingdom. Shakuntala was now left alone.

In that state she fell into contemplation of the Dushyanta. It was not merely thinking of Dushyanta, not merely experiencing what she had experienced, but holding Dushyanta himself in her heart ? the thing itself. And it was such an absorption that when a guest ? another rishi ? came and called out to Shakuntala to receive him she did not hear him at all, the call of a great rishi! This is the mark of a deep contemplation which happens even in ordinary human life.

There are intense states of consciousness in which the object, the essence of the object is dwelt upon by the mind and you are one with the object. You don't need to make any kind of thinking. You go straight into the heart, the essence of the thing itself. This happens also in our ordinary process of pursuit of knowledge. When you have understood an idea, not when you are in pursuit of understanding an idea... Imagine anything that you have understood and that understanding, when you have arrived at an understanding, you feel a great joy in that understanding.

You are not in a process of understanding, there is no successive movement. You are only centred upon what you have understood and that understanding goes on developing so deeply that the object which is understood is seized by you. You feel as if now you have gone beyond the idea.

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You have come not only beyond the essence of the idea you have entered into the very object. That is called contemplation. Many philosophers when they reach a certain height of understanding, reach a stage of contemplation. They are fixed upon... They have understood, there is no more process of understanding. But what is understood is so full of joy or is such a tremendous seizing of the idea that there is no need to develop that idea, no need to develop the experiences behind the ideas which manifest. At once from that understanding you enter into the object itself. You seize the very object in your consciousness.

If the object is the Divine Love in this process, as distinguished from what you have experienced in the process of meditation where different states of love arise one after the other, and you experienced those different states of consciousness, here you directly experience the heart of God Himself. And you enjoy merely by dwelling upon the heart of the Divine. The Divine is possessed by you.

Sri Aurobindo says further: *"If this be the process followed, then subsequently the state into which we rise must still be called down to take possession of the lower being, to shed its light, power and bliss on our ordinary consciousness."* Once you have caught the Divine Himself then you allow the Divine light, Divine joy, Divine power to come down in our lower consciousness. *"For otherwise we may possess it, as many do, in the elevated condition or in the inward Samadhi, but we shall lose our hold of it when we awake or descend into the context of the world; and this truncated possession is not the aim of an integral Yoga."* When you go up you can hold the Divine but when you come down the Divine is lost and you fall into the trap of the world as it is. That is a truncated experience ? one leg upward one leg downward. But here you come fully and even the lower leg is also uplifted and remains uplifted all the time.

Now Sri Aurobindo speaks of the third process. A process which is neither of concentrated meditation or of contemplation but another process.

We have only thought of contemplation but it is better to finish now all the three processes. So we know very clearly what are the three processes of concentration. Once you know all these three processes you have known all that is to be known about concentration. It is a complete science which Sri Aurobindo has given in one page. People have written books on this subject but in one page Sri Aurobindo has given a complete statement of what is concentration. Without reading so many books we just read this page again and again and you will understand it better and better as you experience more and more. Very often these words do not convey much meaning to us because we have not got the experience of it. But the more we do it the more we shall experience and the more we shall understand.

"A third process is neither at first to concentrate in a strenuous meditation on the one subject nor in a strenuous contemplation of the one object of thought-vision, but first to still the mind altogether." There is neither a subject nor the object. You just still the mind, make it quiet. Sometime this is more difficult than the other two processes but sometime it is much easier. You don't have to make any strenuous movement of meditation or concentration. Just be quiet and after that quietude you see that there are no ripples of thought, no waves of thought and the mind is absolutely still, and you dwell upon it ? this is also concentration.

"This may be done by various ways; one is to stand back from the mental action altogether not participating in but simply watching it until, tired of its unsanctioned leaping and running, it falls into an increasing and finally an absolute quiet." There are three things to be considered here. You can stand back from the mental action, that is to say, there is a mental action going on and this mental action that is going on is quite a noisy market ? it is as if you are in a bazaar in which there is hustle and bustle and a tremendous amount of activities going on. So, imagine that you are in a bazaar in which a lot of currents are going on, then you stand back and you experience, even though there is the movement of the bazaar, you are only watching it. You do not participate in the movement of thinking. It is like going to a market in which you are constantly attracted by this side or that side, this shop or that shop, beautiful objects lying around, and you are attracted to buy this or to buy that. This is what we are constantly about. Our entire mind movement is like going to a market in which you are constantly being lured by various sights, calls, sounds, things and objects. And constantly we are judging: this is right this is not right, good, bad, I don't like this, I don't like that... all this marketing going on. Imagine however that although you are in a market you decide that you are not going to buy anything, you are only watching, you are only a witness in the market, you stand apart and you see hustle bustle, everything that is going on. This is a very important step in which you stand back from the mental activity. That is to say there is in you some person who can stand back. This whole psychology is based upon the perception that there is something in you which can withdraw from the market of the mind and which can watch without taking interest in what is going on. This is the process

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that Swami Vivekananda very much recommended to many people. Even Sri Aurobindo in some of his letters on yoga has recommended this process. When you do not want to meditate or to contemplate this is a very easy process. You just stand back from the mental turmoil. And then even that market in which you are engaged or even watching, you will find that even that market will fall quiet. And this will enable you to experience yourself as altogether different from the market and a great quietude will automatically enter into you. To be seated in that quietude is a state of concentration.

There is yet another way to arrive at the same result: *"Another is to reject the thought-suggestions, to cast them away from the mind whenever they come and firmly hold to the peace of the being which really and always exists behind the trouble and riot of the mind."* There is always a peace in you but we do not see this peace because of the riot of the mind, the rush of the ideas. This was the method that Sri Aurobindo himself followed when his teacher said "thoughts come to you from the outside and before they enter you fling them back." It is *"to reject the thought-suggestions, to cast them away from the mind whenever they come and firmly hold to the peace of the being which really and always exists behind the trouble and riot of the mind. When this secret peace is unveiled, a great calm settles on the being and there comes usually with it the perception and experience of the all-pervading silent Brahman, everything else at first seeming to be mere form and eidolon. On the basis of this calm everything else may be built up in the knowledge and experience no longer of the external phenomena of things but of the deeper truth of the divine manifestation."*

This is the third method of concentration. If you ask: "What are these three methods of concentration?" One is meditation, second is contemplation and the third is the method by which peace of the mind is seized upon.

Let us read the last paragraph. It is just to complete our entire understanding.

"Ordinarily, once this state is obtained, strenuous concentration will be found no longer necessary." You become master, you don't need to strain even when there is all the noise going on. You are seated in the Brahman all the time. There is no strain at all. *A free concentration of will using thought merely for suggestion and the giving of light to the lower members will take its place."* If there is obscurity and you want that obscurity to be cleared, a mere thought-suggestion is enough that this obscurity be cleared. The higher consciousness will come down on the obscurity and the obscurity will be cleared. There is no strain; you just will on that plane where there is a constant peace, or a constant state of experience of Divine as love, or whatever — there are many aspects of the Divine. Once you have attained to this then here is a very comfortable, a very easy process: a mere will works it out. This is called *siddhi*. You arrive at a great mastery. *"This Will will then insist on the physical being, the vital existence, the heart and the mind remoulding themselves in the forms of the Divine which reveal themselves out of the silent Brahman. By swifter or slower degrees according to the previous preparation and purification of the members, they will be obliged with more or less struggle to obey the law of the will and its thought-suggestion, so that eventually the knowledge of the Divine takes possession of our consciousness on all its planes and the image of the Divine is formed in our human existence even as it was done by the old Vedic Sadhakas. For the integral Yoga this is the most direct and powerful discipline."* So, you can approach this by meditation or by contemplation or by quieting the mind. And when the mind is quieted you don't need meditation or contemplation. You can simply will anything. And lower parts of the being are based in the higher consciousness. Whatever should be transformed is transformed until, at last, the human image becomes the Divine image. That is the real yoga *siddhi*.

Alright! This was only a comment upon a word that we have read in the chapter *The Four Aids* where Sri Aurobindo speaks of the *shastra* of the old on which we have to meditate (p. 49).

"The spiritual knowledge is then gained through meditation on the truths that are taught and it is made living and conscious by their realisation in the personal experience;" When we read this book ? Sri Aurobindo has told us how we should read this book: the truths which are mentioned here you should meditate on them either by strenuous meditation or by contemplation or by the third way of quieting the mind and listening to what is given here and then comes the realisation of the truths.

"... the Yoga proceeds by the results of prescribed methods taught in a Scripture or a tradition and reinforced and illumined by the instructions of the Master. This is a narrower practise..." It is a narrower practice because you are still moving on a beaten track. When you read this book and following it out, it is a safe movement because all this have been realised by the Master and you only repeat in your own personal experience what has been realised by the Master. Afterwards you can make an adventure, a larger process. What is not given in *shastra* even that you can develop. When you read *The Mother's Agenda* she says: "Sri Aurobindo did not tell us the secret" ? although he has written all this. But Mother says: "Sri Aurobindo left without telling us his secret." Therefore there is nothing to meditate upon. There was an adventure. She says: "I am walking blindfolded." And She

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built a new path. So *The Mother's Agenda* is another vedic *shastra*. What is not given by Sri Aurobindo was given then by the Mother. That is why this book is to be followed by *The Mother's Agenda*. Mother herself has said: "*The Agenda* is the continuation of *The Synthesis of Yoga*." So much of the path has been trodden for us and made easy for us, that we too can tread it.

Now Sri Aurobindo makes a very important comment: "*For the sadhaka of the integral Yoga it is necessary to remember that no written Shastra, however great its authority or however large its spirit, can be more than a partial expression of the eternal Knowledge.*" This applies even to this book, even to *The Mother's Agenda*. That is why there is no religion possible, there is no final stop, it is an open book in which new chapters have to be added because there is no end to the eternal knowledge. "*For the sadhaka of the integral Yoga it is necessary to remember that no written Shastra, however great its authority or however large its spirit, can be more than a partial expression of the eternal Knowledge. He will use, but never bind himself even by the greatest Scripture. Where the Scripture is profound, wide, catholic, it may exercise upon him an influence for the highest good and of incalculable importance. It may be associated in his experience with his awakening to crowning verities and his realisation of the highest experiences. His Yoga may be governed for a long time by one Scripture or by several successively, — if it is in the line of the great Hindu tradition, by the Gita, for example, the Upanishads, the Veda. Or it may be a good part of his development to include in its material a richly varied experience of the truths of many Scriptures and make the future opulent with all that is best in the past. But in the end he must take his station, or better still, if he can, always and from the beginning he must live in his own soul beyond the limitations of the word that he uses. The Gita itself thus declares that the Yogin in his progress must pass beyond the written Truth, — sabda brahma ativartate — beyond all that he has heard and all that he has yet to hear, — shotavasya srutasya ca. For he is not the sadhaka of a book or of many books; he is a sadhaka of the Infinite.*" He is no prisoner of any word.

We should remember this last line: "*For he is not the sadhaka of a book or of many books; he is a sadhaka of the Infinite.*"

VIII.

We have been discussing the question of sin and hell. Not a very interesting subject but it can be very important from many points of view. There were two remarks which were made here when we spoke last time on this subject. Hell and heaven are here, not elsewhere. The second remark was that there is no idea of hell except in those scriptures where people are motivated to work on the right lines under the threat of a hell: "If you don't work properly you will go to hell."

It is true that both hell and heaven are here but not merely here. If you maintain that this world is the only world and there is nothing else in the world, then such a statement requires to be enlarged. There is a series of worlds, not only this world but also a series of worlds.

I appreciate that you have researched and found the place where Sri Aurobindo speaks of the different planes. He speaks of the terrestrial, the supra-terrestrial and the supra-cosmic. These three words are very important.

There is cosmic which consists of two: the terrestrial and the supra-terrestrial. If you take this entire cosmos it can be divided in two distinct parts: first, the terrestrial ? that means earthly existence. What we see around us is the terrestrial existence. But this terrestrial existence is not the only existence. There is also supra-terrestrial ? something that is above terrestrial. The entire cosmos is not merely the earth but also that which transcends the earth. The terrestrial is, we might say, the physical existence ? all that is physical. That would mean also the galaxies, not only this earth as we see it but also the galaxies because they are also physical. Everything that is physical is terrestrial. Apart from this entire physical universe that we see, there are many other worlds. In a certain sense you might say that if you want to be perfect in the physical you cannot be perfect without knowing the supra terrestrial. Many people say: "Why to bother about others, let us confine ourselves to the problems that we face here on the earth." If it was possible to resolve the problems of the earth by remaining confined to the earth it would be quite alright. But the trouble is that you cannot resolve the problems of the physical without entering into the supra-terrestrial. The reason is that from the supra terrestrial a number of forces are constantly vibrating and migrating.

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This supra-terrestrial itself has many planes. There is at least the life plane, and there is the mind plane, and then there is the supramental plane. Between mind plane and supramental plane there are many other planes. There is the plane of the higher mind, then there is illumined mind, there is intuitive mind, and then there is overmind. These planes occupy the intermediate space between mind plane and supramental plane: the higher mind, illumined mind, intuitive mind, overmind and then the supermind. Between the purely physical and the life plane there is also an intermediate plane, which is called subtle physical plane.

And then when you go above the supra terrestrial, when you go beyond all this you come to the supra cosmic. In the supra cosmic there are two aspects. One is called Acosmic and the other is Transcendental. If you enter into acosmic no cosmos exists in that consciousness. It is a state of consciousness in which neither this world nor other worlds are seen to be real. There is a small Gujarati poem, which says: "When I awake the world disappears." It is the exactly opposite of what we do in our ordinary waking consciousness. When you awake the whole world appears. But if you awake in the acosmic consciousness the world disappears.

The transcendental includes acosmic; all the supra terrestrial planes and the terrestrial planes; but it is above all of them. Such is the nature of the transcendental. You might experience transcendental here and now because everywhere transcendental is present. But normally it is very difficult to experience transcendental unless we attain to cosmic. It is a step towards transcendental. It is only when we become conscious of the entire universe at the same time that Divine consciousness is understood or known. What we called God is this transcendental, and because many people are not aware of this whole scheme that the word god is defined differently by different people. When you ask the question: "Do you believe in the existence of God?" The question is: "What kind of God?" There are many kinds of conceptions of God. This is the concept that you get in Sri Aurobindo: the transcendental is God. If you like to call Him God. Some people have an allergy to the word god. It does not matter you can call it: Transcendental Consciousness, or Divine Consciousness. It is this God of which Sri Aurobindo speaks whenever he speaks of God. It is not God living in the seventh heaven looking at the world and amusing Himself with the world as if it were moving on like a cinema show. That is not God. This Divine consciousness is everywhere and above. He Himself is all and He is above. In Sanskrit this word transcendental is called *Purushottama*.

Purushottama consists of two words: *purusha* and *uttama*. It is said that purushottama has a double status: mobile and immobile. It at once moves and does not move. This is the one supreme mystery of His consciousness. Even when He moves He remains stable. Even when He is stable He is not incapacitated from moving. In Sanskrit these two words are called: mobile *kshara* and immobile *akshara*. Now you have a complete picture of all that is. When you ask the question: "What is it that exist?" "This IS that exist." It takes into account everything that is here: in the world as it is understood by us, in other worlds ? supra-terrestrial worlds ? in the immobile and that which is above the immobile. All these planes that we see are part of the mobile because in all this world there is a movement. All the terrestrial and supra terrestrial planes are all part of mobile, because there is a continuous dynamism. Behind that dynamism there is the acosmic that which is immobile, but also transcendental. Acosmic does not remain by itself any time, it does not exist alone. The acosmic exists because of the transcendental. And wherever there is transcendental all that IS is present.

We ourselves are cabined into this terrestrial; we are as it were put into a box. Originally we are not in a box. Our origin or whatever we are is exactly here in the transcendental. We you ask the question: "What am I, and where am I?" the answer is: "I am a portion of the transcendental and I am in the transcendental." This the true answer to that question. Even when we don't experience this because we are imprisoned, we are only seeing this world as it is and seeing only this portion but if you can expand the consciousness then you can live simultaneously in all these planes. Sri Aurobindo and Mother walked on the earth with this total consciousness. They were simultaneously aware of this and were working on all the planes. Just as our work is confined only to this little thing once you become more and more aware you are admitted into all these planes because we already belong there ? only we become aware. You become aware that you are with all these

Take for example, even now, we are cabined in this little space, and if I ask the question: "In this space where are your thoughts? What space is occupied by your thoughts?" In this space your body is certainly located, in a place where no other body can sit. But when you say to yourself: "I wrote a long essay." Long means space isn't it? You can say that "I wrote a long essay" means that you have a long piece of paper on which you wrote. So only your words occupy that space of a long piece of paper. But what you wrote, the meaning of what you wrote which space does it occupy? When you say: "Now my ideas have become very wide." What do you mean by wide ideas? Does it mean that you have now become ten feet larger in space? No! Where does this largeness exist? There is a

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space which is not physical space. We are aware only of terrestrial space but to understand your own ideas you know that your mind is narrow or larger or wider but it is surely not in this terrestrial space. It is mental space. There is a space of the mind. This is only physical space but there is also mind space.

Similarly, there is life space. Alexander the Great conquered a large area of space in the physical world. If you were to ask him the question: "When you say, I have conquered all this space and I am very happy, what it does really mean? The space that you conquered already existed." But he says: "I have conquered." What does it mean? Does it mean that he lives in the whole space, physically? Not at all! He occupied this large space in his life space, not in physical space. It is in his life feeling, in his vital desire that he wanted to conquer, he wanted domination of a wide space, and he felt that he was able to dominate, that he can command something to be done which will be obeyed everywhere in that space. Where is the space in which he commanded because actually that space already existed? Thus, this space which he commanded, surely cannot be this physical space, therefore it is the vital space. All our desires live in the vital space. All our ambitions belong to the vital space. Just as all our thoughts belong to the mind space. And these spaces are much larger than the physical space. Even to imagine the physical space is such a huge thing. It is unimaginable for us, if you consider the galaxies and the wide spaces between one star and the other, if you consider how many millions of light years it takes for light to move from one star and to come from there to here. That is the reason why Mother said, if you want to be very-very wide if you want to come out of the narrow prison of your present consciousness, try an exercise: think of yourself in a small space; then think of your country which is comparatively a very large space; think next of all the continents of the world; and then think of the sun and stars which are not very distant from us; and then think of the many other stars each even bigger than the sun, and all the systems or galaxies in which they are located, billions and billions of them and finally, consider how much space is involved as compared to that which you are and the space you occupy! And when you are troubled by the little things in the world you think of such a huge space, these little things will disappear. The little grumblings and grudges! Thoughts such as: 'This is not done to me, I am entitled to this, I am entitled to that, why don't people look at me' And you will find there is so much space to look at...

And this is only physical space. Life space and mind space are even vaster. And when you come the higher mind, to the illumined mind, intuitive mind, over mind and supermind ? because the word supermind is very common among us we do not consider what supermind really is. And what will be the vastness of supermind! And then if you come to the Transcendental, to the Supreme Purusha...

The word purusha has to be understood first. Purusha is a status of consciousness in which one feels oneself to be the originator. Any status of consciousness in which you find or you experience yourself to be the originator, that status can be called purusha. Whenever you can see yourself as the originator you will find yourself to be superior to what is originated. It is the speciality of the purusha consciousness. Because of the status of consciousness in which one finds oneself to be the originator one feels oneself to be superior to that which is originated. When you produce a beautiful picture, you paint it, then with regard to your painting, when you see it, since you have originated it, the status in which you are in regard to the picture is the purusha consciousness. Purusha is always a status of consciousness. It can exist with regard to anything that is presented to you as that which is originated by you. If you conquer the whole world and you perceive the world as yours then you have a status of purusha in regard to what you have conquered. You feel superior to the whole world and the master of all that is ? that is the Purusha consciousness. Therefore, every individual has a kind of Purusha consciousness with regard to his activity, which seem to be originated by him. Each individual can be said to be individual purusha.

Then there can be cosmic purusha. All the terrestrial and the supra terrestrial existences, if you stand behind and you see all this originating from you, then you can be a cosmic purusha. You are in this consciousness the cosmic purusha. And if the whole world is transcended and you stand above everything then you have purushottama; *uttama purusha*, the Supreme Purusha, everything in world is seen to be originating from you. "*Be thou as perfect as thy father in heaven is perfect.*" Means to be one with the Purushattama. And you don't need to fabricate it. You are already that. It is only that we are not conscious of it. We have cabined ourselves in a small status. Only a little thing we see and we feel that we are originators only of that little thing. But if you begin to expand yourself in consciousness then you discover that you are already purushottama. It is not that you have to fabricate it. You don't have to become purushottama. You are purushottama. That is why the word which is used is: you *realise*. It is called realisation. You realise you are purushottama. In the Upanishads we have a very short sentence of knowledge: "*That art thou.*" That is the Transcendent.

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This is supposed to be the formula of the supreme knowledge. Three words in which the supreme knowledge is contained. In Sanskrit: "*Tat twam asi.*" The Upanishads are very famous for brevity ? very brief, but packed. "Thou art that." Realise that thou art that. Don't become, thou art that. It does not say that thou should be that. Already you are that. You only realise it. At present you have forgotten it, you only realise, remember that you are That.

Now we have before us a good map of all that exists and where we are in this vast transcendental existence which really we are, which each of us is.

Our question was: where exactly is hell? That was our enquiry. In all this where is hell? Sri Aurobindo says that hell exists in the Life plane. Even what we call paradise is also on that plane. In many scriptures you have descriptions of heaven and hell. These are descriptions of normally what we find in the Life plane. In *Savitri*, Sri Aurobindo has described all these planes.

One day you will read *Savitri* and then you will see the whole structure of the poem. It is an epic in which the story is very simple. There is a kingdom of Madra of which there was a king called Aswapati. He was concerned with the highest welfare of the world. He was aware of the problems of the world, the maladies of the world, the difficulties of the world and he was in search of solution to these problems. Knowing at that time what yoga is ? today yoga is not so very well known and people have to make a very special study but in those time yogic knowledge was much more easily available. So knowing what is yoga he set upon the path of yoga.

In the beginning in the very first book of *Savitri*, Book I, Sri Aurobindo first of all describes the beginning of the world ? Book I is called *The Book of Beginnings* ? it is a rapid survey of the whole beginning of the world. It is very difficult to understand because the texture of this poem is very intricate. It is something only the transcendental Purushottama himself can describe and Sri Aurobindo standing on the Purushottama's consciousness describes the beginning of the world. And then rapidly, Sri Aurobindo takes us up to the time when Savitri is born, gets married to Satyavan and he then describes Savitri's condition because she knew that this is the day where her husband Satyavan has to die. All this Sri Aurobindo describes ? some of you are painters so you know how to make a sweep of colours ? like that Sri Aurobindo describes the day on which Satyavan has to die. Then Sri Aurobindo takes us backward; it is a flash-back: what is this issue, why has Satyavan to die? and what is the function, the role of Savitri? who is Savitri? We are told that Savitri is the daughter of Aswapati. And now comes a biography of Aswapati like a flash-back. And he had come to a point where he says: "Now I should do yoga. So I can understand what are the problems and I can reach the point where I can resolve them." Because as I told you last time that is a promise of yoga. By yogic powers, by the yogic knowledge we can gain the supreme knowledge of the Being of the Divine, we can gain the supreme knowledge of the Divine Will and the supreme Knowledge of the Divine Love. This is known actually in the yogic shastra. Knowing this he began to do the yoga. And the Canto 3 of the book is called *The Yoga of the King: The Yoga of the Soul's Release*. How he becomes liberated in his soul and attains to secret knowledge and establishes himself in the greatness of his being. But then this is not enough. The entire Book II is called *The Book of the Traveller of the Worlds* ? of the worlds not world. Now Aswapati begins to scan the whole world, all these planes. If you read only the title of each chapter, of each canto, you will get the idea of all these planes. I will read to you only the title of each canto.

The Kingdom of Subtle Matter.

The Glory and the Fall of Life. This is the Life plane. But to this plane, which is a very large plane, Sri Aurobindo devotes several cantos because of the very huge thing to be described.

The Kingdoms of the Little Life.

The Godheads of the Little Life.

The Kingdoms and Godheads of the Greater Life.

The Descent into Night.

The World of Falsehood, The Mother of Evil and the Sons of Darkness. This is where hell is located.

Then comes *The Paradise of the Life-Gods*. In the same life plane there is also paradise.

The Kingdoms and Godheads of the Little Mind. Now you go above the Life plane and come into the Mind.

The Kingdoms and Godheads of the Greater Mind.

The Heavens of the Ideal. Now you go above the mind.

In the Self of Mind. The self of mind is the purusha. The *manomaya purusha*. The mental purusha.

The World Soul. The cosmic purusha.

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The Kingdoms of the Greater Knowledge. You climb into higher mind, illumined mind, intuitive mind, overmind and supermind.

Then in the third book he moves forwards and sees the origin of the whole world, attains to the supramental and the transcendental consciousness. It begins with *The Pursuit of the Unknowable*. This transcendental is unknowable but this unknowable is approachable through Him who has a creative power of which this world is a result. He is the Supreme Purusha from whom originates all things. Originates through His own Power: that Power is called the Divine Mother. That Divine Mother is approached by Aswapati. Then there is *The Adoration of the Divine Mother; The House and the Spirit of the New Creation; The Vision and the Boon*. He approaches the Supreme Divine Mother and puts forwards all these problems and says the world is in a great difficulty ? as we can do now also. We can approach the Divine Mother in the same way and say there is a great difficulty in the world. He insists upon the Divine Mother: "Please do something." Then the Divine Mother answers: "If such is your anxiety about the world I feel moved and therefore I give the boon to you. I shall be born as your daughter" ? that is the Divine Mother's answer ? "and I shall take the mission of changing this world, of solving the problems of the world."

And the rest of the whole poem is the birth of Savitri, her growth, achieving adulthood, her marriage, Satyavan's death. That death is the crux of the problem of the world. There is a phenomenon of death and if you can touch that problem all other problems can be resolved.

So, subsequent books cover the knowledge with which she equips herself and utilizes it in conquering the death and thus Satyavan comes back from death. That is the key of the solution of problems. If you can touch death and conquer the death all the problems can be resolved.

One day you will read *Savitri* then you will understand and you will realise what knowledge is involved. When we read Sri Aurobindo we are not reading a scripture in which we have to believe. Sri Aurobindo is a book of knowledge he describes as we can describe this room. So, he has described all the planes of the world...

IX.

We read last time "*For he is not the sadhaka of a book or of many books; he is the sadhaka of the Infinite.*" There is no bondage to any particular book in the *Integral Yoga*. "*Another kind of Shastra is not Scripture, but a statement of the science and methods, the effective principles and way of working of the path of Yoga which the sadhaka elects to follow.*" We have a distinction here between scripture and a book of science.

What is the meaning of a scripture? *Veda* for example is a scripture; *Upanishads* is a scripture; *Bible* is a scripture; *Koran* is a scripture; *Avesta* is a scripture; *Bhagavad Gita* is a scripture. All these scriptures are in some way or the other books of yoga. And the characteristic of scriptures is that they are revealed words. Scriptures are words received by revelation. They are supposed to contain truth and normally adherents of a scripture believes that the entire truth is given in that scripture. But Sri Aurobindo has said earlier "even the largest scripture does not bind the sadhaka of the Integral Yoga" because the truth is ever developing and cannot be imprisoned in one single statement.

A scripture is a revealed word. This is distinguished from a scientific book on yoga. There is, for example, in India a book called *Yoga Sutra*. *Sutra* means aphorism. Aphorism or Sutra means a brief statement which does not contain explanation so that if you want to explain to somebody you have to make a commentary on it. There are some human beings who are very developed, they are not in a habit of giving lectures, they only give statements, they shoot at you a word or two which contains lot of meaning. For example the statement I gave you once: "That art thou", in Sanskrit "*Tat tvam asi*": "You are that". Who is *you*, who is *that* is not explained. In India there was a system where most of the teachers spoke in terms of aphorisms, for instance the first sutra of this book called *Yoga Sutra* which is written by Patanjali. He was a very great yogi of India. He put down his system of yoga which is called Raja Yoga. And the very first sentence is a sutra; is an aphorism. It simply says: "*Cessation of the modifications of the stuff of consciousness is yoga.*"

This book on Raja Yoga written by Patanjali is written in the form of aphorisms. "*Cessation of the modifications of the stuff of consciousness is yoga.*" It is the first sentence. It does not tell you what are the modification, what is stuff of consciousness, what is cessation. It simply uses these three words and the commentator has to explain all these words. There are many books in India which are called scientific books which give you the processes in a systematic manner. First this, then this, and

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this and this... In a revealed scripture such a special method is not used to expound. A scientific book is one in which you have first the definition of a word, then explanation of each word, then you have the goal and the methods, processes, all one by one laid down. Description of experiences, inter-relationship between experiences, the highest experience, all systematically stated. That is called a scientific book of yoga as distinguished from a scripture. In scripture all may be given but not in a systematic manner. From a scripture you have to make a scientific book later on. That is also shastra. In his book on Raja Yoga, Patanjali explains in due course but not in detail what is *chitta*, what is stuff of consciousness, how you can arrive at a modification of consciousness, therefore the method of meditation is given, then the achievement and the meaning of samadhi is given and what you experience in samadhi is also given. That is the entire science of Raja Yoga.

Similarly for Hatha Yoga there is a book called *Hatha Yoga Pradipika*. *Dipa* means the lamp; *dipaka* means that it makes the lamp and *pra* means put forth ? that which put forth the knowledge that brings about the lamp of light of Hatha Yoga. That is the meaning of *Hatha Yoga Pradipika*. It is also a book which tells you what is the body, what are the basic processes of the body ? namely breathing and postures. Then it explains to you various kind of breathing, various kind of postures, the processes of breathing, the processes of postures, what are the steps by which you can master your breathing and the postures of the body, and what results are obtained when you breathe in one way or the other, and when you become the master of breathing and when you become the master of postures. It is a scientific process explained and described, again in the form of *sutras* ? very briefly.

For every yoga there could be a scientific statement. For instance, this book *The Synthesis of Yoga* is a scientific book in which everything is explained step by step scientifically. It is also a scripture because it is also revealed; it is not thought out by Sri Aurobindo in his mind. It is both a scripture and a scientific work.

So we come again. *"Another kind of Shastra is not Scripture, but a statement of the science and methods, the effective principles and way of working of the path of Yoga which the sadhaka elects to follow. Each path has its Shastra, either written or traditional, passing from mouth to mouth through a long line of Teachers. In India a great authority, a high reverence even is ordinarily attached to the written or traditional teaching. All the lines of the Yoga are supposed to be fixed and the Teacher who has received the Shastra by tradition and realised it in practice guides the disciple along the immemorial tracks."*

These words are very important: *"All the lines of the Yoga are supposed to be fixed..."* If a given process is given you are told what is the first step, what is the second step, what is the third step, what is the eighth step, what is the end of it. And usually you have to master each step little by little. You are not allowed to go to the third step unless you have mastered the first and the second step. If you go to Hatha yoga and say: "I want to be Hatha yogi. I want to master my body." Then for about five years you are only taught how to breathe properly. Although breathing is our natural process but the scientific way of breathing takes four to five years to learn: how to breathe properly and to master the breathing. During the time when you are learning breathing you are not normally taught how to do asana, postures of the body, they come later on. You are taught how to move forward from one step to the other and even in the second step is allowed the first step only temporarily for a short while. But it is insisted upon to master the first step first then the second step and the third step.

In the Integral Yoga, it is a speciality of Integral yoga, the fixation is very loose. There is not such insistence that you should first master the first step then this, then this... There is some kind of fixation but it is very loose, you can change. There is no insistence that you must start first with Karma Yoga, then you should continue with Jnana Yoga, then you should do Bhakti Yoga. There is not such a line. If it is easier for you to start with Karma Yoga you start with Karma Yoga. If it is easier for you to start with Jnana Yoga you start with Jnana Yoga. It depends upon each individual; the freedom is tremendously given in the Integral Yoga. But normally in the systematic systems, which are currently available in tradition, all the lines are fixed and you cannot move forward by breaking the line.

"One often even hears the objection urged against a new practice, a new Yogic teaching, the adoption of a new formula, "It is not according to the Shastra." But neither in fact nor in the actual practice of the Yogins is there really any such entire rigidity of an iron door shut against new truth, fresh revelation, widened experience. The written or traditional teaching expresses the knowledge and experiences of many centuries systematised, organised, made attainable to the beginner. Its importance and utility are therefore immense. But a great freedom of variation and development is always practicable. Even so highly scientific a system as Raja Yoga can be practised on other lines than the organised method of Patanjali." You can do Raja Yoga, normally you follow the same process called *Ashanga Yoga* ? it is called eightfold path. I told you about the eightfold path earlier. You have first yama, niyama, asana, pranayama, pratyahara, dharana, dhyana and samadhi. These are the

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eight steps and normally you should move in this direction, one after the other in a fixed line. But even this Raja Yoga practice, Sri Aurobindo says, can be handled in another way. Although there is fixation some kind of flexibility is allowed. But in Integral Yoga as I said there is a tremendous flexibility, much greater than any where else.

"Each of the three paths of the trimarga..." Tri means three, marga means path. Trimarga are Jnana Yoga, Karma Yoga and Bhakti Yoga. They are called the three paths. It is also called the triple path. Whenever there is the expression triple path, it normally refers to the path of Jnana, the path of Karma, the path of Bhakti. "Each of the three paths of the trimarga breaks into many bypaths which meet again at the goal." The way in which you can connect jnana with karma, karma with bhakti ? there are many different ways of doing it. "The general knowledge on which the Yoga depends is fixed, but the order, the succession, the devices, the forms must be allowed to vary; for the needs and particular impulsions of the individual nature have to be satisfied even while the general truths remain firm and constant." For each individual there has to be a difference, a kind of variation.

And now Sri Aurobindo speaks of the Integral Yoga.

"An integral and synthetic Yoga needs especially not to be bound by any written or traditional Shastra; for while it embraces the knowledge received from the past, it seeks to organise it anew for the present and the future. An absolute liberty of experience and of the restatement of knowledge in new terms and new combinations is the condition of its self-formation. Seeking to embrace all life in itself, it is in the position not of a pilgrim following the highroad to his destination, but, to that extent at least, of a path-finder hewing his way through a virgin forest." This is our present condition. We are actually, pilgrims who don't have the map. We do not know where is the highway. The map does not give the highway. We are like the path-finder. We go sometime in this way, sometime in that way, we are constantly making a voyage into the unknown ? as Sri Aurobindo says in a virgin forest. A forest, which has not been trodden by anybody as yet, and you make a new path. "For Yoga has long diverged from life and the ancient systems which sought to embrace it, such as those of our Vedic forefathers, are far away from us, expressed in terms which are no longer accessible, thrown into forms which are no longer applicable. Since then mankind has moved forward on the current of eternal Time and the same problem has to be approached from a new starting-point."

This is an example which is given here which requires a little explanation. Yoga has for long deviated from embracing life. What does it mean? If you look at the first page of *The Synthesis of Yoga* you will find a very short line: "All life is Yoga." It is the most important line of this book.

This was the original idea of the Veda. If you read the Veda the whole life was explored just as a physicist explores matter, a biologist explores organic life and psychologist explores mind. Even so, the scientist of yoga basically explores the whole life, the totality of life. It is a very difficult task to find out what is human life. The Vedic Rishis made a big exploration and laid out the entire process and said if you lead your life in this particular fashion you will reach the highest fulfilment. It was the programme. And if you read the Veda you will find the whole yoga as in a scientific book but in due course this effort to lead the whole life was reduced. People began to find shortcuts instead of leading the whole life they tried to find out if there was a shortcut to the achievement, to the realisation, to the fulfilment. As a result a distinction came to be made ? don't bother about the whole life, bother only about one process and develop only one process. And they said that you develop that process to such extent that you don't have time for anything else.

If you go to the Hatha yogi he will occupy the whole day so that you can do no other work in life. Go on doing asanas and paranyama and no other time is left to you for doing anything in the world. If you go to Raja yogi he will constantly ask you to do pratyahara, dharana, dhyana and samadhi. You don't have much time left for anything else. You are told don't do this, don't do that. If you go a jnana yogi he will say: "Think but don't feel. All activities of feeling you ban them. All activities you ban them. Only think and think in only one particular line" If you go to a bhakta he will say: "Don't think, don't do any activity, do only *bajan* and *kirtan*. Sing a song in praise of God all the time or turn your rosary all the time. Take the name of God all the time. Don't think, don't do any activity, cut off everything." If you go to a karma yogi he will say, don't feel anything, you simply go on acting and that is enough.

You will find that in due course of time life was cut off from the process of yoga. It even came to be known in such a way; that if you want to become a yogi you should renounce life. Therefore even today many people are afraid that if you become a yogi you will be out of the world. It is against this principle that Sri Aurobindo has written: "All life is Yoga." No need to cut yourself off from life, on the contrary use the life itself as a process of yoga. You must be absolutely involved in life. Instead of renouncing you are completely immersed in feeling, in thought, in action, in all kinds of relationships. But in a special way and that special way constitutes the yoga. How you relate yourself to others in

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action? Don't renounce action; don't renounce relationship in action. But what kind of relationship will you have? What do you expect from action? That will be different from what other people do. This yoga does not say that you should not feel. It does not say don't love as many yogis do — they say don't fall in love. In this yoga you love but love differently, there is a different way of loving. Not love for bargaining which is the normal way of loving, no there is a different way of loving. This is what constitutes yoga. Yoga of love is yoga of Divine love, how do you love Divinely? Love, but love Divinely that is the message of the Integral yoga. Jnana yoga as Sri Aurobindo proposes is not only to think but think Divinely. Not only to stop thinking because in Jnana yoga there is stoppage, cessation of modifications of stuff of consciousness. According to that yoga you cease to think and what Sri Aurobindo says is that you cease to think and yet you think in a different way. You arrive at a point where thoughts arise automatically and the nature of thoughts are different. There are inspirations, not thoughts but inspiration. There are revelations, there are intuitions, and there are discriminations but not arising in the ordinary way, in a new way. In other words in the yoga that Sri Aurobindo has proposed all life is taken up, every activity of life is accepted but every activity is transformed. This is one formula of the Integral yoga: All life is accepted but all life is transformed. That is the meaning. "All life" is merely ordinary life is not the doctrine. All life is life, transformed the statement "all life is yoga." If you accept life as it is and be satisfied with it, it becomes all life is life but if you say all life is accepted but all life is transformed it becomes all life is yoga. Yoga is a process of transformation. You accept life but transform it.

This was also the principle of the Veda but Sri Aurobindo says that the Veda was a very remote experiment and we are not able to understand it now. It is written in terms which are very difficult to us to understand therefore Veda does not become easily accessible to us. So even that past experience has now to be done again and that is what Sri Aurobindo has done. Even the vedic yoga is accepted here but re-termed. It is not given in the same terms as in the Veda. It is written in terms that are understood by us today. "Unite the horse and the cow" was one of the expressions of the Veda and Sri Aurobindo says, "Unite knowledge and will." This is the new terminology, the same sentence. "Unite horse and the cow" was an expression of the Veda and you would not understand what it means but to us we will understand if you say "Unite knowledge and will". Sri Aurobindo has changed the whole terminology of the Veda and written in such a way that we can understand it in our modern times. And also he found that what was in the Veda is not enough. Vedas had made a big exploration but not a complete exploration. And this is a very important statement that has to be underlined. The Integral yoga explores something which has never been explored earlier. Even the highest realisations of the past in the Veda or even in the *Upanishads*, Sri Aurobindo found to be not capable of answering the question that he had put forward. We must know what is that question and what is that answer. And then only we shall be able to understand this phrase "All life is yoga".

All life is life on the earth as also life which is above the earth. You remember last time we spoke of different planes of existence, all the cosmic planes, from *satyamayi prakriti*; *chaitanyamayi prakriti*; *anandamayi prakriti*, then *vijnanamayi prakriti*, *manomayi prakriti*, *pranamayi prakriti*, *annamayi prakriti*. All this is the domain of life. In the past there was exploration of all the planes but there was one thing that was missing. How to unite the highest plane of *prakriti* with the lowest plane of *prakriti*?

How to unite the Supreme Consciousness with the inconscient? Inconscient is even below matter. Even matter is not the lowest. How to transform inconscient was not even explored and Sri Aurobindo found that unless you explore this plane and do it all life cannot be transformed. If you want a complete transformation of life then you should find out the method by which the Supreme consciousness can enter into the inconscient and can transform it. Even the inconscient becomes conscious and supremely conscious. This is the secret. Unless you do this... there are four stings of life ? you know just as a scorpion has a sting similarly life has stings: sting of death; sting of sorrow; sting of darkness; and sting of falsehood. These are the four stings of life.

Question: What is falsehood?

When I make an error and admit this error it is not falsehood. When I make an error and tell the people look it is true and try to make other believe that it is true, that is falsehood. When I insist upon error as true it is falsehood. If I make an error and tell people that I may be in error, there is no falsehood in it. When I know that something is an error and yet present it to other people as true that is falsehood: I did not see that you passed from here and went up to there but I tell somebody that I saw you coming from here to there. But if I say that I don't remember, you might have passed that is not a falsehood. It is always possible that you might have passed but I have really not seen you, but during this hour you don't pass and I tell somebody I really saw you passing that is called falsehood.

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This is one of the stings of life. Life is full of falsehood, if you go around the world you will see how many people in the world are living in the realm of falsehood. They believe something to be wrong and yet they put it before other people as right and canvas it saying: "Yes it is true". I may not be a saint and yet I allow people to believe that I am a saint, it is a falsehood. I may not be a philosopher and yet I believe that I am a philosopher, that is falsehood and I try to make other people believe that I am a philosopher, it is a falsehood. A true seeker must be so transparent, so shining that there is no shadow of falsehood arising in it. That is the big sadhana. Not to speak anything is easier but to speak and yet speak the truth, that is very difficult. That is the difference between other yogas which deny life and this yoga which accepts life. Other yogas will say because when you speak you may somehow speak falsehood don't speak at all. Deny all speaking then you will never tell a lie. It is very much simpler but if you speak and always tell the truth it is a very difficult task. And Sri Aurobindo says speak but speak the truth. Do not deny to yourself the happiness of speaking. Accept the life of speaking but transform it, speak the truth. These are the four stings; death, sorrow and falsehood, darkness, which are inherent in our present life. As soon as you accept life these four things immediately present themselves.

The question is: can we have real life in which these stings are removed? That is the problem of life. If you don't live at all there is no death; it is only if you live that there is death. If you don't make any effort at all ? become like a log, like a stone, there is no sorrow. Only when you begin to live there is pain, pleasure, joy, sorrow, etc... If you don't live you don't move from darkness to light. If you are in darkness you don't even know that there is darkness. A stone does not know it lives in darkness. Experience of darkness comes when you begin to live, begin to move forward. When we say all life is yoga if you want to make this world a heaven on the earth then it should be a perfection of life in which these stings don't exist. The fact that these stings exist means that life is not yet transformed. Now, Sri Aurobindo asks this very question: Why is life not yet transformed? And how can life be totally transformed?

This is a question which was not even addressed in the whole history of mankind. The question was asked in a certain way but not fully, not centrally, not fundamentally. It was said that if you want to go out of these four stings you reject life and go upwards. In life it is not possible. This was the answer obtained up till now. If you want to get rid of death, darkness, sorrow and falsehood you just renounce life. And find out the way by which life can be renounced; what is the effective method of withdrawing from life. Of course, one method is suicide but it was found out that this is not sufficient because you have rebirth and you cannot cut off from rebirth. So suicide was given up. While living, but not committing suicide and yet withdraw from life ? how could you do it? They found out many methods of doing it. These are called yogas which are life-negating. You negate life and come out of life and attain to a higher state of consciousness ? don't come down at all on life ? they you feel that you are blissful all the time. As I said, if you don't speak, the question of speaking falsehood does not arise. Just do not speak anything, reduce your life activity to the minimum, the most minimum. Sri Aurobindo found that there is a way, but that way is difficult, and he made a new path as it were, hewed from a virgin forest, and he found out that there is a way by which the inconscient can be transformed. When this inconscient begins to move upward it produces these four flowers. So unless you deal with this inconscient and transforms it, you cannot get rid of these four stings.

Therefore the Integral yoga that we are going to study, is a new yoga in which this new secret has been found out. Mother one told me that when you take your classes the first thing you should explain is this. I have taken such a long time to tell you this ? after nearly one year. Actually, I should have continued my first lecture through such a long term, without given you any break, until I came to this point. So, count this is my first lecture to you!

The most important thing to be learnt is this new secret. The secret, first of all, is that these four flowers arise from the inconscient. They are not tied up with life itself, if they were tied up with life itself then it means that life will be always like this. Sri Aurobindo discovered that it is not true. Life inherently is not this. Life by its own nature is deathless ? in life there is no death. Life is eternal life always; life is full of delight; life is always luminous; life is absolutely truthful. It is because the inconscient has intervened that there is a fall of life. There is a glory of life and there is a fall of life. In *Savitri* there is a chapter entitled (Book II, Canto 3) *The Glory and the Fall of Life* in which Sri Aurobindo explains how life in itself is deathless, sorrowless, luminous and true. And he explains how this has fallen and has become subject to these four things. This is very important because many- many panaceas have been proposed in the world: capitalism, socialism, communism, liberty, equality, fraternity, so many good names have been given. And people have been trying all the time how to bring out a new kind of social order in which there is great happiness, great joy, people living like brothers and sisters. How to do that? Sri Aurobindo found out that unless you work here all these

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glorious things will not happen permanently. You will arrive at some little thing and it will break down. There is a big dragon, as it were, sitting at the bottom of things and whatever you achieve is swallowed by it. How to deal with this dragon? Such is the stupendous task that the Mother and Sri Aurobindo did. It is in doing that that you can fulfil this statement: all life is yoga.

X.

All life is Yoga. Yesterday we said that, isn't it? And we pointed out that this statement brings out what is entirely new in Sri Aurobindo and Mother's works. I have made the statement but I have not yet shown you the details of this novelty. You should keep this with a question mark in your diary. I have not yet proved it to you because that will take us into more details. "*All life is Yoga.*": this statement brings out what is new in Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, what was never present earlier. I only told you one sentence as a formula that in order that all life is yoga you have to dissolve four poison stings: falsehood, sorrow, darkness and death. These are the four stings and unless they are conquered and removed we cannot say that all life is being proved to be yoga. All life must be a manifestation of the Divine. In fact, the very book's name is *The Life Divine*. Life becomes completely Divine and if it becomes really Divine there is no place for falsehood, sorrow, darkness and death. And I pointed out that this can be achieved only if the Supreme Consciousness can enter into the inconscient and can transform it, because these four stings arise out of the inconscient. So unless you deal with the inconscient you cannot deal with these four poisonous flowers of the inconscient. This I have told you only in the form of a formula, like a *sutra*. Next time I shall have to tell you in detail what is the Supreme consciousness, what is the inconscient, how the inconscient is capable of being transformed and what will be the process by which it can be transformed. Only then shall we have proved that "*All life is Yoga.*" So till that time you use it only as a formula to be worked out as yet ? in fact the whole book *The Life Divine* is an explanation of this formula. And the whole book *The Synthesis of Yoga* is an exposition of the process by which the inconscient can be conquered, transformed, out of which the result will be the elimination of these four flowers of the inconscient. Having said this we shall now proceed further with the four aids.

"By this Yoga we not only seek the Infinite, but we call upon the Infinite to unfold himself in human life." It is the same statement as "*All life is Yoga*". By this yoga we not only seek the Infinite, we not only reach the Supreme Consciousness but we call upon the infinite, the Supreme Consciousness to unfold itself in human life right to the inconscient. *"Therefore the Shastra of our Yoga must provide for an infinite liberty in the receptive human soul. A free adaptability in the manner and the type of the individual's acceptance of the Universal and Transcendent into himself is the right condition for the full spiritual life in man. Vivekananda, pointing out that the unity of all religions must necessarily express itself by an increasing richness of variety in its forms, said once that the perfect state of that essential unity would come when each man had his own religion, when not bound by sect or traditional form he followed the free self-adaptation of his nature in its relations with the Supreme. So also one may say that the perfection of the integral Yoga will come when each man is able to follow his own path of Yoga, pursuing the development of his own nature in its upsurging towards that which transcends the nature. For freedom is the final law and the last consummation."* There are three things that I would like to point out.

First is the statement of Vivekananda. This statement speaks of every man having his own religion, a religion different from the religion of another. The second is Integral yoga having such a possibility of adaptability that each one of us will have his own yoga. Not one fixed law, not one fixed system and process of yoga meant for all. Each one having his own process although each one of them will be integral. But each one will have his own process of development. And third is the question of freedom. There are three things which we need to attempt to understand in this paragraph.

So let us start first with the question of religion. The ordinary belief is that religion is a method, is a process of relating oneself with the Divine or with that which is highest. Every universal religion such as Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Judaism, Zoroastrianism, Buddhism claims that it is applicable to everyone in the world ? one uniform religion applicable to all people in the world. And therefore it claims that other religions are either wrong, erroneous or subordinate whereas one's own religion is the highest. This is the present condition of those who believe in religion and who are adherents of one religion or the other. A Christian believes that Christianity is the best religion and everyone in the world ultimately ought to embrace Christianity. One religion, one uniform religion which should be

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embraced by everyone in the world. Islam believes that it is the best religion and that everyone in the world should embrace Islam; that the way of meeting the highest is what is laid down in Koran. Christianity believes that the way of meeting the highest is laid down in the Bible. This is the mark of religion. Religion is a way of meeting the Highest, or the Divine, it is a method of meeting the Divine and that this method is universally applicable uniformly. It is a very important part of the definition of religion.

Vivekananda travelled all over the world and his main message was this: Let religions not quarrel among themselves; let no religion claim that it is the best religion. He pointed out that actually everyone should have his own religion. There is no religion as such which is supreme. For each individual there can be one special religion and in that sense the present number of religions are not enough. There are only five or eight, at the most ten religions. He pointed out that everyone should be able to develop his own religion, his own method of meeting the Highest. For each one his religion is the method by which he can rise. For him his religion is better than others but it is not that for everyone it is better than others. This is the way in which he tried to show how the conflict of religion can be overcome. Even among Christians there can be as many Christian religions as individuals. Or one may even transcend what is Christianity. The reason behind this proposition was that his own teacher Sri Ramakrishna made a tremendous experiment in the life of religions.

One day when you have time, take the biography of Ramakrishna and read the experiments he made. He practiced several universal religions. He was born Hindu, he was a great worshiper of *Kali* and realised Kali so that he could be in constant touch with Her. He could talk to Her, seek Her advice and act according to Her advice. This was his first realisation. Kali is real, more real than the things that we see in the world ? that was his conclusion, his experience. Then he practiced many other forms of Hinduism. Kali is only one form of Hindu religion. Hinduism itself is like a banyan tree in which there are so many branches. He realised also what is called *Advaita* (*Advaita* means non-dualism. *Dvaita* means two, *A* means not). You realise Oneness. When you realise Kali there is a realisation of Kali being separate from you; there is a relationship between the two. But when you have Advaita there is no relationship between one and the other. There is a realisation of identity ? Oneness. That is Advaita. Within a few days of practice of Advaita he realised Advaita. Then he practiced Christianity. He began to go to the church, he especially observed Sunday because it is a part of Christian religion, he practiced everything that is prescribed in Christianity and realised that Jesus is real. Just as he realised that Kali is real he realised that Jesus is real. He is not an imagination he really lives. He is an embodiment of love: he helps, cures your sorrow, uplifts you, he can give salvation. This was Ramakrishna's conclusion by experience. He practiced Islam. He began to go to the mosque. He practiced Friday particularly because it is the Muslim holiday. And he came to the conclusion that the message of Prophet Mohammed is valid, is true. He practiced so, even the consciousness of Hanuman for example. You have heard of Hanuman? Hanuman was one of the chiefs of the army by whose help Rama conquered Lanka and could rescue Sita. This Hanuman is supposed to be the most devoted servant of Sri Rama. Ramakrishna in his practice of Yoga realised that Hanuman is real, that he is not a fiction. And his identity with Hanuman was so great that he claimed that a tail began to grow! Even that experience he began to have so much of identity did he experience. If you become the devotee of Hanuman it is as valid as if you become the devotee of Jesus ? just as Jesus is real Hanuman is also real. He practiced even Radha's Consciousness. He used to wear sari although he was male he used to put on the female dress! People used to call Ramakrishna a mad man but his madness was Divine. Wherever was the Divine he wanted to experiment whether it is real or not. It is like a scientist and a scientist must completely fulfil the conditions of the experiment. He experimented to see if Radha is real or not and he realised that Radha is real.

Thus he declared that as far as all the existing religions are concerned the basic claims are valid, they are not wrong. But if anybody says that one is better than the other ? that he denied. He said everyone leads you to the right path and takes you to the highest which is claimed. This was his experimental conclusion. Not by belief, not by intellectually trying to reconcile the religions. No! He experimented and found that Jesus is real, Krishna is real, Rama is real, Hanuman is real, Radha is real, Prophet Mohammed is real. About Rama and Krishna he said that both are manifested in himself. He emphasised their reality by saying "I am myself Rama and Krishna", that is why he took a new name: Ramakrishna. He said that both are incarnated in him. Instead of doubting he experienced and realised that he himself embodied Rama and Krishna.

In the history of spiritual life in the world, Ramakrishna stands as it were at the gate of harmony. How to harmonise all the religions not by debate or controversy or comparing one dogma with the other dogma but directly by experiencing, by experimenting and realising in his own life. Now

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what conclusion therefore do you derive from it? That every religion is valid but no religion is superior to the other religion and that further, if it is appropriate for you to be Radha then for you that path is better than any other path. If it is good for you to be Rama then the path of devotion to Rama is better for you but not for all. So Vivekananda came to the conclusion as a direct disciple of Sri Ramakrishna, and gave this message to the world: Why are you quarrelling saying my religion is better than the other? Why do you want to convert people from one religion to the other? If people are happy with their religion since this religion is valid let them move with that religion. If this religion satisfies you you move on with this religion and realise your own goal. Why do you quarrel? He went farther and he said: Even these religions which are now available are not enough and as you move forward your own religion will be another religion. Every one can have his own religion, so that, in this world that can be as many religions as every human being. This is one of his highest messages that he gave to mankind. That is why Vivekananda and Ramakrishna are the reconcilers. They brought about a great synthesis. But still they spoke the language of religion.

Now what is that characteristic by which religion is called religion, you might say the differentia of religion which is common in all religions? All religions have specific rituals, ceremonies and mechanical acts. And both Ramakrishna and Vivekananda allowed even rituals and ceremonies to be promoted. It is here that there is a distinction between religions and yoga. Yoga also is a method to attain to the highest but not by the method of rituals, ceremonies, dogmas and prescribed acts. This is the speciality of yoga. There are no ceremonies, no rituals, no prescribed acts. In other words true spirituality transcends the limits of religion. It does not condemn ceremonies and rituals. If it is good for you it is alright. But there is another way in which rituals and ceremonies can be all dispensed. Yoga is an explosion of consciousness. There is nothing mechanical or dogmatic in it. There is nothing to do with ceremonies. You take any yoga in which there are no rituals and ceremonies except when as a preliminary method it is admitted to some extent. But when that religious ceremony is over then you are fit for a higher step where ceremonies are no more necessary. But then again in the field of yoga ? there are several of them: Karma Yoga, Hatha Yoga, Raja Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, etc... ? and there again there is a quarrel. Just as among religions there is a quarrel saying this religion is better than the others even in the yoga there is this malady, this sickness, this illness. The Raja yogi says that Raja Yoga is the best method, jnani says that Jnana Yoga is the best method, bhakta claims that Bhakti Yoga is the best method, even though there are no rituals and ceremonies. But still they maintain that their method is better than the others method and that every one should do this method. Sri Aurobindo points out that even this is a falsity. You practice every yoga and you arrive at a conclusion and actually you require all the conclusions. It is not as if the realisation of Karma Yoga is enough, you should strive to have the conclusions of all the yogas.

The very condition of the Integral Yoga is acceptance of all the paths of yoga without claiming that this is superior to the other. But when you do that you find that every individual has his own method of integrating. You should integralize but there is no uniform method by which you integralise. Every one grows where one is and integrates all according to his or her own line of development. There is no fixed proposition that every one should follow so many steps. That is why Mother said: "It is impossible to make a religion out of Sri Aurobindo's teaching." Impossible because to make a religion you must have ceremonies and rituals, prescribed acts and you should claim that your method is the best method while according to Sri Aurobindo there is no particular method which is the best one. Every individual has his own method, that can't be any uniformity about it. You cannot say here there is Integral Yoga you apply this first step, or second step and third step like marching ? you cannot give marching orders in Integral Yoga. There is a complete freedom. Every individual is free to arrive at the explosion of consciousness which is the central thing. Discovery of higher and higher levels of consciousness through expansion of consciousness is the method. You arrive at higher levels of consciousness and what is the method: you break the limits of consciousness. Each one has his own limitations therefore each one has his own method for crossing his limitations. Therefore Sri Aurobindo says in the Integral Yoga every one has his own yoga to be freely chosen by each one. So there can't be any process of converting somebody saying: "Look I have followed this method now you follow that method only and only through that method you will succeed." This is a false message. Every individual is free and according to his nature, according to the lines of his development he will be able to integrate all. The shastra of Integral Yoga therefore is to be quite different. It is not one straight line given to everybody saying now you will follow this path. It is a shastra, it is a science but it is a different kind of shastra. If you read *The Synthesis of Yoga* you will find a new way of approaching yoga. It is a new kind of science, a science which can be adapted to each individual differently. These are the three points that we wanted to make in regard to this paragraph.

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"Meanwhile certain general lines have to be formed which may help to guide the thought and practice of the sadhaka" Although each one has his own method there are certain general lines which can be formed. For example, Integral Yoga, you might say, has three steps: Psychic transformation, Spiritual transformation and Supramental transformation. These three lines of development in general will be common to all the sadhakas who follow Integral Yoga. But these three processes are of such a nature that they can't be uniform. The way in which you will come to psychic transformation will quite different from the way in which I will come to psychic transformation. The way in which you will arrive at spiritual transformation will be quite different from the other ones, and similarly for the supramental transformation. General lines can be laid down. What is psychic transformation can be laid down, what is spiritual and supramental transformation can be laid down, in general. But what steps you will take, how you will grow that cannot be laid down. Therefore Integral Yoga is always an open book where nothing is closed. In fact Integral Yoga develops with each one, it is an ever fresh yoga. Nobody's yoga can be duplicated in the other one. So how many variety of Integral Yoga will there be? Millions and millions of openings, each one having his own way. This is an example of showing what is the meaning of general lines of development and yet a unique line for every one. Both the propositions have been made by Sri Aurobindo: Integral Yoga is one in which each one has his own method even though if there are general lines of development. Normally you will not be able to arrive at spiritual transformation without psychic transformation, but even this statement is not true. Some will arrive at spiritual transformation earlier than the psychic transformation. Some may even begin supramental transformation, in some respect, even when one is still in psychic transformation in regard to some others elements of his being. But normally psychic transformation should occupy a lot of your time then will come spiritual transformation, then supramental transformation. But they are general lines without forcing each individual to fall in line.

"Meanwhile certain general lines have to be formed which may help to guide the thought and practice of the sadhaka. But these must take as much as possible the form of general truths, general statements of principle, the most powerful broad directions of effort and development rather than a fixed system which has to be followed as a routine. All Shastra is the outcome of past experience and a help to future experience. It is an aid and a partial guide. It puts up signposts, gives the names of the main roads and the already explored directions, so that the traveller may know whither and by what paths he is proceeding."

The rest depends on personal effort and experience and upon the power of the Guide." This is the complete statement of the shastra of the Integral Yoga.

We have got four statements so far. One is that the shastra of Integral Yoga is in the heart of every individual who is thinking and living. You remember the first sentence about the shastra of Integral Yoga: it is the eternal Veda which is in the heart of each and every individual. So that even if there is nobody in the world to tell you about it, even if no book exists in the world, even then as you move forward and you refer to your inner heart the Integral Yoga will manifest on its own. You don't need anything: no book no teacher. You don't need anything because it is already in your heart. The second statement is that many people require a word ? *sabda*, the word, the revelation. It may be an oral word or a written word. This is the second way of shastra: a written shastra or an oral shastra. Of the written shastra there are two: the scriptures which are revealed by the Divine Himself and the others not revealed but scientifically codified. We already made a distinction between the Veda on the one hand and the Sutra of Patanjali. Veda is a revealed scripture whereas Pantanjali's Yoga Sutra is a scientific code. Shastras can be of two kinds oral or written and both of them can be scriptures or scientific codes. Lastly, there is a need of a word coming from a living teacher. There may be an oral tradition or a written tradition but apart from that it may also come to you through the teaching of a teacher. A teacher reveals... as you move forward a teacher comes and at every stage says you have reached here you now move forward there. That is also shastra ? shastra coming out of the teacher as you move forward. This is what we have been told.

And Sri Aurobindo says that Integral Yoga has a speciality which is not available anywhere and that is to declare, *"All life is Yoga"* meaning thereby that whatever is the result of inconscient can be eliminated from life and the entire life can become divinised. It is a speciality of the Integral Yoga: the entire life is concerned. Life is always integral, whenever you do any little thing which is living you will find that all the elements of your being are present. Life is always many-sided, multi-sided, all-sided. There are basically three sides of our life: the cognitive side (cognitive means that which is concerned with knowledge), the affective side (which is concerned with affection, feeling, emotion), and the conative side (conation means inclination to act). All the three elements are present in every activity of life. It is by artificiality that you may divide one from the other. But in life all the three are present all the time, it is integral always. Therefore the natural method where life is the instrument of

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yoga is that it has to be integral. And then finally Sri Aurobindo says the Integral Yoga even though it has general lines of development still every individual individualises it in his own manner. Right. This is the summary of the entire chapter so far on what we have done about shastra.

Now we come to the next. This is regarding *utsaha*, the role of the sadhaka himself.

You may have knowledge of the shastra but if you don't have aspiration then the shastra is a dead letter. There must be enthusiasm in the individual to pursue the goal of Integral Yoga. Therefore, what is the role of the individual himself?

In ancient India there was a very important system. The pupil was required to search out a teacher. Not like the present system where teacher is appointed first and then waits for the pupils to come. Pupils don't have to make a big effort to find out teachers, they are available in the schools. But such was not the case in ancient India, the very system was such that a pupil had to find out and had to move onwards and onwards in search of a teacher. So the starting point was not the teacher but the pupil. Apart from shastra the starting point of yoga is the pupil himself. The pupil has to lift his hand in a manner of call then the teacher may come from above and may lift him up. The role of the teacher is only uplifting, not lifting. Lifting has to be done by the pupil himself. He lifts himself above, calls out, aspires, then the teacher also answers. Uplifting the effort of the pupil is the instruction, example and influence of the teacher. This is the relationship between the pupil and the teacher. If the pupil has no enthusiasm then the pupil will find that the teacher does not come forth. So, Sri Aurobindo now tell us what is the role of the pupil, what is the role of effort, what is the role of aspiration.

"The development of the experience in its rapidity, its amplitude, the intensity and power of its results, depends primarily, in the beginning of the path and long after, on the aspiration and personal effort of the sadhaka" How far you will move in the yoga, what kind of results, what fullness of experiences you will get, what will be the results will depend ? in the beginning at least and even after beginning for long time after ? upon the pupil. This is a very good warning to every student: do not blame; make an effort on your side, be sure the teacher will be always there. Such an example you will find in *The Mahabharata*. Arjuna came to a crisis and simply declared: "I will not fight." And Sri Krishna simply smiled and rebuked him as a friend, not as a teacher. Then when it really became critical his mind, he asked, made an aspiration, lifted his hand and said: "Please, tell me what is the right thing to do?" And then he suddenly found that the one with whom he was standing was himself the teacher. The moment you aspire you will find the teacher always standing near you. This is the promise of God to man that he has arranged the world in such a way that when you are really in crisis, when you really want a teacher the teacher will come, he is available. But on your part you should be aspiring, you must aspire and say: "Oh! I want to know." The teacher is always there. In this process of yoga the individual aspires, he makes a personal effort.

"The process of Yoga is a turning of the human soul from the egoistic state of consciousness absorbed in the outward appearances and attractions of things to a higher state in which the Transcendent and Universal can pour itself into the individual mould and transform it. The first determining element of the siddhi is, therefore, the intensity of the turning, the force which directs the soul inward. The power of aspiration of the heart, the force of the will, the concentration of the mind, the perseverance and determination of the applied energy are the measure of that intensity. The ideal sadhaka should be able to say in the Biblical phrase, "My zeal for the Lord has eaten me up." It is this zeal for the Lord, — utsaha, the zeal of the whole nature for its divine results, vyakulata..." This is a great Sanskrit word. You should become restless. Without God you have no rest, no repose. That is the meaning of *vyakulata*. *"...the heart's eagerness for the attainment of the Divine, — that devours the ego and breaks up the limitations of its petty and narrow mould for the full and wide reception of that which it seeks, that which, being universal, exceeds and, being transcendent, surpasses even the largest and highest individual self and nature."* This is the measure of *utsaha*: *"My zeal for the Lord has eaten me up."* There is no rest for me until I meet the Divine. I will be consumed by fire. This is the *utsaha*, the aspiration. And Sri Aurobindo says: "One who wants God must want God and God only." No other aim, no other lower thing. That is the sign that you are really a good pupil. The mark of a good pupil is one who wants the Divine and the Divine alone.

"But this is only one side of the force that works for perfection. The process of the integral Yoga has three stages, not indeed sharply distinguished or separate, but in a certain measure successive. There must be, first, the effort towards at least an initial and enabling self-transcendence and contact with the Divine; next, the reception of that which transcends, that with which we have gained communion, into ourselves for the transformation of our whole conscious being; last, the utilisation of our transformed humanity as a divine centre in the world." Let us stop here and take stock of these three steps.

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"There must be first the effort towards at least an initial and enabling self-transcendence and contact with the Divine..." You make such a tremendous effort you go out of yourself. When ego breaks down. Our limitations are transgressed. That which was unknown to us ? the Divine was a stranger to us as He is now to us ? with that Divine you make a contact. Here your effort has to be intense, it all depend on you, at least apparently because behind, the Divine's hand is always present; He always inspires and helps you. But from your side you feel as if you have to make a tremendous effort to go beyond yourself. It is as if an effort to come out of yourself and have a contact with the Divine. *"...next, the reception of that which transcends, that with which we have gained communion, into ourselves for the transformation of our whole conscious being..."* First you make a contact and the moment you make a contact you will find a fountain of knowledge, joy, everything and that fountain will pour itself into you. This is the second step in which you allow the pouring of the Divine into you. Here reception is necessary. In the first there was a great effort to come out of yourself and now comes the stage where the Divine pours Himself into you and transforms you. *"... last, the utilisation of our transformed humanity as a divine centre in the world."* You receive the fountain from the Divine then you become a channel of the Divine force. In the third stage you yourself become a Divine center so that you can pour the Divine knowledge, the Divine love into the others. So there are three stages: your ascent towards the Divine, the descent of the Divine in you and third is the flow of the light of the Divine through your channel, you yourself become a center of the Divine action.

"So long as the contact with the Divine is not in some considerable degree established, so long as there is not some measure of sustained identity, sayujya, the element of personal effort must normally predominate." As long as the contact has not been established, as long as you have not become in some degree one with the Divine (*sayuja* means that you are united, you become one with the Divine). Until some kind of identity, in some degree you should be identified with the Divine, until this point is reached personal effort is preponderant. You cannot say: "Let the Divine do everything." From your side you have to make a constant effort. There are some people who believe that the Divine is always present, which is a fact, the Divine is always active, this is a fact, and they conclude: therefore if Divine wants me to realise he will make me realise. This is the idle man's dream. One who does not want to make an effort he only dreams and he will never realise himself because he does not know the process. In the process, even though the Divine is present, his hand is coming down, but from your side until you lift your hand you will not be uplifted. On your side you must lift your hand. Therefore those who preach that God will do everything in His own time are teaching only idleness. Yoga is exactly the opposite of idleness. Yoga is a process of vigilance. It is a constant effort in which you go on transcending yourself; you exceed yourself at every moment. You go upward and upward and upward from your side. There should be no limit. Wherever there is a corner where your effort has not yet reached you make an effort. Every corner of your being should be like a fire; the tons of fire should spread out in all parts of your being. That is the effort. Then you will find the next step when the pouring will come from above and personal effort will diminish.

"But in proportion as this contact establishes itself, the sadhaka must become conscious that a force other than his own, a force transcending his egoistic endeavour and capacity, is at work in him and to this Power he learns progressively to submit himself and delivers up to it the charge of his Yoga." Then you will find how easy is the process of yoga. Because you have now got the contact with the Divine who was already helping you and now you realise that He is helping you and there is a big difference between the two. The Divine helping you when you are not aware that He is helping you and the Divine helping you when you are aware that He is helping you makes all the difference. When you are aware that the Divine is helping you then you just tell Him: "Do this" and He will do it for you. You have not to make an effort then, the effort diminishes.

"In the end his own will and force become one with the higher Power; he merges them in the divine Will and its transcendent and universal Force. He finds it thenceforward presiding over the necessary transformation of his mental, vital and physical being with an impartial wisdom and provident effectivity of which the eager and interested ego is not capable." Even with your utmost effort what you can do is little but when you are in that context, when you submit to Him as Sri Aurobindo says: "Yoga is a process by which you make God do what you want to do." It is a very beautiful expression. You don't need to do anything. You just tell the Divine, pray to the Divine this is what is to be done and you will see it immediately happening. In the Divine action there is no delay. Delay is present as long as egoism is present, as long as there is an ego there is a time lag but once you reach the door of the Divine the boon is instant, you just ask the *tathastu* (*tatasthu* means let it be, so be it). That is always the answer of the Divine when you really approach Him, as Sri Aurobindo says when you approach Him more and more you become His favourite. And to the favourite, Divine does not deny anything. If you approach Him more and more you become His favourite although He is

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impartial. The fire is impartial it gives heat to everybody equally but if you are far from the fire the heat which is transmitted is lesser, if you are near the heat it is much greater. So if you are nearer the Divine, the grace which falls upon you is much greater. The nearer you come to the Divine the greater the favourite you become of the Divine and the greater the favourite you are, there is no denial from the Divine. All you ask for is given on the spot. Only then you have to be careful whether you can receive all that He gives or not.

"It is when this identification and this self-merging are complete that the divine centre in the world is ready." There is no difference between Him and you in every manner. Then you become a real channel. You can radiate the Divine through yourself. That is your destiny. Everybody's destiny is this. The only question is the time by which one approaches. What will be your condition then? *"Purified, liberated, plastic, illumined, it can begin to serve as a means for the direct action of a supreme Power in the larger Yoga of humanity or superhumanity, of the earth's spiritual progression or its transformation."* The whole humanity is then your field. The entire world is your field and you become a channel of the Divine action in the world.

"Always indeed it is the higher Power that acts." Although personal effort is necessary from your side because you are egoistic, you are blind therefore you feel I must make an effort but the basic truth is always *it is the Higher Power that acts.* *"Our sense of personal effort and aspiration comes from the attempt of the egoistic mind to identify itself in a wrong and imperfect way with the workings of the divine Force."* As long as we have egoism our sense of personal effort is tremendous. Always the Divine is acting and even your effort is His effort actually. It is He who is putting you into the mill so that you are constantly driven to make an effort.

XI.

As I told you I had once proposed for the Ashram's school a programme. I made a syllabus: Spiritual history of India — that was the title. And I had started with the *Veda*, *Upahishads*, *Bhagavad Gita*, Indian philosophies, movement of *Bhakti*, the eclipse and the restarting, the new renaissance and coming up to Sri Aurobindo. And the impression that I had created was that Sri Aurobindo is the culmination of all that has gone before, a point of fulfilment of all that has been aspired for. Mother answered with a big bang towards me when I presented this to her. And she advised me as to what I should concentrate upon. I told you, that it was my first lecture the day before yesterday in fulfilment of what Mother had said. So, I would like to read with you what she had written for me. I have it both in French and in English. But if you don't mind I will read first in French because Mother told me: "If you want to read me you should read me in French." I had requested the Press to give me English copies of Mother's talks and the Ashram Press people went to the Mother and showed my letter, so Mother gave me a bang saying: "If you want to read me you must read me in French."

(Mother's answer in English to the School's teachers when she was told that the new special afternoon classes at the library had chosen as a first research theme India's spiritual History.)

No! It won't do. It is not to be done that way. You should begin with a big BANG! You were trying to show the continuity of History, with Sri Aurobindo as the outcome, the culmination ? it is false, entirely. Sri Aurobindo does not belong to History; he is outside and beyond History. Till the birth of Sri Aurobindo, religions and spiritualities were always centered on past figures, and they were showing as "the goal" the negation of life upon earth. So, you had a choice between two alternatives: either a life in this world with its round of petty pleasures and pains, joys and sufferings, threatened by hell if you were not behaving properly; or an escape into another world, heaven, nirvana, Moksha, liberation. Between these two there is nothing much to choose, they are equally bad. Sri Aurobindo has told us that this was a fundamental mistake which accounts for the weakness and degradation of India. Buddhism, Jainism, Illusionism were sufficient to sap all energy out of the country. True, India is the only place in the world which is still aware that something else than matter exists. The other countries have quite forgotten it: Europe, America and elsewhere... That is why she still has a message to preserve and deliver to the world. But at present she is splashing and floundering in the muddle. Sri Aurobindo has shown that the truth does not lie in running away from earthly life but in remaining in it, to transform it, divinize it, so that the Divine can manifest HERE, in this PHYSICAL WORLD. You should tell all this at the first sitting. You should be square and frank. Then, when this is told, strongly, squarely, and there, is no doubt about it ? and then only ? you can go on and amuse

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them with, the history of religions and religious or spiritual leaders. Then ? and then only ? you will be able to show the seed of weakness and falsehood that they have harbored and proclaimed. Then ? and then only ? you will be able to discern, from time to time, from place to place, an "intuition" that something else is possible: in the Vedas, for instance (the injunction to descend deep into the cave of the Panis); in the Tantras also a little light burning. I may add that you could adopt as motto for your first project this quotation of Sri Aurobindo:

"We do not belong to the past dawns, but to the noons of the future."

Essays on the Gita

Message from Mother to the School:

"Sri Aurobindo does not belong to the past nor to history. Sri Aurobindo is the Future advancing towards its realization. Thus we must shelter the eternal youth required for a speedy advance, in order not to become laggards on the way."

Mother's Agenda 5 April 1967

Actually Mother had put here one big square ? *carrément*. She herself had drawn a square. It is not here but the paper that she sent me had this big square written on it to indicate that I should be square and should tell all my students very squarely with a big bang.

As I told you the day before yesterday I have really given the first lecture only on that day. All the rest was a preparation to be able to tell you what Mother has said here and I will take another time, long long time to dilate upon it. In fact, when I read *The Life Divine* and *The Synthesis of Yoga* it is basically for this purpose.

So we come back to *The Synthesis of Yoga*. The *utsaha* is the zeal for the Lord that eats us up. It is the necessity of personal effort particularly during the first period until we are able to have contact with the Divine and not to listen to the advice that don't worry, God will do everything for you. This is the period when we must ask every part of the being to strain and to work harder and still harder.

But to remember *"Always indeed it is the higher Power that acts. Our sense of personal effort and aspiration comes from the attempt of the egoistic mind to identify itself in a wrong and imperfect way with the workings of the divine Force."* That means that our personal effort is actually Divine force itself, pushing itself. Because we are egoistic we do not know so we imperfectly identify with it and give a twist to it and that gives us the sense of effort. Actually everything is so facile. *"It persists in applying to experience on a supernormal plane the ordinary terms of mentality which it applies to its normal experiences in the world. In the world we act with the sense of egoism; we claim the universal forces that work in us as our own; we claim as the effect of our personal will, wisdom, force, virtue the selective, formative, progressive action of the Transcendent in this frame of mind, life and body. Enlightenment brings to us the knowledge that the ego is only an instrument; we begin to perceive and feel that these things are our own in the sense that they belong to our supreme and integral Self, one with the Transcendent, not to the instrumental ego. Our limitations and distortions are our contribution to the working; the true power in it is the Divine's. When the human ego realises that its will is a tool, its wisdom ignorance and childishness, its power an infant's groping, its virtue a pretentious impurity, and learns to trust itself to that which transcends it, that is its salvation. The apparent freedom and self-assertion of our personal being to which we are so profoundly attached, conceal a most pitiable subjection to a thousand suggestions, impulses, forces which we have made extraneous to our little person. Our ego, boasting of freedom, is at every moment the slave, toy and puppet of countless beings, powers, forces, influences in universal Nature. The self-abnegation of the ego in the Divine is its self-fulfilment; its surrender to that which transcends it is its liberation from bonds and limits and its perfect freedom."*

This is one of the most important statements about the ego and the Divine and their relationship. I will just make a little diagram for you. Each one of us is seated in the vast compass of the whole universe which is issued from the Divine who is at once immobile and mobile. This mobility is a tremendous creative movement and in this movement at a certain point there is a blockage. As a result of this blockage a small little pebble is created; in this vast movement a small little pebble is created because of this blockage. But this blockage does not mean that this force is not transmitted. It is transmitted but feebly. Therefore we don't feel here in our egoism the tremendous force which is behind. It is a manageable force, a small little force which seems to be moving round and round and it is here that this force enters as it were and we catch the force. It is woven into us as it were. And we think that this force is our force ? my force. Whatever force you catch you identify yourself with it. And this force is already moving forward but the ego feels that this force is moving because of its catching it. It has caught it but already the force is moving in its own way. But because you identified yourself

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with it you feel that this is my force, which is moving forward. Actually it is all moving from here. Because you catch it the force becomes weakened. You lose the whole thing. The force which is coming here, by the ego's catching it, its force is becoming weakened, diluted. Therefore when this force tries to move with its own movement you feel as if there is a big resistance ? actually the resistance is your own. You are trying to catch it and it is moving forward by itself but because you catch it you feel a resistance. Already the force is trying to move forward so you feel as if you are making a big effort to move forward. Actually the movement is moving already but because you are resisting and identifying yourself with it, it becomes weaker and the force behind is pushing you. You feel therefore a kind of burden behind you. It is a burden which make you feel that *you* are making an effort.

This is what gives you the sense of personal effort. But Sri Aurobindo says: always it is a power of the Divine that acts. You become enlightened when this blockage is removed. Normally when this enlightenment is presented in intellectual terms, as I am doing now, our natural tendency would be "Alright, I will not catch it. I will allow the force to pass by me." You do nothing as it were. This is the kind of conclusion that many people derive out of this statement which I am making. If it is the Divine force which is working it will work whether I do anything or not. So I stop doing anything. But it does not stop in that way. It is a wrong way of dealing with it. Unless you break this ego, here, whether you allow it to pass or not to pass, ego remains. It will always creates this sense that I am doing. And the way by which you can break this ego is to work from behind. The dam is there, blockage is here and unless you break this blockage you won't be liberated from this sense. It is not merely by hearing that ego is not the doer, that Divine is the doer. Merely by hearing you won't enter into this consciousness.

Now this dam consists of what: exclusive concentration of consciousness. Our concentration is exclusively concentrated upon this way. If you look at your whole life you find that your whole concentration is moving outward towards all that is around you. You look at your senses. All the senses open outwards: your eyes open outwards, your ears are opened to the sounds coming from outside, the touches are all coming from outside, you feel the sense of touch only when it comes from outside and since we are bound by these senses we are all opened outward. Because we are opened outward this blockade is created. There is no consciousness at all in this way. So when consciousness is absent again and again and again a blockade is created. Therefore instead of moving outward, move inward. This is all the meaning of meditation. Instead of moving outward you withdraw and go inward. And if you do it repeatedly then this dam will be broken. And once you enter here you will see a beautiful palace of the Divine. You don't need to create the palace of the Divine it is already here. You don't need to fabricate anything it is all here. Only you have to turn your gaze from without to within. All yoga is turning inward. It is to stop our exclusive concentration outward by an opposite movement in which you turn inward. All yoga implies inwardisation ? turn inward, move inward. When you close your eyes and sit for meditation you strive to break this which keeps you always outward. When you sit down for meditation slightest sound coming from outside and immediately you are drawn outside. Very little time is available in our life when we can sit down very quietly and move inward. This is the entire science of yoga. All the time we are living outward. Yoga means shifting our attention from outward to attention inward and then again coming back outward.

Once you have done this very often the tendency is to go inward and remain there. Life is rejected. All the movement here is thrown out. It is another kind of ignorance. That is why the *Isha Upanishad* says that this is a movement of ignorance and this is a movement of knowledge. But if that movement of knowledge is only here that is also a darkness because then you lose the whole outward. You break the dam, break the boundaries, enter here, contact the Divine and then come back again but with the cancellation of the ego.

That is the only way of cancelling the ego. You can't cancel the ego merely by thinking that you are not the doer. Simply by saying you are not the ego does not destroy it. It goes on like a cork bobbing on the sea constantly going on and on. It can't be destroyed. If you want to destroy it you have to move here and realise it. The moment you realise it the ego goes away. And then you can come back here without it and then you become a centre but a Divine centre. The Divine Himself moves without any resistance and His power is not at all diminished, there is no dilution, it moves omnipotently. The same force of the Divine powerfully is transmitted through the centre that we are truly. We are not the ego and there is a centre which is called *jivatman*. That is the real individual. That centre is the Divine Himself; it is a partial manifestation of the Divine Himself. When this happens there is no personal effort at all because all the force come from here and you know it. You are only the instrument, an instrument which is completely into the hands of the Divine.

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We have once spoken of the analogy of the bow. Take a bow... How does a bow work? A bow cannot work by itself. You need an archer. Archer takes the bow in the hands, takes an arrow, fixes the arrow himself ? bow itself can't fix it itself ? , the arrow is fixed by the archer and whenever the arrow is to be shot is decided by the archer. He uses the bow only to fix the arrow and to shoot at the target. And that is all. Such is the real condition of our true being. The *jivatman* is of this nature. It is a bow in the hands of the Divine ? always. But because of this blockage, the ego is created, and it diminishes the force which is coming from here and then when that force is pushing forward you feel I am making an effort. That is all the meaning of personal effort. The ego stops the force but the force pushes it. This pushing is recognised by the ego as its effort because it passes through it. It is exactly like the cart and the dog. The dog moving under the moving cart. The dog feels that the cart is moving because of it moving under it. But the cart moves on its own.

Sri Aurobindo speaks of three stages in the previous paragraph that we read yesterday. First is a process of contact. It is a long, long process in which you turn inward. Then you become *sayujya*, you become united with the Divine. This is where the ego is destroyed. You unite here and ego is destroyed there. It is like an electric current, once you realise your unity here ego falls down. The third step starts when you become the Divine centre and the force moves without any boundaries, without any blockage. Until this happens the idea of personal effort persists and you should not therefore be idle: you make the sense of effort a part of your development. But this effort is to be turned inward and inward-outward so that the balance is maintained in your being until the ego is abolished and there is a powerful instrument of the Divine in the world which works in the world, without boundaries.

Now let us read therefore the paragraph that we had read yesterday. *"But this is only one side of the force that works for perfection. The process of the integral Yoga has three stages, not indeed sharply distinguished or separate, but in a certain measure successive. There must be, first, the effort towards at least an initial and enabling self-transcendence and contact with the Divine; next, the reception of that which transcends, that with which we have gained communion, into ourselves for the transformation of our whole conscious being..."* I spoke yesterday of a fountain. When you go near the Divine there is a big fountain of Divine consciousness. It bathes you as you return to it. *"...last, the utilisation of our transformed humanity as a divine centre in the world."* You realise the *jivatman* in you and through that *jivatman* you allow the Divine force to manifest. *"So long as the contact with the Divine is not in some considerable degree established, so long as there is not some measure of sustained identity, sayujya, the element of personal effort must normally predominate. But in proportion as this contact establishes itself, the sadhaka must become conscious that a force other than his own, a force transcending his egoistic endeavour and capacity, is at work in him and to this Power he learns progressively to submit himself and delivers up to it the charge of his Yoga."* Once you reach this point everything then becomes the responsibility of the archer. The bow remains the bow. The bow does not make an effort now to bring out the arrow, to fix it, to make the target and to shoot because it can't do it even if it tries. It never does. We only try to imitate the Divine in our ignorant way. We become the archer as it were, we become the fixer of the target, we shoot, but only as a monkey imitates man when it sees man doing something. If a man wears a cap the monkey also wears a cap but in its own clumsy manner. Similarly we are only imitators and when we stop imitating, open ourselves to the Divine, the Divine goes on doing its work without any boundary.

"In the end his own will and force become one with the higher Power; he merges them in the divine Will and its transcendent and universal Force. He finds it thenceforward presiding over the necessary transformation of his mental, vital and physical being with an impartial wisdom and provident effectivity of which the eager and interested ego is not capable. It is when this identification and this self-merging are complete that the divine centre in the world is ready. Purified, liberated, plastic, illumined, it can begin to serve as a means for the direct action of a supreme Power in the larger Yoga of humanity or superhumanity, of the earth's spiritual progression or its transformation." There is always a question for every individual: "How to be helpful to the others? How to serve mankind?" This is the answer. If you really want to serve mankind this is the condition. Abolition of egoism, allowing the Supreme force to work through you as a Divine centre. Then all what you do will work for the unity of mankind, for the progression of mankind, you really help mankind.

"Always indeed it is the higher Power that acts. Our sense of personal effort and aspiration comes from the attempt of the egoistic mind to identify itself in a wrong and imperfect way with the workings of the divine Force. It persists in applying to experience on a supernormal plane the ordinary terms of mentality which it applies to its normal experiences in the world." It is actually a very refined way of saying that the ego is like a monkey which is imitating the higher force, which simply imitates what is happening behind and applies the higher to the lower in its own way which is done very clumsily.

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"In the world we act with the sense of egoism; we claim the universal forces that work in us as our own; we claim as the effect of our personal will, wisdom, force, virtue the selective, formative, progressive action of the Transcendent in this frame of mind, life and body. Enlightenment [when you turn inward] brings to us the knowledge that the ego is only an instrument; we begin to perceive and feel that these things are our own in the sense that they belong to our supreme and integral Self, [integral Self is the Self which is both immobile and mobile at the same time] one with the Transcendent, not to the instrumental ego. Our limitations and distortions are our contribution to the working..." What we are contributing is to weaken the force. Because of our egoism the force which is coming from outside and which is powerful is weakened. We contribute only by distorting, by limiting it, by weakening it. *"...the true power in it is the Divine's. When the human ego realises that its will is a tool, its wisdom ignorance and childishness..."* In egoism we always say: "I am now more mature, I am more experienced, I am really wise." So Sri Aurobindo breaks this wisdom and says: *"...its wisdom [is only] ignorance and childishness..."* *"...its power an infant's groping, its virtue a pretentious impurity..."* What I say is my virtue is only a purity which is pretentious, which does not exist. You pretend to be virtuous, actually nobody is virtuous unless this happens. All claim to virtue is a pretence. *"...and learns to trust itself to that which transcends it, that is its salvation. The apparent freedom and self-assertion of our personal being to which we are so profoundly attached..."* In our egoism we feel we are free ? I decide myself what I am to do. It is my freedom. But this freedom is nothing but *"a most pitiable subjection to a thousand suggestions, impulses, forces which we have made extraneous to our little person. Our ego, boasting of freedom, is at every moment the slave, toy and puppet of countless beings, powers, forces, influences in universal Nature. The self-abnegation of the ego in the Divine is its self-fulfilment; its surrender to that which transcends it is its liberation from bonds and limits and its perfect freedom."*

The word *surrender* is a very important word. There is a science and art of surrender. This is the symbol of the Divine and this is the symbol of jivatman. This is more complex and this is less complex, but it is the image of the Divine. It is like the Divine looking at Himself in a small mirror. This mirror also is fabricating by Him. It is He who fabricates the mirror, it is he who looks into the mirror, it is a partial manifestation of Himself. Usually in your ordinary circumstances when you look to your mirror your face confronts you. You are on one side and on the other side there is your image. In other word we have got two important words subjective and objective. There is a difference between these two only to this extent ? this is subjective, this is objective. This objective, however, is not (and this is very important point), like a puppet of the subjective. Usually in the mirror your reflection is a puppet, whatever you do is reflected there automatically. So the analogy is not complete: in the mirror whatever the subject does the object does, it simply reflects. In a sense it is only puppeting the original subject. But in this process something more happens in the objectivisation. His objective consciousness is also brought into this. This reflection is not only an objective reflection of the content of the subjective but it is also a reflection of the subjective that is the element also present here. The objective is not only objective. The objective also contains in itself a subjectivity. And therefore the object behaves as if it is the subject. It is like a mother giving birth to a child ? that is a better analogy than a mirror. The child when it is born is a reflection of the mother. It is a subject giving rise to object. Very similar to the mother but the child is not the puppet of the mother It is not as if whenever the mother does something the child does something. The mother has a power of initiative action; the child also has a power of initiative action. This initiative action has a different angle, that is, to say while the angle of this subjective is turned this way the angle of this is turned that way. Just as this angle is free; similarly this is also free. The freedom of the subject is also transmitted to this object therefore it is also free. This is the real meaning of what is called the play. Mere puppetry is not play. Subject becoming an object and repeating in the object whatever it is, is no play. The object also repeats the subject completely, not only contains but the subjectivity is also present in the objectivity. So every object has subjectivity. Each one of us is also subjective. It regards the Divine as its object. It does not create the object but there is a sense of objectivity with regard to the object. This is the complexity of subjectivity and objectivity.

As a result there is a very important psychological condition which is created. There is a very interesting story that Mother has given. This is in the context of *Durga*. *Durga* is one of the manifestations of the Divine, a power of the Divine, like many others powers of the Divine who are called Gods and Goddesses. All God and Goddesses are the powers of the Divine. They are all instruments of the Divine. And surprisingly Mother one day said: "I taught *Durga* how to surrender herself to the Divine." What is the meaning of it? *Durga* is always an instrument of the Divine, where is the question of surrendering herself to the Divine? She already knows that she is the instrument of the Divine. The knowledge of being an instrument of the Divine is not sufficient. There is something much

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more to it. There is a play in which you are not merely a puppet of the Divine but you offer yourself to the Divine and this offering of yourself to the Divine is not an act of puppetry. It is creative. It is Himself but in that form. It is the Divine Himself surrendering, offering Himself to the Divine but from this side. This objectivisation also transcends this subjectivity. This objective is also subjective in character. This subjective character offer himself to the Divine and this conscious offering is surrender. Conscious offering of the objective figure of the Divine, in its subjective consciousness, offering itself to the Divine, is surrender. To know that there is a big force behind is one realisation. But to turn back again to the Divine and offering all that comes from the Divine to the Divine again is the method by which ego can be abolished. The abolition of the ego is not only a realisation that there is a Divine force which is working you still have the egoism of being the instrument of the Divine. Egoism is not abolished. It is only a partial success. From your side knowing all this, subjectivity comes back again and offers itself to the Divine. It is the child smiling at the mother. The mother has produced the child; it is an objective figure of the mother but having come there the child behaves in interplay. Even when the mother is not smiling the child may smile. It is not only puppetry. And by the child's smile the mother heart gets much more fulfilled. Uninvited the child smiles at the mother and the mother feels greatly fulfilled. Uninvited, because the child himself feels happy and that happiness pours out and manifests as a smile. The child must not really do what the mother tells him. On his own the child feels like offering. This is the condition in which surrender is obtained. It is that which Sri Aurobindo speaks in the last sentence. *"The self-abnegation of the ego in the Divine is its self-fulfilment; its surrender to that which transcends it is its liberation from bonds and limits and its perfect freedom."* We shall come to this subject again when we will come to other chapters but this is only a kind of an *aperçu*, a glimpse of the real meaning of surrender: the subjective becoming objective and objective expressing itself as subjective and returning to the object with a tremendous sense of submission ? happy submission. Not willy-nilly like a slave under compulsion but freely offering itself to the Divine. That is its perfect freedom.

"But still, in the practical development, each of the three stages has its necessity and utility and must be given its time or its place. It will not do, it cannot be safe or effective to begin with the last and highest alone. It would not be the right course, either, to leap prematurely from one to another." If from the first stage you say all is Divine even when egoism is not abolished, it will be disastrous. As long as you are egoistic, admit you are egoistic and work out step by step until the third stage arises when ego itself falls down. *"For even if from the beginning we recognise in mind and heart the Supreme, there are elements of the nature which long prevent the recognition from becoming realisation."* Mere intellectual knowledge or even some spiritual knowledge is not enough. It is not realisation. Merely to say I am not the doer is not enough. It is a good step forward but you must realise that you are not the doer. *"But without realisation our mental belief cannot become a dynamic reality; it is still only a figure of knowledge, not a living truth, an idea, not yet a power. And even if realisation has begun, it may be dangerous to imagine or to assume too soon that we are altogether in the hands of the Supreme or are acting as his instrument."* Many people who turn to yoga have illusions. The moment they turn to the Divine they think that they have become instruments of the Divine. And there is a vast difference, a long road to go... Once one sadhak wrote to the Mother and says: "Mother I want to do Divine's work." Mother answered: "First you do the work for the Divine then you will be able to do Divine's work." There are steps ? you cannot say immediately that you want to do Divine's work. To be able to do the Divine's work you must have realisation of the Divine and not only a partial realisation but a real realisation in which the Divine Himself gives you the work consciously. Not that you think that everything comes from the Divine therefore my work is also Divine's work. That is not true, it is falsehood. But many people who starts doing yoga become deluded simply because they are offering, they are now turning towards the Divine and they feel they have already become the instruments of the Divine. One should be therefore extremely cautious, extremely humble. The true humility is to see that one's self for a long, long, long, long, long time has to be a very sincere servant offering his work to the Divine, not claiming that it is Divine's work. His work should be an offer to the Divine, reminding that he is still an egoistic doer that he is still in the meshes of the ego but trying to get rid of it and therefore offering himself again and again until you reach a point when the Divine Himself gives you the work and says "Do it". You can see when Sri Aurobindo was in Alipore jail then as a result of his long sadhana Sri Krishna himself said: "I have work to do and I am giving a part, a little bit of that work to you." If you read Sri Aurobindo's account of the Alipore jail experience, Sri Krishna says: "I have a work to do, a part of it I want to give you." And he reveals him what is that work. So, one should be therefore very careful not to have the egoism of the instrument. This is one of the great delusions that arises in the process of yoga and one should be extremely careful. To claim, "I am the instrument of God" my Lord! don't have this delusion. When the

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realisation comes that you are the instrument of the Divine you are extremely humble you don't exist even to claim that you are the instrument of God. Only at this stage you can come to the third step, the Divine center in the world.

"But still, in the practical development, each of the three stages has its necessity and utility and must be given its time or its place. It will not do, it cannot be safe or effective to begin with the last and highest alone. It would not be the right course, either, to leap prematurely from one to another. For even if from the beginning we recognise in mind and heart the Supreme, there are elements of the nature which long prevent the recognition from becoming realisation. But without realisation our mental belief cannot become a dynamic reality; it is still only a figure of knowledge, not a living truth, an idea, not yet a power. And even if realisation has begun, it may be dangerous to imagine or to assume too soon that we are altogether in the hands of the Supreme or are acting as his instrument. That assumption may introduce a calamitous falsity; it may produce a helpless inertia or, magnifying the movements of the ego with the Divine Name, it may disastrously distort and ruin the whole course of the Yoga. There is a period, more or less prolonged, of internal effort and struggle in which the individual will has to reject the darkness and distortions of the lower nature and to put itself resolutely or vehemently on the side of the divine Light. The mental energies, the heart's emotions, the vital desires, the very physical being have to be compelled into the right attitude or trained to admit and answer to the right influences. It is only then, only when this has been truly done, that the surrender of the lower to the higher can be effected, because the sacrifice has become acceptable.

*"The personal will of the sadhaka has first to seize on the egoistic energies and turn them towards the light and the right; once turned, he has still to train them to recognise that always, always to accept, always to follow that. Progressing, he learns, still using the personal will, personal effort, personal energies, to employ them as representatives of the higher Power and in conscious obedience to the higher Influence. Progressing yet farther, his will, effort, energy become no longer personal and separate, but activities of that higher Power and Influence at work in the individual. But there is still a sort of gulf or distance which necessitates an obscure process of transit, not always accurate, sometimes even very distorting, between the divine Origin and the emerging human current. At the end of the process, with the progressive disappearance of egoism and impurity and ignorance, this last separation is removed; all in the individual becomes the divine working." This is the long process therefore the right attitude is only to be a servant and slave of God for ever and ever and ever until a time comes where you do not even know that you have become the instrument of God. You are the instrument of God, you have not time even to claim that you are the instrument of God. This is the process of *utsaha*, the entire process of effort which will culminate at this stage.*

XII.

We come now to the third aid in Yoga: the aid of the teacher.

"As the supreme Shastra of the integral Yoga is the eternal Veda secret in the heart of every man, so its supreme Guide and Teacher is the inner Guide, the World-Teacher, jagad-guru, [jagad means world and guru means teacher: the world teacher] secret within us. It is he who destroys our darkness by the resplendent light of his knowledge; that light becomes within us the increasing glory of his own self-revelation. He discloses progressively in us his own nature of freedom, bliss, love, power, immortal being. He sets above us his divine example as our ideal and transforms the lower existence into a reflection of that which it contemplates. By the inpouring of his own influence and presence into us he enables the individual being to attain to identity with the universal and transcendent.

What is his method and his system? He has no method and every method. His system is a natural organisation of the highest processes and movements of which the nature is capable. Applying themselves even to the pettiest details and to the actions the most insignificant in their appearance with as much care and thoroughness as to the greatest, they in the end lift all into the Light and transform all. For in his Yoga there is nothing too small to be used and nothing too great to be attempted. As the servant and disciple of the Master has no business with pride or egoism because all is done for him from above, so also he has no right to despond because of his personal deficiencies or the stumblings of his nature. For the Force that works in him is impersonal — or superpersonal — and infinite.

The full recognition of this inner Guide, Master of the Yoga, lord, light, enjoyer and goal of all sacrifice and effort, is of the utmost importance in the path of integral perfection. It is immaterial whether he is first seen as an impersonal Wisdom, Love and Power behind all things, as an Absolute

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manifesting in the relative and attracting it, as one's highest Self and the highest Self of all, as a Divine Person within us and in the world, in one of his — or her — numerous forms and names or as the ideal which the mind conceives. In the end we perceive that he is all and more than all these things together. The mind's door of entry to the conception of him must necessarily vary according to the past evolution and the present nature."

There are four things that I would like to point out.

First is the comparison of the *guru* with the supreme *Shastra*. As the *shastra* is present in the heart of every thinking being even so the teacher is in the heart of everyone. There is always the need of the teacher. This is you might say a universal law. There is always a relationship between humanity and the Supreme Lord whether we recognise him or no. This relationship is constant and whether we recognise Him or not, whether we ask him or not, he is at work. And he is constantly in the process of teaching. In other words we are already in a school presided over by the Supreme Lord. The whole world is a school in which all of us are pupils and he is the master, he is the teacher. Therefore we should never complain I have no good guide or no good teacher. There is indeed the teacher and he can be unveiled. There is first always the teacher available since all life is yoga the whole world is a school of yoga. Yoga is not one special study it is a common study for everyone. Everyone is a student of yoga whether he knows it or not, whether he likes it or not that is what we are here for ? all of us. And the Supreme Lord is the Master of Yoga and he uses the whole of life as a textbook. All that is here in the world, all that is happening here is the textbook for the Lord. He uses every event of life in training all the pupils in the world. It is a constant process.

What is his method? This is the second point. How does he teach? What are the methods by which he teaches us? And Sri Aurobindo says, he has no method and every method. It is not merely a rhetorical statement. It is not something that will startle us, it is a real literal fact. He has no method and every method. And why? Sri Aurobindo explains why he has no method and every method. No one method which he applies to everybody. Because every individual as a certain combination of psychological functioning, he will have a method appropriate to each one. We may only point out how he uses every realm, every kind of trend in the individual, how he himself combines ? he is like a Supreme Artist and he combines and recombines the colours of the world and of human beings. And by combining different kinds of colours he produces different designs and patterns and beautiful objects of the world. He wants to make each one of us a blooming flower ? every one of us. Nobody is especially a favourite, nobody is he prejudiced against. Every one of us is for him a blooming flower in his garden.

Sri Aurobindo says: *"His system is a natural organisation of the highest processes and movements of which the nature is capable."* This sentence is central to the whole thing. If you want to develop other systems of education in the world this sentence should be your guideline. Do not prescribe any specific method of teaching. You take your students as they come, see for each one what are the combinations of his or her psychological functioning and see how each one can be lifted up to the highest. Therefore the system will be highly individualised and yet there can be common ways by which the 'irrigation' can take place. There are certain forces which are so generated that each individual will approach automatically in his own way just as every tree moves towards the sun. Sun is placed as one general attraction as it were, one magnet, and each plant, each organism in the world approaches the sunlight and tries to reach the sunlight in his own way. Similarly a good teacher puts up certain magnets over the students and then every student will approach, that magnet or those magnets are of such a nature, that they will act upon each individual individually. It will automatically form combinations, psychological methods by which they can grow to the highest. And then *"applying themselves even to the pettiest details and to the actions the most insignificant in their appearance with as much care and thoroughness as to the greatest, they in the end lift all into the Light and transform all."* Pettiest details. There is a beautiful poem of Sri Aurobindo where he says that one who sends Jupiter spinning in the spheres and whatever care he takes in doing so, whatever might he employs in sending Jupiter spinning, the same amount of care, the same amount of might and care he uses in fashioning a curl of the hair. How your hair will curl that also requires artistry and supreme artistry. Both of them are equal in his consciousness: sending Jupiter in the spheres on one hand and fashioning the curl of a child. Both are equal in his omnipotent consciousness.

I had one very interesting example: the Mother as the Supreme Teacher. I had the privilege of taking children's letters to the Mother from time to time and I used to read out the letter to the Mother. I also used to take down some letters even from the Prime Minister. And I could see the same care she would take while reading the letter from the Prime Minister and letter from the child. It was not as if the children letters are less important and the Prime Minister's letter is more important ? equal care, equal attention. I give you one example, one day one child had written: "I am going to finish my third

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year of the higher course.” So she had written “*mon troisième année*”. This is grammatically not correct and when I read that letter Mother said, “give it to me”, it was in 1973, she was ninety-five years old at that time and people used to say that she does not see, she does not hear but this was completely false because I can tell you that I read it myself and Mother said: “*Donne moi le papier*” ? “Give me the paper” ? and she said where has she written “*mon troisième année*”? So I showed her and she said -- write “*ma troisième année*”. And she corrected it herself and she said, when you give the letter to her you explain to her that *année* is feminine, *mon année* is correct because of pronunciation but not because of grammar, it is *ma troisième année* grammatically. This was the care that Mother took to explain to the child and there were so many other important letters with me, but no, this was very important. Applying herself to every minor detail with as much care as the other one. Actually if you saw how Mother was working among all the children, among all the people and also world events, how she found time for everything, what kind of organization, it was unimaginable, amazing, in fact. The Mother at work was the Supreme Karma Yogin, one who knows what is the real action, what is the right action, what is the measure of action, how much care is needed.

I had once taken to her a problem, which was a very simple problem outwardly. We had a delegation coming from the Government of India and I was in charge of the delegation and then we have a problem, which was not a problem normally, but it was a problem. They were all to sit together in the dining hall and the question was who will sit where? Normally this problem does not even get attention, is not even mentioned, people come pell-mell and sit anywhere, so when I told the Mother about it she said: “Be very careful who will sit where. Tell me now.” She drew the table herself on a paper and she asked how many of them are there and I said about fifteen people. She decided who will sit where with whom. And knowing each one, whether that person can talk or will remain quiet ? because all people cannot talk, they don’t have equal capacity of talking and even if they talk one has to be careful in talking — what kind of talk it will be, some people are so boisterous that they might spoil the whole atmosphere, some people might not talk at all and there are some people in the Ashram who do not know how to talk at a dinner party. And Mother knew everyone so well that she told me you put this person here, this person here... What a tremendous care. It was not just something to be thrown out, just to be done: here is the dining table, people will come, pell-mell they sit, you chat and then disperse. Every activity has importance, significance. Every person sitting next to another is important. It is like organising the whole universe and the stars. If the sun was slightly nearer to the earth what would have happened? If the sun was slightly farther then where it is, what would happen to the earth? It will be so cold that we couldn’t survive. If it was slightly nearer the whole earth would be blazed, we could not live. It is the exact measurement. In the Divine organisation of things everything is so situated, so measured, one can even say that God is a great geometrician; he is a master of geometry. All the measurements are so beautifully done, such proportion, in every minute detail and even in the greatest, the largest movements the Divine intervention, wisdom is at work equally. Sri Aurobindo says, “*For in his Yoga there is nothing too small to be used and nothing too great to be attempted.*” Therefore attention has to be equal. This is the second point to be mentioned.

First was that everywhere the Supreme Teacher is present, all over. The second point is that his system and his method are of such a nature that everything receives his highest attention, fullest attention, complete attention. And he organises in detail everything as also from the large so that all psychological combinations which are necessary for each individual are affected and ultimately they all rise towards perfection. That is his aim and method.

Third thing is the recognition of him as the guide on the part of each one. We may have many other teachers, we may have many books, we may have many experiences but it is very important for everyone to discover, to recognise him, to recognise the Supreme Guide. Above all so-called teachers there is the Supreme Guide. Sri Aurobindo says: “*The full recognition of this inner Guide, Master of the Yoga, lord, light, enjoyer and goal of all sacrifice and effort, is of the utmost importance in the path of integral perfection.*” Even if you have teachers, human teachers, you may have temporary guides, permanent guides, whatever... the real thing comes when you begin to recognise the inner Guide. He is indeed present always and to recognise him so that you can say: “The Supreme Lord is my teacher.” All other teachers are only helpers and human teachers are really good teachers only when they realise their relative importance and encourage all the pupils to discover the inner Guide. Instead of substituting themselves as the inner Guide, which many teachers have the tendency to do so, they want to be permanent guides and teachers and they impose upon pupils such a discipline that they may not be able to discover the Supreme Guide. Whereas a good teacher is one who allows every individual to discover, to recognise the Supreme Guide so that every pupil feels that his teacher is the Supreme Lord. This is the third point.

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The fourth point is the manner by which you will recognise this inner Guide, in what form you will recognise him. There are many ways by which you recognise him because the Lord himself is not one-sided. He is multiple, multi-sided, all sided in fact. There are comprehensive ways of knowing the Divine; there are partial ways of knowing the Divine. Depending upon each one's approach you will start with recognising him in one form or the other. Sri Aurobindo gives here four or five different ways by which you can recognise him at the beginning. You may recognise him as impersonal wisdom, love and power. You may perceive in this world: Wisdom at work, and trust in that wisdom. Once one *sadhak* wrote to the Mother, with something that was happening in the Ashram, and he was very much troubled and said: why do you allow this? Mother's answer was that what is happening is a mixture of truth and falsehood. And then she advised and said, you remain quiet and witness how the Wisdom works it out so that falsehood is eliminated and the truth remains. In our ordinary rush of things seeing wrong happening we try to mutilate, make it worst sometimes, because our perception may be wrong, our own revolt may be wrong and therefore while trying to throw out the falsehood we may throw out the truth at the same time. It is the wisdom, wisdom knows exactly where the truth is and where exactly is the falsehood, and knows also how to eliminate falsehood without sacrificing the truth. That is the special mark of Wisdom. Wisdom has the true perception of the truth and falsehood, how they are inter-mixed, and knows also how to separate.

In India there is an image of the swan. If there is milk and water both combined together how do you separate milk from water? It is said that the swan has got a consciousness by which when he drinks he will drink only the milk and throw away the water. It is an image; such is the image of wisdom. You give any kind of mixture in the world it will discriminate between what is right and what is wrong and also eliminate the wrong in such a way that Truth or the Right is not thrown away at the same time. One might visualize the Divine in that Wisdom and indeed it is so, but the Divine is not only the Wisdom. Some people might see him only as Wisdom, some people might see him as Love, some people might see him as Power. These are different forms in which we approach because our own consciousness is very limited. We may be highly intellectual therefore the attraction of Wisdom is very great to us. We may be highly capable, competent therefore power affects us much more, and therefore we may see the divine as the Power. Or, by nature you may be full of love, therefore the love of the Divine attracts us most. And there are many others aspects of the Divine. According to what is so much prominent in us we recognise him as that.

That is why in India there is a word which is called *ishta devata* which means preferred deity. Every individual in the world whether he knows it or not has an *ishta devata*. That is how human beings approaches the Higher. Even in human terms you will find different individuals who admire different people. Automatic admiration for something that is high and our tendency is also to make others to believe that my *ishta devata* should also be yours ? which is wrong. In India it is recognised that each one can have his own *ishta devata*, you should not prescribed to other. Some people are attracted by Durga, some by Mahakali, some by Saraswati, some by Ganesh, some by Subramaniam, Kartikeyan, different gods each one has a specific character. You recognise him in one way or the other according to your own nature and temperament, which ever is suitable to your temperament, is your *ishta devata*.

Question: If you love all?

That also happens but gradually. It depends on your universality. But very often when you say that you love all, there is still a preference in most of us, because our nature is not yet comprehensive. When your nature becomes comprehensive then you rise to a higher point. You pray like Sri Aurobindo, you will pray to every god and you will say now let me go beyond all gods. Then you become absolutely connected to the Supreme Divine.

You may recognise him as Power or Love or Wisdom, in many forms of them. This is how you recognise. Sri Aurobindo tells us how to recognise. One of the ways to recognise is recognize what you admire automatically. What is your highest point of admiration? Every human being secretly admires something, enjoys something. And if you can become conscious of it you can determine and then you can follow it and as you follow it will become expanded gradually. Your admiration also constantly changes in that way.

That is the first way by which you can recognise. Or you may recognise him "as an *Absolute manifesting in the relative and attracting it.*" Love, Power, Wisdom, these are different aspects but you may say that you are not limited to any aspect, my admiration is for the Supreme, the Absolute, so you may recognise an Absolute working in the world which is present in all the relativities. That may be another way of recognising him. You may recognise him as a Divine Person within us. Absolute is not a person. Absolute is a principle which is impersonal. The Divine Person is a personal relationship ? a very important point about the Divine Person is that He enters into relationship. It is like going to a

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river which is flowing. Whoever approaches the river can take the water. The river itself does not come out and says, you are my very favourite and I give you water. It is impersonal; there is no special relationship of the river with you but its gifts are available to all. Whoever approaches can take advantage. But Personal Divine is different. The Personal Divine has relationship with every one of us in a very special manner.

There is a beautiful story in India of Gopal, one young boy and the mother who was very poor but wanted that her child study in a school. She managed to get him admitted but the school was very far off and the mother had to send the child through a long road in the forest, which was infested with animals, and the child was very much afraid. So the child told his mother: "How should I pass through the forest to reach the school? I am very much afraid why don't you come with me?" But the mother was working somewhere and she had no time to accompany the child. She said: "Look I have another son of mine, he lives in the forest and if you need him you can call him and he will come and take you whenever there is a difficulty." And the child whenever he passed and had a fear he called out and said: "Come and help me!" And indeed his elder brother appeared and took him always. And they used to have fun, good talks. One day there was the birthday of his teacher and everyone was required, not compulsorily but it was expected that everyone would give some gift to the teacher. And the child told the mother that he had to give something to his teacher but the mother had nothing to give. So she said: "You ask your brother he will give you." On his way he called out to his brother and who gave him a very little vessel in which there was little milk. That was the gift he gave. Of course the boy was slightly ashamed that his gift compared to others was nothing. But it was all that he could manage. All the boys in his school gave big gifts to the teacher and with a great hesitation he offered his own little thing. But lo and behold! When the milk was being poured it continued to pour and pour and pour endlessly. And vessel after vessel was filled but this trickle of milk was still continuing. And the teacher became extremely intrigued and he said: "Who has brought this milk?" The boy said: "I brought it." "From where did you get it?" "My brother gave me." So he said: "Let me see your brother. Who is this brother of yours who can give this kind of miraculous streak of milk?" The boy said: "Alright, I will show you my brother." And then the boy took the teacher into the forest and called out to his brother and he saw his brother standing and he said to the teacher: "See, he is here." But the teacher could not see him." Only the boy could see him, the teacher could not see him. The boy was surprised and said to the teacher: "But he is here." But the teacher replied that he doesn't see him. Then his brother told the boy that his teacher has to be as young as you are, as small as you are, as pure as you are to be able to see him, but because he is not he will not be able to see him.

This is the speciality of personal God. When the Divine is personal to you there is a special relationship with you. Everybody can cultivate this: a special relationship with the Divine. You determine... as Mother says: If you think that he is angry with you he is angry with you; if you think that God is happy with you he is happy with you; it depends upon you. How you build up a relationship with the Divine so he is with you. In the *Bhagavad Gita* there is a beautiful sentence: "As they approach me so do I approach them." That is the speciality of the personal God. He is not like a river in which everybody can equally take water. He gives specially for each one depending on the relationship that you build up. You can relate yourself to the Divine, you recognise the Divine either as Wisdom or as Power or Love or you recognise him as an Absolute impersonal or you recognise him as a Divine Person. You can recognise him in one form or numerous forms or you can recognise him also as an Ideal. There are ideals of Liberty, of Equality or Fraternity, all kinds of ideals, virtues of various kinds. Purity may be your preferred ideal so Divine comes to you as Purity; generosity may be your ideal so he comes as Generosity. In one way or the other you begin to recognise that there is in the world something other than yourself. There is a magnet somewhere other than yourself who attracts everything in the world. Then gradually you go through all this and the Supreme Divine reveals himself supremely in all his aspects.

"The mind's door of entry to the conception of him must necessarily vary according to the past evolution and the present nature." How you enter into the Divine will depend upon your own past development, your past evolution, your present composition of the mind, accordingly you will enter into him.

"This inner Guide is often veiled at first by the very intensity of our personal effort and by the ego's preoccupation with itself and its aims. As we gain in clarity and the turmoil of egoistic effort gives place to a calmer self-knowledge, we recognise the source of the growing light within us. We recognise it retrospectively as we realise how all our obscure and conflicting movements have been determined towards an end that we only now begin to perceive, how even before our entrance into the path of the Yoga the evolution of our life has been designedly led towards its turning-point. For now we begin to understand the sense of our struggles and efforts, successes and failures. At last we are

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able to seize the meaning of our ordeals and sufferings and can appreciate the help that was given us by all that hurt and resisted and the utility of our very falls and stumblings. We recognise this divine leading afterwards, not retrospectively but immediately, in the moulding of our thoughts by a transcendent Seer, of our will and actions by an all-embracing Power, of our emotional life by an all-attracting and all-assimilating Bliss and Love. We recognise it too in a more personal relation that from the first touched us or at the last seizes us; we feel the eternal presence of a supreme Master, Friend, Lover, Teacher. We recognise it in the essence of our being as that develops into likeness and oneness with a greater and wider existence; for we perceive that this miraculous development is not the result of our own efforts: an eternal Perfection is moulding us into its own image. One who is the Lord or Ishwara of the Yogic philosophies, the Guide in the conscious being (caitya guru or antaryamin), the Absolute of the thinker, the Unknowable of the Agnostic, the universal Force of the materialist, the supreme Soul and the supreme Shakti, the One who is differently named and imaged by the religions, is the Master of our Yoga."

There are three ways by which we recognise either retrospectively or immediately or we recognise him as constantly accompanying us. Not in specific acts but all the time as One who is accompanying us. In all the three ways we recognise the Supreme Lord. Often we recognise him retrospectively. When you discover the Divine help suddenly at one time then you feel: Oh! But he was with me earlier at all the stages of my development. Now he has revealed himself but indeed he was present.

In my own experience my major experience was my reading of *The Life Divine*. The arrival of this book in my life, at what time this book came into my hands. I was struggling for the previous two or three years only with one question: "What is Truth?" That was my *ishta devata*. Truth was my *ishta devata*. What is the Truth? And I was searching desperately what is the Truth. And therefore I was struggling with pain and I read books after books after books after books ? literally. Within a few years, two years or three years I read enormously. All the time getting disappointed and finding no answer to my question. It was painful for me because I knew that I will not be able to take the next step in my life unless I know the Truth. And you need to take your next step in your life. So it was necessary for me to discover the Truth. And I did not believe in God so there was no prayer in my heart. But one day I prayed and I said: "If you are God you know what I am." If there is God he knows me, I may not know him but if he is God, if he claims to be what he is he must know me. So I told him: "If you know me you know what I need and if you are capable give me the answer. I want to know the Truth." There was no answer yet. So I decided that now since I don't know what is the Truth my next step will be in the wilderness. Not knowing the Truth I will take pell-mell what seems to be the best although I will know that it is not true but still whatever is best. And I was going to take a decision of leaving my college, because I thought that these college years I was spending were useless and I was going to devote myself to village work because India requires a lot of work in villages. I was about to take a decision and then suddenly a friend of mine came and said: "My uncle has given me a book to read (it was for him to read not for me) but as you know I am incapable of giving attention to such a difficult book. But my uncle is persistent and he will ask me after week whether I read the book or not. So will you kindly help me by reading the book and tell me the summary of it and then I will tell my uncle that I have read the book and this is the summary of it and he will leave me." I said, "What is that book?" He said: The name of the book is *The Life Divine*. So I told him, this was my first answer: "I have read lot of mysticism, they all speak of God who does not exist and in any case they don't know why God should have created this kind of world. If the God exists he would have developed a better kind of world not this kind of world. If he is omnipotent what should he create this kind of world? So enough! And sometime when they ask the question the philosophers say why God has created this world is inexplicable. Then they say you can become one with God and if you become one with God then you will know the answer to the question." These were the questions I put to him and I said: "Therefore these books I have banned I will not myself read such books." He was disappointed but the book remained on my table. After two days his uncle asked him the question if he has read that book so he came running to me and said: "Kireet no for God sake, for my sake you read the book. I want to tell my uncle that I have read the book and he will leave me in peace. Please read the book." Again I told him: "Look I have no time to read this book." Then he said "Sri Aurobindo, you know who is he?" I said: "Whoever he may be but *The Life Divine* and the Divine itself means that I will again go into that confusion. I don't want any confusing writings now. I have had enough of it." He said, Sri Aurobindo sits six feet above the ground; such is the greatness of this master." I said, "Whether he sits six feet or twelve feet I don't want to read this book." So he left me as a lost case, he felt that I have not been convinced and the book was still lying on my table.

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And suddenly one day after my dinner I came to my room I just said to myself, let me just glance at the book, and then I glanced and the first chapter that seized me was: *The Double Soul in Man* ? this was the title ? and this seized me tremendously. Because everybody speaks of one soul but here there was a double soul in man. That attracted me very much so I said; alright let me read this chapter. Then I went backward, I started the book. I read the first volume of *The Life Divine* twice in one week. Every line, it was as it were a downpour of knowledge and every word that I read was true. My whole aspiration to know the Truth, in every line I said, yes this is true, this is true, this is true. In four days I read the first volume, twenty-two hours, I read incessantly. And then I said I should revise now the first volume and I revised it. I recognised that my struggle for two or three years was all designed by Him because if I have not read so many books I will not have understood *The Life Divine*. It is a such complex book, so much of background is needed that if I had not passed through painfully I would not have recognised the value of what Sri Aurobindo had written. Retrospectively, I realised it was Sri Aurobindo who was taking me through this struggle, he was all the time with me and then he had now replied within no time and through somebody who had no care for the book himself. He had brought me the book and his uncle who did not know me was all the time hammering him, "read the book, read the book..." he did not know that he was hammering me actually to read it. That is how I recognised the Divine's hand retrospectively. You may know the Divine is there through your tribulations all the time; he is always there. If he gives you this experience or that experience or another experience remember it is the Divine who wants to open your eyes so that you may recognise him.

That is how Sri Aurobindo says *"We recognise it retrospectively as we realise how all our obscure and conflicting movements have been determined towards an end that we only now begin to perceive, how even before our entrance into the path of the Yoga the evolution of our life has been designedly led towards its turning-point. For now we begin to understand the sense of our struggles and efforts, successes and failures. At last we are able to seize the meaning of our ordeals and sufferings and can appreciate the help that was given us by all that hurt and resisted and the utility of our very falls and stumblings."* This is one way by which we recognise. And then *"We recognise this divine leading afterwards, not retrospectively but immediately..."* Once the Divine's hand has been seen you can see it at every step. We may know that he is there behind any experience that you will get you can ask the Divine what is the meaning of this, please tell me why this experience? Why I am in a state of tremendous joy? Why I am in a state of great despondency? Why this sorrow? Why this failure, why this success? What does it mean? You begin to see him immediately, at every step he answers you: look this is the meaning. You should read the Uttarpara speech of Sri Aurobindo in which he explains... when he was taken to the jail by now he had had already a supreme experience of nirvana and he had an assurance from the Divine "I will lead you, I will be always with you". Already he had this. And yet when he was taken to jail from his home by the police he himself writes: "I was shaken and I cried out 'Why this?'" He complained to the Divine that he had promised that he would always protected him but now where is his protection? I am now taken to the jail. And the Supreme Divine said: "Wait." He waited in the solitude of the jail and then Sri Aurobindo says he put the *Bhagavad Gita* into my hands. And he revealed to him the necessity for him to undertake the yoga of the *Gita* which he could not have done if he was in the hustle-bustle of the activities of politics. Outwardly it may seem that Sri Aurobindo was removed from his field of action he was thrown into a way where there was no protection but that was only the protection. The jail gave him the seclusion that was absolutely necessary for him to study the *Gita* and to get the revelation of his work for the future. Sri Krishna said after three days: "Now do you see? You were shaken in your faith. But now do you see? I cut your bonds in one stroke. To you your action was very dear and by yourself you would have not left it. So I had to force you because I want to embrace you and in that hustle-bustle you would not have embraced me. Now you are alone with me I can embrace you, I can pour all my love to you, I can pour all my knowledge into you, I can show you what is your next path, what is your next step." So, his being taken to the jail was not immediately known as the hand of God ? retrospectively he knew, but afterwards all the times the Divine revealed himself and showed him how to move forward.

"We recognise this divine leading afterwards, not retrospectively but immediately, in the moulding of our thoughts by a transcendent Seer, of our will and actions by an all-embracing Power, of our emotional life by an all-attracting and all-assimilating Bliss and Love. We recognise it too in a more personal relation that from the first touched or at the last seizes us; we feel the eternal presence of a supreme Master, Friend, Lover, Teacher." This is the glorious moment when you begin to perceive the Divine as your Supreme Master, Friend, Lover, Teacher who is constantly with you. *"We recognise it in the essence of our being as that develops into likeness and oneness with a greater and wider*

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existence; for we perceive that this miraculous development is not the result of our own efforts: [On the contrary our effort may be the exact opposite of what is really needed by us] an eternal Perfection is moulding us into its own image. One who is the Lord or Ishwara of the Yogic philosophies, the Guide in the conscious being (caitya guru or antaryamin), the Absolute of the thinker, the Unknowable of the Agnostic, the universal Force of the materialist, the supreme Soul and the supreme Shakti, the One who is differently named and imaged by the religions, is the Master of our Yoga." By whatever name he may come ? he may come as a materialist and he may worship matter. Even that is the method of the Divine to make you worship matter because he may reveal himself to you through the matter. Even an atheist suddenly may become aware of the Divine in matter ? only by worship of matter itself.

"To see, know, become and fulfil this One in our inner selves and in all our outer nature, was always the secret goal and becomes now the conscious purpose of our embodied existence. To be conscious of him in all parts of our being and equally in all that the dividing mind sees as outside our being, is the consummation of the individual consciousness. To be possessed by him and possess him in ourselves and in all things is the term of all empire and mastery. To enjoy him in all experience of passivity and activity, of peace and of power, of unity and of difference is the happiness which the Jiva, the individual soul manifested in the world, is obscurely seeking. This is the entire definition of the aim of integral Yoga; it is the rendering in personal experience of the truth which universal Nature has hidden in herself and which she travails to discover. It is the conversion of the human soul into the divine soul and of natural life into divine living."

XIII.

We had done the *Shashtra*. We are doing *utsaha*, we shall soon go on to the *Guru* and then we shall come to *kala*. These are the four aids of which Sri Aurobindo has spoken. The *Shashtra*, the science of the processes and the operations that govern the yoga leading towards realisation. *Utsaha* is the effort; the enthusiasm on the part of the pupil which uplifts itself so that the teacher can lead the individual forwards towards the realisation.

What is the place of this aspiration from the pupil? Aspiration that makes you makes an effort. What is the role of effort in the process of yoga? This is the question. We have almost finished it but not fully therefore I would like to revise it. We shall put our focus on the right points. Sri Aurobindo spoke of three stages. There are three stages and Sri Aurobindo tells us the role of effort in each of the three stages. There is a wrong notion: that the Divine exists, he does everything; therefore if I have to do yoga he will make me do it. He does everything; if he wants that I should do yoga he will make me do yoga. Very often this is taken as an excuse for not making the effort on our part. He will do everything and if he is doing everything he will do this also. This is an ignorant reaction to a profound truth. You know when a truth is spoken but at the wrong place: truth becomes falsehood. It is true that everything is done by the Divine but we have to see how the Divine does everything, what is the complexity of that action and if you don't see the complexity then you are not saying the truth as a whole. The Divine is of course the initiator, the performer and the result all that is the Divine. It is true that if he wants it will be done. But in our ignorance we do not know that he wants it. Therefore we must also say that. If you really want to speak the Truth you should not merely say: "If he wants it will be done." It is an incomplete statement. We must find out whether he really wants or not. To make a full statement you should say: "If he wants..." The moment you say: "If he wants..." you are ignorant. Therefore your statement is incomplete. You should find out whether he wants. So, even to go from this state to that state you have to make an effort. You must know that he really wants it.

I had told you last time when I drew a diagram... I had said that this is the Divine Power. It is this Power which is working everywhere. But I had told you that at a certain stage this Divine Power creates a blockage ? it is also created by Itself, the blockage also is created by the Divine Power. This introduces the element of complexity. There is a difference between Divine Power manifesting unobstructed and the Divine Power manifesting through a blockage. There is a knot or there are series of knots which are created because of this blockage. Each knot is what it is call the ego. Each one of us is this ego. Because of this egoistic knot the force, which should really proceed smoothly, unobstructed, gets twisted all over and does not move smoothly. That is why what we see in this world is not as a direct manifestation of the Divine. All kind of twists are present in this manifestation.

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Therefore this world is full of difficulties, obstructions, and phenomena of incapacities, of death, pain. All these phenomena result from this central thread of ego.

We have to examine that although behind power is at work always, it is moving in us through a twist. As a result, this twist has three elements in it. First this ego ignorantly thinks that this power is its power. It does not recognise that there is Supreme power which is behind it. On the contrary it says: "This power which is moving in me is my power." It does not recognise the superior power behind. As a result the greatness, the supremacy of this power is narrowed down. So that power itself becomes diminished. The second result is that there is a resistance to this power. Whatever power comes from above is resisted ? there is an opposite movement. So not only is the power diminished because of the egoistic idea that the power comes from myself, but the power is also resisted. This is the second result. And the third result is that the ego builds up a wall. The power is diminished, the power is resisted and finally the ego builds up like a spider a small home for itself ? a fortress is built up. In that fortress, if you listen to the music in it, you will find only one word or two words being hummed all the time: "I am doing, I am doing, I am doing... I am the doer. I am the doer, I am the doer..." Because of this constant music which is going on the constant belief is that the ego is the doer. When the ego is told the Divine is the entire doer, it is only when it does not want to do anything it says let the Divine do it. Not that it really believes that the Divine is the doer, it wants to resist it and to resist, it says if the Divine is the doer, let him do it, I don't do anything. But inwardly the belief is I am the doer. That belief is not cancelled. It is only that in answer you are using the words of wisdom not out of your real conviction that the Divine is the doer. Your conviction is I am the doer. If your conviction is lost and you really say the Divine is the doer then of course the consequence is absolutely perfect. The divine will certainly do and he is always doing whatever is to be done. But because the ego's strong conviction operates, we have to deal with it in that state of consciousness and therefore the element of effort is needed. All effort is necessitated on account of this false idea that I am the doer. If this false idea is removed then there is no place for the effort. The role of the effort is a resultant of this consciousness that I am the doer. Therefore if you want to put yourself in the right condition you must start by saying "I have to make an effort." You have to work on the contrary: "I have to make the effort."

And when you make the effort Sri Aurobindo says there are three stages. The first effort is to be in the process of reversal so that you can transcend this wall which has been built by the ego so that the consciousness which is vibrating here, becomes able to exceed itself and identify itself with the source of the power. It is called effort at self-transcendence and identity with the Supreme self. In this entire process, effort is needed. Constantly we go back to this wall, constantly we fall and constantly we have to lift ourselves to transcend our little ego and to identify with the Self. This is the first long stage. It is a very long stage. During this stage if you make a false statement: "The Divine will do", Sri Aurobindo says, "Do not remain under the illusion that the Divine will do yoga for you." The Divine demands from you but does not impose himself upon you. That is because the ego believes that it is the doer. So long as it believes that it is the doer there is a resistance so the Divine power even if it wants will be broken. That is the meaning of the divine demanding but not imposing. It tells you the real truth but as long as this false idea remains active, operative, under conviction you are asked to make an effort to transcend yourself and to arrive at identity with the Supreme Self, the Transcendental and Universal Self. This is the first stage.

The second stage is that you receive the power directly, not through the knots, not through the blockage. To receive the power of the Divine so that this power is able to work unaffected by this wall. And all the instruments of your being are transformed. Our egoistic consciousness is a complex web; it is like a spider's web, there are many threads interwoven. There is the web of the body, life and mind. These are the three instruments and the egoistic thread is interwoven into all these three. Everywhere there is an egoistic thread, egoistic consciousness which is resisting. I told you there are three things which are happening all the time: diminution of the power, resistance to the power and the perpetuity of the wall. This power which comes directly more and more once you establish a contact with the Self, with the Divine; once you establish identity with it the force which is flowing all the time is now received and transforms the mind, life and body. This also is a very-very long process.

And the third stage is when all these walls are broken and instead of ego there remains only jivatma now. The ego is gone only jivatma remains. And the very nature of jivatma is a constant self-surrender, automatic, not laboured, an automatic self-surrender to the Supreme. It is the beloved friend of the Divine, constantly dependant upon the Divine, a happy companion to the Divine. And then a Divine centre is created so that it works in the world as a free channel of the Divine, unobstructed channel of the Divine through whom the Divine force is spread in the world.

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These are the three stages. The first stage is an effort to transcend, the diminution of the power of the Divine, the resistance to the Divine power and the walls, which have been created by the ego, are broken. This is the first stage and here we have to make a tremendous effort. Only then this notion will be cancelled in the psychological condition. This strong belief will be annulled. First is the contact, then the identity. When this happens, or as you move more and more toward the contact and the identity, more and more you realise that you are not the doer, there will be hardly any effort left. The more you attain, a time comes when you just will and the result is accomplished because the walls are not there and the Supreme power is at work automatically. A major portion of our life or yoga is the long space of effort. Therefore we should never arrogate to ourselves the right to say: "I will now make no effort. If the Divine wants it he will do it." It is a false and proud reaction to the great truth that the Divine is the doer. We should not be deluded; we should always make an effort. Effort is our prerogative you might say, it is a privilege ? we have to make an effort. The more and more we reach this point of contact and identity the force will always work itself out. You will see automatically that you have given yourself to this power and the power goes on working. And when you become the Divine centre automatically you will not feel that you are the doer, it is he who is doing automatically. There is no effort there.

Now let us read this paragraph because it is very important. It applies to every one of us. We are all disciples and we are all instruments. This paragraph summarises the role of the disciple, what we have to do from our side.

"The process of the integral Yoga has three stages, not indeed sharply distinguished or separate, but in a certain measure successive. There must be, first, the effort towards at least an initial and enabling self-transcendence and contact with the Divine; next, the reception of that which transcends, that with which we have gained communion, into ourselves for the transformation of our whole conscious being; last, the utilisation of our transformed humanity as a divine centre in the world." These are the three stages. We shall repeat it because these three stages have to be remembered. It is a key for all Integral Yoga. Whenever you want to judge how far you have progressed you take these three statements and see where you stand. And largely you will find that you are in the first stage because it is only when the question does not arise in your mind that you know it is already transcended. As long as there is a question you are still in the first stage.

"There must be, first, the effort towards at least an initial and enabling self-transcendence and contact with the Divine; next, the reception of that which transcends, that with which we have gained communion, into ourselves for the transformation of our whole conscious being; last, the utilisation of our transformed humanity as a divine centre in the world." I will not proceed further because I want that this is established. I shall read once more again in a different way.

There must be first, what? the effort towards at least an initial and enabling self-transcendence and contact with the Divine; next, what is next? The reception of that which transcends, reception of God, in other words that with which we have gained communion, you have begun to talk to God; because of the context we are now unable to speak to him, into ourselves for what purposes? For the transformation of our whole conscious being; this is the second step, last, what is the last stage? The utilisation of our transformed humanity as a divine centre in the world. First to go up, allow what is above into ourselves and then third to become a divine centre in the world.

Now Sri Aurobindo analyses the exact role of effort in all the three stages. *"So long as the contact with the Divine is not in some considerable degree established, so long as there is not some measure of sustained identity, sayujya, the element of personal effort must normally predominate."* It is a long process and during that period personal effort must predominate. There must be a constant effort on our side, vigilance. *'But in proportion as this contact establishes itself, the sadhaka must become conscious that a force other than his own, a force transcending his egoistic endeavour and capacity, is at work in him and to this Power he learns progressively to submit himself and delivers up to it the charge of his Yoga.'* The more and more you are in contact with the Divine during your conversations with the Divine you always say: "Please take charge of my yoga." You learn that actually he is doing everything so you admit, submit and accept it and give the charge of your yoga in his hands. And when he enters into the yoga then your personal effort diminishes, it is not very much needed. Provided this happens. Let us no delude ourselves that now the Divine has taken charge of our yoga. We should examine ourselves again and again and again ? has he really taken the charge? Till that time unless you are sure that the Divine himself tells you "Look now don't worry. I have taken charge of you." Then your effort diminishes more and more.

"In the end his own will and force become one with the higher Power; he merges them in the divine Will and its transcendent and universal Force. He finds it thenceforward presiding over the necessary transformation of his mental, vital and physical being with an impartial wisdom and

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provident effectivity of which the eager and interested ego is not capable. It is when this identification and this self-merging are complete that the divine centre in the world is ready. Purified, liberated, plastic, illumined, it can begin to serve as a means for the direct action of a supreme Power in the larger Yoga of humanity or superhumanity, of the earth's spiritual progression or its transformation." There is a beautiful word in the *Gita*: *muktasyakarma*. It is a Sanskrit phrase which means *action of the liberated*. *Karma* means action, *sya* means of and *mukta* means liberated. He is therefore described by Sri Aurobindo as *purified, liberated, plastic, illumined* ? four important words. This is the mark of the liberated man. During the process of yoga we have to try to attain to these four qualities: purification, liberation, plasticity, illumination. There are numerous stages of purification, liberation, plasticity and illumination. We have to keep this goal before us and only then we really begin to do what is called Divine's work. There is among us a wrong use of this word. We often tell ourselves and the world that we are doing Divine's work. Be careful in using this word. It is not an accurate term when we speak. To be able to do Divine's work you must have these four qualities: purification, liberation, plasticity, illumination. Till that time you have no authority to say "I am doing Divine's work." If you say so it is a false statement.

Very often we say I am doing Mother's work. Actually one disciple wrote to the Mother saying: "Mother's, I want to do Mother's work." Mother said, that will take a long time. To really do Mother's work is a long-long process. You have to reach this point. Before that you must do work for the Divine, as there is a difference between doing Divine's work and to do work for the Divine. When you do the work for the Divine you are in the first stage. From here you are offering to the Divine, it is only the first stage. You are attempting to go in self-transcendence to contact and identify with the Divine. Then comes the second process of receiving the self into ourselves, into your body, life and mind to transform them. When this is accomplished then you can now be entitled, qualified to say, I am now doing Divine's work. *Muktasyakarma*, you become liberated. You are no more subject to passions ? that is one important mark. The word passion is a very important word. To be passionate or to be under a passion is to be passive. Something is overpowering you. So much overpowering you that you are passive to it. You are like a slave to it. To be a slave to a feeling, to an emotion, so you cannot resist it at all. You are so passive to it that you allow it to manifest through you; you are bound to it. So long as passions work through you, you are bound, you are a slave. You are not liberated. To be liberated is to have no overpowering influence over you. Passions is a mark of being bound ? in bondage.

So, when you are purified, liberated, plastic, illumined then you begin to serve as a means for the direct action of the Supreme Power *in the larger yoga of humanity or superhumanity*. You really become a contributor; you are then the messenger of God, you are the prophet of God, the Son of God and then you can work in humanity as a free being unbound by any bonds and you contribute to the spiritual progression of humanity.

This is the paragraph that we had done last time. I have revised it because it is a very important paragraph. In a sense, we might say, the whole Integral Yoga is summarising in one paragraph here.

Question: What does 'provident effectivity' mean?

"... *with an impartial wisdom and provident effectivity...*" When you are working upon yourself egoistically, when you make an effort egoistically you are partial to yourself, you are favourable to yourself, you justify yourself, you are not able to see your own defects but when the Divine works in you then the Divine himself tells you: "Here you are wrong" and you are able to admit that here you are wrong. You look at yourself, as it were, like a scientist looking through microscope. You are no more trying to hide this corner of your being or that corner of your being; you are no more trying to justify this or to justify that. You don't have any kind of excuse; it is very sharp, very powerful. You allow the Divine himself to work in you with the four powers of the Mother.

There is *Maheswari*, who works on you with wisdom, but impartial wisdom, and reveals in you all the defects, pitilessly. Because you are working for him, open to the Divine, therefore he will not cease to reveal your defects — he will illumine you and say, here is your defect, there is your defect. When you become aware of your own defects, think that the Divine is working very well with you. The Divine is helping you because he is now impartially working with you so that you can see your defects very clearly. This is one way of the Divine working.

When necessary he works with the power of Mahakali ? impetuously, even destroys you, you might say. In one second the great obstruction is removed. Like a good doctor who wants to take out the thorn which has gone deeply into the flesh and in one second he just takes it out. It is a tremendous pain at that time but then it is over. The obstacle is gone. This is the second way in which the Divine works in you with *provident effectivity*. The effectivity which is marvellous. But the

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Mahakali's action does not come arbitrarily. The Divine sees how much you can bear. He is a very good doctor. He knows exactly when you can bear him, and how much, what dosage to give ? therefore provident. When you are absolutely open to the Divine, when you will not misunderstand him he will come with impetuosity. It is as if, even when you are resisting, he will take you in his embrace because you are so open to him, he knows that now you have shed off all your resistances, then he works powerfully. But when it is not the case, he moves slowly. That is the meaning of *provident effectivity*. When this dosage is necessary he gives that dosage, according to your capacities, how much you can bear. The divine is neither in a hurry nor he is sluggish. At the right moment the right amount of energy is given and he enters into you very wisely, very impartially and providentially, according to your necessity, according to your openness to him.

He works with the power of Mahalakshmi. He pours into you the bewitching smile which is irresistible. He is extremely intimate. The contact is so magical that you melt into his presence. All the resistances are gone. Not like Mahakali's action but your heart melts automatically when the Divine works in you through the Mahalakshmi power.

He acts through the power of Mahasaraswati. Mahasaraswati is a constant toiler, constant worker. The Divine is at work day and night. Once you have reached that state of contact with the Divine remember the Divine doesn't see the day and night. He is constantly working. Even in your sleep when you are unconscious he is conscious; when you cannot be vigilant he is vigilant; he protects you. He does not allow you to slip down, he keeps you always aloft That is the power of Mahasaraswati. And he toils on every defect like a goldsmith. He takes every little thing, each small amount of gold in us and makes various kinds of beautiful shapes. Everything is so chiselled, everything shines with that chiselling. And Mahasaraswati is the one who does the work so perfectly that when the work is done it is found that no defect is left, no work is left unattended, nothing is omitted and nothing is forgotten.

These are the four powers which are summarised by Sri Aurobindo as *impartial wisdom and provident effectivity*. These are the four powers by which the Divine works of which the ego is not at all capable, *of which the eager and interested ego is not capable*. That little puny thing that we call ego — myself — which is eager for this and eager for that and wants this result and that result immediately and prides himself, this eager and interested ego is not capable of this impartial wisdom and this provident effectivity.

"Always indeed it is the higher Power that acts. Our sense of personal effort and aspiration comes from the attempt of the egoistic mind to identify itself in a wrong and imperfect way with the workings of the divine Force. It persists in applying to experience on a supernormal plane the ordinary terms of mentality which it applies to its normal experiences in the world. In the world we act with the sense of egoism; we claim the universal forces that work in us as our own; we claim as the effect of our personal will, wisdom, force, virtue the selective, formative, progressive action of the Transcendent in this frame of mind, life and body. Enlightenment brings to us the knowledge that the ego is only an instrument; we begin to perceive and feel that these things are our own in the sense that they belong to our supreme and integral Self, one with the Transcendent, not to the instrumental ego. Our limitations and distortions are our contribution to the working; the true power in it is the Divine's. When the human ego realises that its will is a tool, its wisdom ignorance and childishness, its power an infant's groping, its virtue a pretentious impurity, and learns to trust itself to that which transcends it, that is its salvation. The apparent freedom and self-assertion of our personal being to which we are so profoundly attached, conceal a most pitiable subjection to a thousand suggestions, impulses, forces which we have made extraneous to our little person. Our ego, boasting of freedom, is at every moment the slave, toy and puppet of countless beings, powers, forces, influences in universal Nature. The self-abnegation of the ego in the Divine is its self-fulfilment; its surrender to that which transcends it is its liberation from bonds and limits and its perfect freedom."

Just as the last paragraph that we read it is a complete statement of the Integral Yoga in one paragraph. Similarly this paragraph gives us a complete analysis of all the obstacles that are in our path. How we put obstacles in our own path because of our own egoism.

"But still, in the practical development, each of the three stages has its necessity and utility..." When you are ignorant you make a tremendous effort. When you begin to have more and more contact, personal effort will diminish more and more as the contact grows more and more. And when you become the Divine centre there is no personal effort at all ? it is all gone. All the three stages have their necessity and their utility. Predominance of personal effort; gradual diminution of personal effort; loss of personal effort. *"...and must be given its time or its place. It will not do, it cannot be safe or effective to begin with the last and highest alone."* If you just sit alone saying I am now at the third stage when you are only in the first stage it will be a disaster. If you just sit down saying "Now the

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Divine is working in me, I am a Divine center" when you are not it will be a disaster. *"It would not be the right course, either, to leap prematurely from one to another."* Gradually, you should always be very wise in moving forward from one stage to the other. When you are egoistic admit that you are egoistic but then do your effort. You cannot cure egoism just by saying, "I am not egoist". It takes a long time, therefore at such time be humble and say, "Yes I am egoistic now but I am making an effort because it is appropriate to the egoistic stage." *"For even if from the beginning we recognise in mind and heart the Supreme, there are elements of the nature which long prevent the recognition from becoming realisation."* A mere idea that God is the doer of all things will not give the realisation that God is the doer of all things. *"But without realisation our mental belief cannot become a dynamic reality; it is still only a figure of knowledge, not a living truth, an idea, not yet a power. And even if realisation has begun, it may be dangerous to imagine or to assume too soon that we are altogether in the hands of the Supreme or are acting as his instrument. That assumption may introduce a calamitous falsity..."* Before you realise the Divine has taken charge of you, you begin to say the Divine has taken charge of you because you have spoken to him, mere speaking to him does not mean that he has really answered. He must accept you, he must really take you in his hands and you must be sure that he is taking you in his hands. He must tell you definitively: "Yes I am now taking you in charge." *"... it may produce a helpless inertia or, magnifying the movements of the ego with the Divine Name, it may disastrously distort and ruin the whole course of the Yoga. There is a period, more or less prolonged, of internal effort and struggle in which the individual will has to reject the darkness and distortions of the lower nature and to put itself resolutely or vehemently on the side of the divine Light. The mental energies, the heart's emotions, the vital desires, the very physical being have to be compelled into the right attitude or trained to admit and answer to the right influences. It is only then, only when this has been truly done, that the surrender of the lower to the higher can be effected, because the sacrifice has become acceptable."* Then you know that the Divine has really accepted your sacrifice, all your tapasya. There was a disciple who asks to Sri Aurobindo: "Can I see the Divine? Sri Aurobindo said: "The question is whether the Divine wants to see you." This is the stage you should arrive at. The Divine must want to see you and take your charge and this come when you are constantly making an effort ? tapasya.

"The personal will of the sadhaka has first to seize on the egoistic energies and turn them towards the light and the right..." this is the first thing to do. To seek the knowledge; to seek to do the right action constantly; to come out of the error; to discover the Truth; to stop doing wrong actions and to constantly practice the right action. Because it is the first step I started with speaking to you about Dharma, you remember long long ago. The first thing to be done is to seek the Light and the Right as a light of Dharma and to practice Dharma. It is a long process. *"... once turned, he has still to train them to recognise that always, always to accept, always to follow that."* The word *always* is very important. Because our egoism when he succeeds to do one thing then it relaxes. It says, "I have done it." But it does not remember that it has to be done *always* ? persistence in doing the right, persistence in discovering the Truth.

"Progressing, he learns, still using the personal will, personal effort, personal energies, to employ them as representatives of the higher Power and in conscious obedience to the higher Influence." The word *obedience* is very-very-very-very important. Obedience is the one thing the ego does not like. Ego likes affirmation, assertion. Therefore obedience must be learned. To obey the higher influence, to achieve the state of obedience is a tremendous achievement. First you discover which is the higher influence and then to cultivate the influence of obedience. You may not like the order of the higher influence but you should obey. Therefore in the Indian system of Yoga the student was told: "Obey first, obey in the middle, obey last." At every stage of your movement do not disobey. If you really want the highest, obedience must be willing obedience, not that you are whipped to obey. If you want the Divine, if you are eager for the Divine realisation then since you are in the ignorance and darkness, since you are committing errors, since you easily swerve from the right path you should willingly tell the higher influence ? "As thou will, as Thou will." As you will, as you will, let it be done. The eagerness to obey should be the real condition of consciousness. You should be very eager. The normal egoism wants to resist. "Why should I do it? I don't like it!" But obedience to the higher influence. Remember this. Obedience does not mean that you obey indiscriminately anything and everything whoever commands you. No! You should be very discriminate. Whom do you obey? The one who is higher in influence. There the obedience should be perfect, ungrudging. You should be very happy to obey even when you do not believe; when your mind says that it does not want. As long as you are a pupil, as long as you are a student you want to obey, you want to move forward and obedience is the path.

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"Progressing yet farther, his will, effort, energy become no longer personal and separate, but activities of that higher Power and Influence at work in the individual. But there is still a sort of gulf or distance..." Even at the higher level of your development, when you can see the higher will working in you, even then Sri Aurobindo says do not delude yourself, there is still a gulf between you and him. "But there is still a sort of gulf or distance which necessitates an obscure process of transit, not always accurate, sometimes even very distorting, between the divine Origin and the emerging human current. At the end of the process, with the progressive disappearance of egoism and impurity and ignorance, this last separation is removed; all in the individual becomes the divine working."

XIV.

We come to the third domain. Sri Aurobindo has spoken of the third element in the very first paragraph of this chapter.

"There intervenes, third, uplifting our knowledge and effort into the domain of spiritual experience, the direct suggestion, example and influence of the Teacher — guru." There are three things, first *uplifting our knowledge and effort*. Already effort put our hands upwards. The teacher comes to uplift our hands which are already upwards. That is the first function of the teacher. Uplifting our knowledge and effort, and this effort is uplifted so high that we can enter into the spiritual experience. And then there are three important words, *the direct suggestion, example and influence*. These are the three key words in every process of teaching. The teacher does not teach as much as he suggests. There is a difference between teaching and suggestion. A good teacher suggests. Even his instruction, if normally the teacher gives lectures, these lectures should be in the form of suggestions. It is not a taskmaster giving instructions which have to be obeyed and fulfilled. A good teacher does not instruct as much as to suggest. A teacher suggests, then he gives example of himself, so he does not teach exactly but he does perform within himself what he wants to convey to the others. He provides an example. And third is the influence. This word of influence is a very delicate word. What is influence? I shall come to that word very shortly, but I just wanted to underline first the words *uplifting our knowledge and effort* and second *the domain of spiritual experience* and third his *suggestion example and influence*. And now that we are reading on the Teacher we should mark where Sri Aurobindo refers to these three things.

"As the supreme Shastra of the integral Yoga is the eternal Veda secret in the heart of every man, so its supreme Guide and Teacher is the inner Guide, the World-Teacher, jagad-guru, secret within us. It is he who destroys our darkness by the resplendent light of his knowledge; that light becomes within us the increasing glory of his own self-revelation. He discloses progressively in us his own nature of freedom, bliss, love, power, immortal being. He sets above us his divine example as our ideal and transforms the lower existence into a reflection of that which it contemplates. By the inpouring of his own influence and presence into us he enables the individual being to attain to identity with the universal and transcendent."

There is a theory in India: without the teacher you can never-never-never attain the Divine. That is why people in India are always advised to find out a Teacher. Normally when this is said the teacher is referred to as any good human being who is supposed to have the power, knowledge experience which he can transmit to his pupil. Therefore in India people are in search of what is called a human teacher. When, in this paragraph, Sri Aurobindo uses the word *teacher* he does not refer to any human teacher, he refers to the World-Teacher, he refers to the inner Guide. Just as the *shastra* of the Integral Yoga is not contained in any book similarly the teacher to whom we have to refer or to whom we have to turn is not any human teacher but the Divine Teacher. He is the Divine himself. It is this Divine Teacher who is in our heart. Just as the *shastra* is in the heart similarly the Teacher also is in our heart. The place of the human teacher is subordinate ? he is a concession you might say. If you need him you can have him but it is not necessary that we should have a human teacher. The Teacher is always there with you, in you.

Now what is the mark of that teacher? How do you experience him? *"It is he who destroys our darkness by the resplendent light of his knowledge; that light becomes within us the increasing glory of his own self-revelation."* These two sentences are very difficult to understand although linguistically they are not difficult. But let us try to understand them. *"It is he who destroys our darkness by the resplendent light of his knowledge..."* First there is the concept of darkness and then there is the

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concept of resplendent light. Light is qualified because there can be physical light, there can be rational light, light of the reason, and there can be light of His knowledge. It is not physical light, it is not rational knowledge, but there is a light, the light of his knowledge. What is that light of his knowledge? Let us ask the question what is knowledge? Then we will find out what is his knowledge.

Whenever we speak of knowledge the word knowledge is incomplete because additionally we ask the question knowledge of what, knowledge of whom? Every time we use the word knowledge necessarily we speak an incomplete phrase. If I ask the question: "Do you have knowledge?" the question is still incomplete unless you add the word which will define the quality of the knowledge ? knowledge of this, knowledge of that, etc. Normally the word knowledge refers to a process of uncovering. There is an object which is covered and when you uncover that object then there arises the knowledge of that object. Basically knowledge is a process of uncovering. We also use the word discovering. There are many things which are discovered merely by words. You speak a word and the object is uncovered. When a child learns in the beginning, he learns very often only by words. "I saw a cat." The word cat, when the child is told the word cat, there is an uncovering for the child. He sees the object and the word cat uncovers that object, so much so that next time, even if the object is not present, the mere mention of the word immediately gives an image of the real cat. So word is a very powerful instrument of uncovering. That is why whenever we use the word knowledge our first concern is with the word. That is the reason why many educators begin to speak to you about words. Whenever a word is spoken something happens in your consciousness. It is not a physical light but something that begins to uncover and something begins to glow. It may be an image that glows; it may be an idea that glows. We do not think very often that ideas are like light because ideas can run about even in our physical darkness but the fact is that ideas are like small lamps, small lights and these ideas are ignited by words. But there are limits of words. Everything cannot be uncovered by words. Even if I use a word, if you have not seen the object the word makes no meaning and the object can be seen, the physical object can be seen, only if physical light is thrown upon the object. There is a connection between the light and the object. There are objects which are self-luminous. You don't need to throw light upon the object because the object itself is glowing by its own light in which case you don't have to take a torch and put light on it from outside. But all objects are not self-luminous. Therefore you have to throw light upon objects which are not self-luminous. A star is self-luminous; the moon is not self-luminous ? as you know the moon shines by the light thrown upon it by the sun. The sun is self-luminous. But in any case there is a connection between the object and the light. If the object is self-luminous you don't have to throw light upon it but if the object is not self-luminous you have to throw light upon it. But all objects are known through light. Object and knowledge, object and light are both needed in order to have knowledge. There is knowledge which itself is a light. I said previously that light thrown upon object gives you knowledge but knowledge itself can be regarded as light. Most often by uncovering that knowledge is generated and therefore light and knowledge are regarded as synonymous.

"It is he who destroys our darkness by the resplendent light of his knowledge..." God to us is in darkness. We don't see him anywhere. We see so many objects but we don't see God; the Divine Teacher is not seen. He is in darkness we might say. It is a great surprise that one who is all luminous is unseen by us. Actually speaking the only thing that we can know is the Divine because he is all luminous but some how there is a phenomenon of darkness which has covered that all luminousness which is itself a surprise. How can the All luminous be covered? This is a very important question and one day you will ask me and we should spend two, three days on it. But at present we only start with this statement: it is a fact that we do not see the All luminous. The Divine is All luminous and yet covered to our eyes. Something has happened. What has happened, how it has happened, why it has happened? These questions are extremely important. And one of the specialities of *The Life Divine* is that this book answers these questions in detail, which no book in the world answers as much in detail as *The Life Divine* has answered. It is the only book in the world which has answered these questions in detail. How has the all luminous become covered? What is the process by which this has happened? What is the nature of light that it can be covered? Can the self-luminous be covered? But this is what has happened. At present to our psychology, it is a fact that we don't see God. The Self-luminous and All-luminous, the Divine we don't see him.

In other words, there is a darkness, that darkness by which we are not able to see the All-luminous. We see so many other things but not He. Sri Aurobindo says, it is he who himself destroys our darkness. By what mean: *by the resplendent light of his knowledge*. The one who is covered as it were suddenly reveals himself as self-luminous. It is as if there is an object which at present you don't see and suddenly it becomes luminous. Then you see it. It is he himself who switches on the light as it were, his own light, so that light falls upon him and he is seen. This is the mark of a teacher, the Divine

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Teacher. When you have the experience of this kind then you can say: "I have now found my teacher." When the teacher reveals himself by his own knowledge which is thrown upon himself ? it is the resplendent light of his knowledge. Dazzling light, light which you cannot refuse at all. Having seen that light you have no doubt ? can you ask the sun to prove that it is luminous? Having seen the sunlight you cannot doubt that there is sunlight. Similarly, here too, there is a self-luminous light of the Supreme. That is why those who have seen God, have no doubt at all that God exists. We know the story of Swami Vivekananda. As a young man studying in the college, reading books on philosophy and logic and he listened to a number of people who claimed that they knew God, they described God and he was not convinced. He used to ask the question to everybody who claimed knowledge: "Have you seen God?" And nobody could satisfy his query until one day he met Sri Ramakrishna to whom he asked his very question, "Have you seen God?" And Sri Ramakrishna said: "Yes! Only I see him more vividly than I see you." It is as if somebody asks: "Have you seen the sun?" Our answer would be the same: "Yes! I have seen the sun". That was his answer. That is the mark of the Teacher. The one who has seen it is he who destroys our darkness *by the resplendent light of his knowledge*.

"... *that light becomes within us the increasing glory of his own self-revelation.*" The light of the Divine is a glow within ourselves. Once you see that light that light does not get extinguished. It is the glow that is born in us and in that glow we have the revelation both of ourselves and of the Divine.

"*He discloses progressively in us his own nature of freedom, bliss, love, power, immortal being.*" When you say you have seen the Divine, you have not seen the Divine unless you have experienced the Divine Freedom, the Divine Bliss. The Divine Love, the Divine Power, the Divine Immortal Being. "*He sets above us his divine example as our ideal and transforms the lower existence into a reflection of that which it contemplates.*" All the qualities that you have spoken of: freedom, bliss, etc, cannot be understood unless we have an example, a human being or a divine being. Merely by looking at the outside you do not understand his real nature. It is when you come into contact by experience and learn by example in what way he is free. By freedom is meant capacity of manifesting infinite possibilities, at the same time any one of these infinite possibilities ? that is the freedom. Normally human being have got only one or two possibilities. I can go here or I don't go there. Even if some people have two or three possibilities, or hundred possibilities but all that is limitation. The real freedom comes when there is infinite possibility and also the possibility of selecting any one of them without any compulsion. That is the freedom. And it is by his example that you can see...

Once there was a dialogue with the Mother and a few disciples. These disciples were not able to see the Divine Mother as the Divine Mother. And the Mother suddenly made a remark to them in a conversation: "Do not think I am compelled to be here with you." This is a very important sentence. You know, when you discuss any question with anybody there is an inner assumption that the person to whom you are talking is compelled to be there, he has his own necessity to be there. The real freedom is understood when you find that that person is not compelled. We very often deal with other people as if they are compelled to be where they are. And our relationship is based upon this small assumption. We do not know that the Divine is not compelled to be with you: That he needs you, that he cannot do without you that for his fulfilment you are very necessary. Human beings when they are quite ignorant deal with the Divine as if the Divine is a puppet who is required, who has the necessity to be there and that is what distorts our relationship with him. You are in the right relationship with the Divine when you know that he is not compelled to be with you. This is the majesty of the Supreme. Therefore do not deal with the Divine as you deal with so many other things in the world. In the world things are compelled to be where they are. The chair is compelled to be where it is, because you have put it there and it has no capacity to run away. It is by seeing the example of the Divine that you see that in the Divine consciousness there is no compulsion. If he is with you it is because he has so chosen freely. There are thousands of possibilities. There is a beautiful example given in *The Bhagavad Gita*. Arjuna says to Sri Krishna: "I will not fight." And Sri Krishna first says: "Even if you run away from the battlefield you will be compelled to come back." That is the nature of human incapacity. He may think: "I run away" but that very nature will compel him to come back. He also says: "Even if you are not here I don't need you. My goal will be achieved even if you decide one way or the other." The Divine is not compelled to have Arjuna on the battlefield. Both ways he answered the question. The Divine freedom is of such a high and majestic nature. If you think that without you God's work will not be done, have no illusion at all. If he makes you his instrument it is because he is pleased to do it. Not that God is compelled to choose you because you are so great, so wonderful and without you he cannot do his work. Not at all! There is no compulsion at all.

There is a beautiful anecdote. It is reported as a real story, but even if it is not a real story it can be a real story. There was once a great leader called Shivaji. He was a great leader of Marathas. He was creating a new nation a new aspiration among the people of Maharashtra and therefore the

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emperor of India Aurengzeb was opposed to him thoroughly and always he used to send his soldiers and generals to chase Shivaji and to kill him. There are many stories of this chase and the stories of how he was rescued. Once he was with his teacher Ramdas. He has gone to meet his teacher, a very great saint, one who knew God so well. And suddenly when he was talking with his master he was told that there is an attack on that very house and Aurengzeb's men have entered. Shivaji was alone with his teacher and several soldiers were coming at the same time so it would be impossible for him to escape. At that stage he just looked at his teacher and teacher smiled. And when the soldiers came they saw two hundred Shivajis in the room. And the soldiers were bewildered. This is a story, but it can have happened. This is the freedom of the Divine power. To say that Shivaji can protect himself by himself, by his own power, is an illusion. It is because the Divine so chose that he is to be protected, therefore he was protected. Such is the nature of the Divine Teacher; such is the freedom of the Divine Teacher. And the same thing can be said about bliss, love, power and immortality.

"He sets above us his divine example..." If you have once seen two hundred Shivaji coming out like that in one stroke, that is the example. It is by this kind of example ? it is a major example but there are minor examples, small examples. But the Divine Teacher gives an example and it is this example which is extremely important. He embodies what he proposes. Sri Krishna says in the *Bhagavad Gita* where he teaches the karma Yoga: "Karma Yoga is a process of doing an action without the desire to enjoy the fruits of action." And Sri Krishna says: "I am myself an example of this Karma Yoga because I have nothing to gain from this world, nothing to gain by doing works in the world and yet I work all the time." This is the example. He says: "I require nothing from this world. I am perfect, nothing can give me more than what I am and yet I go on doing works all the time." And he says: "If I do not give this example then the world will perish because people will cease to work. In order that people will be inspired to work I give an example." It is by this means, when you see some embodiment of the ideal then you know it is possible. It can be done and then it inspires you to emulate it. This is the mark of a teacher, that he gives an example. He does not merely speak, he practices what he teaches and is a living embodiment of what he teaches. , Sri Aurobindo and the Mother declared that Divine life in matter is possible ? this is the teaching in the first chapter of *The Life Divine* ? and that it is inevitable both Sri Aurobindo and the Mother have taught this by example. As Mother says: "When Sri Aurobindo was in the earth it was a perfect Divine life on the earth." And when she said: "What Sri Aurobindo has asked me to do is DONE." It is not merely a teaching. Sri Aurobindo has asked the Mother to show, to realise that Divine consciousness can manifest fully in matter and Mother said that is done. It is because of this example that we are all inspired and that is the mark of the Divine Teacher.

He sets above us his divine example as our ideal and transforms the lower existence into a reflection of that which it contemplates. By the inpouring of his own influence and presence ...

Sri Aurobindo has said: suggestion, example and influence are the three powers of the teacher. When he reveals himself he gives suggestion, when he gives example by showing you, experiencing in you his freedom, bliss, light, immortality he has taught you through example. But now comes the third example: *By the inpouring of his own influence and presence into us he enables the individual being to attain to identity with the universal and transcendent.*" What is this influence? Influence is a radiation. It's a radiation that proceeds from nearness. A good teacher is one who can bring great inner intimacy and nearness — unless a teacher becomes near his students there is no influence. If the divine influences us it is because he is very intimate with us. It is by becoming intimate with us that his influence radiates in us. The Divine Teacher is the most intimate friend and shows his intimacy and presence all the time — it is that which radiates and by that radiation identity with the divine is experienced. So the instrument of the teacher is nearness, not a physical nearness. It is not the position that the teacher occupies in the surrounding of the pupil, it is an inward nearness How much he is inwardly present. We have the story of Draupadi when she was being derobed in the court in the presence of so many standing around her as wolves and no one would come to her aid. She just turned to Sri Krishna and in her heart prayed to him — and it did not take time for the Divine to come. On the spot there was the saving of Draupadi. Again it is a story but it can happen. It is not a myth. It is not a mere fiction. Such things can happen on the spot — that is the power of real prayer. That is the nearness. And because of the nearness there is the radiation. The divine teacher always whispers into your ears. And the human teacher who comes nearer to the divine teacher, also whispers in the ears. That is the why the greatest teaching is in the *Upanishads*. You sit near the teacher, you are very close to him. The best teaching is done by the teacher not by discourses, but by a word whispered into the ears — in close proximity to the student. One word transforms. A good teacher whispers in the ear of the child "Can you be like this?" and in one second the character can be changed. One word to the child spoken by the teacher in that intimacy and the character of anger can

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be changed: "Can you be in such a state of rage?" A teacher telling a child, a student, with that sense of intimacy the whole the whole sense of revenge can vanish in one second. That is the power of influence.

So once again, influence is a radiation that proceeds from the teacher because of this nearness, because of this intimacy with the inmost recesses of the student. That is influence. So, *"By the inpouring of his own influence and presence into us he enables the individual being to attain to identity with the universal and transcendent."* If you hear one day the word of the Divine in this fashion: "Are you so narrow?" One word from the Divine and you become universal and transcendent. You can attain to identity with the universal and the transcendent. These are the marks of the Divine Teacher.

"What is his method and his system?" this is the question we ask of any teacher. How does he teach? What is the situation which he creates for teaching. All schools are systems. In these systems, you have classrooms, you have books, you have lectures, you have timetables, you have syllabi to cover; these are the methods and systems of education. But the Divine Teacher — what is his method and what is his system? And Sri Aurobindo says: *"He has no method and every method."* There is nothing special, unique. We cannot say this is his system. Does he beat his students; does he uplift everybody; does he love everybody; does he instruct all the time or at a certain time only or in a certain way only? There is no method and every method. Yes, he does everything. Every method that is suitable to the individual ? when we speak of "free progress system" and when we emphasise so much individuation it is because of this. There is no method actually. What is it that will uplift a given individual or all whether you are a group class or an individual class? Depends, you don't make a rule that there will be no group classes, that does not apply to the Divine teaching. You say that it will have only individual teaching, that does not apply to him. Depends upon who before him he is going to be present. Now Sri Aurobindo answers this question in depth.

"His system is a natural organisation of the highest processes and movements of which the nature is capable." Everybody's nature he knows quite well. He knows what is Samai and how Samai can be uplifted, what is the best in his nature, how the different elements in his nature are coordinated or dis-coordinated, what is the stand in which he is now. Every element in him, according to the Divine's eyes, has behind it the Divine supremacy. If I am weak behind my weakness is the Divine strength; if I am dull behind this dullness there is the Divine luminous light. Behind everything that is there the Divine always stands in his full glory. So he knows everybody's nature and knows his present weakness, his present dullness, how all that can be cured, because the Divine is behind it. But to everybody he organises in such a way that very smoothly everything flowers and blooms and becomes resplendent. He knows the timing of everybody, when he should flower, when he should sleep, when he should rest, relax. He does not force anybody but creates an organisation which is natural to him.

"Applying themselves even to the pettiest details and to the actions the most insignificant in their appearance with as much care and thoroughness as to the greatest, they in the end lift all into the Light and transform all." Whether you know the Divine or not, whether you have put yourself into the Divine's hands or not, he is always your teacher and always uplifts you. But if you are aware, the speed becomes so great, almost like a miracle. It is as Sri Aurobindo said to one of the disciples, that within a short time he made as much progress as if a lame man was to throw away on the spot his crutches and started running with a tremendous speed. This can happen within a short time if we go into the hands of the Divine with consciousness. When we are unconscious we are what we are now and even there the Divine is constantly striving to lift us naturally by combining your nature in the right manner and giving you experiences which are necessary for you to grow. But if you go consciously to him and put yourself into his hands then the progression will be tremendously fast because he attends to every detail, whether big or small. In his eyes there is nothing big or small, everything is equal, it is in our small eyes that we make distinctions of big and small, but in his eyes there is nothing that is big and nothing that is small. And therefore in every detail the Divine constantly goes on pouring and uplifting. How much he will pour, in what way he will pour depends upon the individual. So there is no particular system, no particular method. Whatever is suitable by which this uplifting is possible that is the method that will be used. *"For in his Yoga there is nothing too small to be used and nothing too great to be attempted."*

"As the servant and disciple of the Master has no business with pride or egoism because all is done for him from above, so also he has no right to despond because of his personal deficiencies or the stumblings of his nature." It is a tremendous bond given to every disciple, to every student: "Do not worry about your deficiencies because the Master is at work and you are in his hands and he can put

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the necessary light, the necessary strength, the necessary knowledge, the necessary skill ? whatever is needed. *"For the Force that works in him is impersonal — or superpersonal — and infinite."*

"The full recognition of this inner Guide, Master of the Yoga, lord, light, enjoyer and goal of all sacrifice and effort, is of the utmost importance in the path of integral perfection." The Supreme Teacher at present is covered not recognised by us. So long as he is not recognised by us our speed of work and progress will be as we are now, but if we can recognise him; the full recognition, not only ordinary recognition, Sri Aurobindo speaks of the full recognition, *the full recognition of this inner Guide, Master of the Yoga, lord, light, enjoyer and goal of all sacrifice and effort...* When we recognise the Master with all these qualifications, the Master is the lord, is the light, is the enjoyer, is the goal of all sacrifice and effort, when we do this then we shall attain to integral perfection. What is integral perfection? There is one very long chapter in this very book. We shall read one day the concept of integral perfection. And we are all called upon to arrive at that integral perfection. And that perfection cannot come without the full recognition of the Master. That is why it is said that without the Teacher you can never attain the goal. But it is not the human teacher, you have to recognise the Divine Teacher and that teacher is within us and the more we recognise him the more we come near him and attain to perfection.

"It is immaterial whether he is first seen as an impersonal Wisdom, Love and Power behind all things, as an Absolute manifesting in the relative and attracting it, as one's highest Self and the highest Self of all, as a Divine Person within us and in the world, in one of his — or her — numerous forms and names or as the ideal which the mind conceives." These are the first experiences, the first ways by which you recognise him. So whether you recognise him in this way or that way or another way it does not matter. Begin your recognition of him. You recognise him as impersonal or as personal. You do as you choose as Sri Krishna says, *"Ye yatha mam prapadyante tams tathai 'va bhajamyaham'"*; "as they approach me so I approach them." He makes a room according to your approach. If you think that he loves you immensely, he will come to you as immense love; if you think that he is angry with you, he comes to you with anger; if you think that he is taskmaster, he will come to you as a taskmaster; if you think that he is impersonal, he will only stand with the eyes uplifted, then you will find him with uplifted eyes and you have to make a tremendous effort to approach him; if you think that he is all the time behind you, he is behind you; if you think that he is in front of you, he is always in front of you; if you think he is a child, he is your child; if you think he is your father, he is your father. In whatever form you may look upon him it depends upon you. So you choose your own way, what do you like the Divine to be with you. You start in the beginning in that form ultimately all the aspects will come one after the other. As you start with one, gradually his integrality will manifest little by little.

So he says, *it is immaterial, whether he is first seen as an impersonal Wisdom*. You can approach him as you approach a book, this book contains wisdom, and you read it ? it is impersonal whether you read it or another person read it, it is the same book equal to everybody, nothing special for you. But you may also approach him as personal Wisdom then he answers specific questions, very personally. It depends how you want him. *So it is immaterial whether he is first seen as an impersonal Wisdom, Love and Power*. You may conceive of God distributing lollipops to every one of us, all equally. Everyone is going to him and he gives one lollipop to everybody. He is impersonal love; it is love, but impersonal love. But he may also give specially bounty. If you approach him as personal love. That also he is. It depends how you approach him: impersonal love or impersonal power. You can approach him as Absolute manifesting in the relative and attracting it. When you conceive the Divine as an Absolute he is so high, so remote, inaccessible. He is inaccessible also, so high, all the time very high, you have the image of climbing staircases which do not end, on and on and on you climb, and you find that he is always higher still. You never reach him, he is inaccessible. That also is true of him. But you just imagine that he is your child and he comes as a child and remains with you all the time. That also is his nature therefore you can approach him in that way also.

"...as an Absolute manifesting in the relative and attracting it, as one's highest Self and the highest Self of all, as a Divine Person within us and in the world, in one of his — or her — numerous forms..." You may see him as Durga, you may see him as Shiva, you may see him as Krishna, in many forms, one form or many forms and he is all this. In the beginning you may choose any one of them, it is an infinite freedom on your part and gradually he will reveal to you all the aspects. *"In the end we perceive that he is all and more than all these things together. The mind's door of entry to the conception of him must necessarily vary according to the past evolution and the present nature."* How you will look upon him will depend on your past evolution and your present condition of consciousness.

If you read this whole chapter you will find that Sri Aurobindo explains to us the nature of the Divine. The whole chapter actually describes the nature of the Divine. How the Divine himself is the *shastra*. The Divine himself as a *shastra*, the Divine himself as the divine knowledge, the Divine knowledge of the process by which one can enter into relationship with the Divine. The Divine himself as the effort, the Divine himself as a labourer, the Divine himself as a pupil, as a student and how the Divine relates himself with the student as a student and as a teacher. And now we have the Divine himself as the Divine Teacher. And if you look upon the Divine you will find that the Divine can be looked upon in many different ways. He can be looked upon as the Lord of the universe; he can be looked upon as the one who upholds the universe; the Divine as the enjoyer of the universe, one who plays with the universe. The Divine can be seen as one who is indifferent to the universe. He is so above the universe that the universe is simply a small play in one of his fingertips. The Divine can be seen as one who is turning the wheel of the universe in which all human beings are like the cogs of the machine. But the Divine can also be seen as our teacher and here we have the description of him as our teacher. As our teacher he is first a veiled master, a master who is not seen by us and yet who is working with us and above us as instructor. How does he instruct? By why is he veiled? Why is that veil seen? Why is he not seen as a teacher? And Sri Aurobindo answers in the very first paragraph that we are going to read.

"This inner Guide is often veiled at first by the very intensity of our personal effort and by the ego's preoccupation with itself and its aims." Because we are labouring too much and because we are preoccupied with our own petty aims of life, the great master who is behind remains veiled for us. We do not have as yet questionings in our mind, we behave as if we know the answers to the questions, we labour as if we know what we have to do, what we must do, what we want to do. And unless we ask questions the teacher does not unveil himself. The first task that we have with our teacher is to go with a bag of questions. Unless you have questions the teacher does not reveal himself. So long as we know what we have to do ? most of us know what we have to do, although in our quiet moments we admit that we do not know who we are, we don't know what is our life and what we have to do in it. In our quiet moments we do that. But in our active life we behave as if we know what we have to do. Somebody says something and we know how to react to it immediately. We know how to become angry, we know how to be displeased, we know how to please, how to welcome. We know everything as it were, all that is needed in our life, and because of this knowledge, which is ignorance, the Divine Teacher is veiled. In the *Bhagavad Gita* it is said that if you want to go to the teacher you should go with *pari prashnena*, you should have repeated questioning ? *sevaya* ? and you should serve the teacher. These are the two methods of approaching the teacher: by repeated questioning when you begin to suspect that you are ignorant, which you don't normally do, but when you begin to suspect that you do not know then the questions arise and then the attitude develops in us of serving the teacher. *Pari prashnena sevaya*. *Sevaya* means by means of *seva*, of service. *Pari prashnena* means repeated questions, not only *prashna*, *pari prashnena*. Repeated questioning, again and again you question. That is why in the Indian system there is always a beginning of studies which says of *Athabrahmajigyasa* Now there is the query, the desire to know the *Brahman*, the Divine. The master is to be known, in order to receive instruction we have to know him. The more we question him the more unveiled he becomes. The more we receive the answers from him the greater becomes our preoccupation, not with ourselves, but with him.

"As we gain in clarity and the turmoil of egoistic effort gives place to a calmer self-knowledge, we recognise the source of the growing light within us." Day before yesterday I began to speak on what is knowledge. It was just the introduction to the idea of knowledge. But a greater understanding of knowledge comes when we consider the contrast between knowledge and information. As I said last time all knowledge is uncovering. And the uncovering is done in many ways. Word, I told you, is way of uncovering. You hear a word and the word uncovers. Idea is presented and it can be seen as a ray of light which also uncovers. Another way of uncovering is to gain information. In fact, information in our present day is so important that to us all information is knowledge and all knowledge is information as if there is nothing else than information. It is only when we come to deeper levels of understanding that you find that true knowledge is far transcendental of information. To get information

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about soul is not soul knowledge. You read ten books on the description of the soul and you find you are exactly where you are almost. You may read ten books about the knowledge of God, it is information about God but that is not God knowledge. Even with the world we have much information but truly to know the world unless you become one with the world, there is knowledge by identity, you do not know the world. You may have information: I know who is my uncle, who is my father, who is my mother but you do not know. Knowledge is a different dimension.

True knowledge has three characteristics. There is first a growth of light. There is something like what we can call illumination. The least level of experience of illumination is awakening ? one is awakened. In the Veda it was termed as the arrival of *Usha*, the arrival of dawn. We may have lot of information but there is no arrival of *Usha* in it, there is no awakening. That is the first mark, there is awakening. Once you are awake the whole world then seems to be different; it is like dreaming and coming to the state of awakening. What is the difference between the two? The first mark is the arrival of the glow of light. There is a shock and we find the world is not what we thought it to be; it is not the hum-drum of existence. There are depths and depths and heights and heights. Even this knowledge, this awakening to heights and depths and wideness ? in fact all true education begins with the perception of wideness, of depths and of heights. These three words are very important in all process of education. As you are educating yourself you must ask always these three questions. How wide have I become, how deep have I become, how high have I become? These are the three measures by which you can judge yourself, evaluate yourself in the true process of knowledge. With the awakening, the deepening, widening, heightening — these three processes begin to occur. When you begin to experience these three things you are entering into the threshold of knowledge. Even information can give you these three things. When you are informed about many things you experience to some extent this heightening, widening and deepening. But when you are truly awakened you begin to perceive the widenesses. You don't merely see the shadows of widenesses or of deepening depths or of the heights. It is like hearing that Himalayas are the highest mountains; it is information about Himalayas and then you go and stand before the Himalayas and really see the glory in the daylight, of the snow peaks, the heights and heights, the rocks, piles upon piles. You begin to perceive the height of the Himalayas and become overwhelmed by it. But that is only the beginning.

Then there is the growth of the being. Information gives you growth of becoming. The true knowledge gives you growth of Being. And there is a difference between the two. The more you know through information the more you can deal with the world externally. Which is good by itself but it is not true knowledge. What is the difference between becoming and being? Being is the source of becoming. This is the first difference. In the process of becoming you fluctuate, it is like the flow of the river, there is a wavy movement. In the process of being you stabilise yourself, there is an experience of stability. You become *sthanu*. That is a Sanskrit word. You become stable, you become an unshakable mountain, an experience of possessing yourself, self-possession. When you possess in your palm something and when you see something outside you this is the difference between information and knowledge. With information you only stand before an object but in the knowledge you possess the object of knowledge. There is self-possession and then there is self-mastery. That is the third stage of true knowledge, self-mastery in which you find all that has to be known contained in it. It is not only that you have in your hands only a little thing, but you possess, you contain within yourself. And the Divine Teacher is interested in this task, in developing your Being.

So, as Sri Aurobindo says: *"As we gain in clarity and the turmoil of egoistic effort gives place to a calmer self-knowledge, we recognise the source of the growing light within us. We recognise it retrospectively as we realise how all our obscure and conflicting movements have been determined towards an end that we only now begin to perceive, how even before our entrance into the path of the Yoga the evolution of our life has been designedly led towards its turning-point."* This is the experience of all who stand at the threshold of the true knowledge. As you stand at the threshold of yoga and you become awake to the necessity of yoga in your life you realise how the Divine himself was leading you towards that path even without your knowledge, even without your consent. All circumstances of life were determined as it were, so as to make you aware of the need of yoga. You recognise it retrospectively. You have already trodden the path to some extent and you look back retrospectively and then you come to know that this was the meaning of it. As Sri Aurobindo was taken to the Alipore jail and he asked the question: "Why am I taken to this jail?" He was removed from the field of his work in which he was fully engaged and he was cut suddenly from all that surrounding of that field of action and put into a prison where he could not even meet a single person apart from himself, apart from the sentries. Then retrospectively when he began to lead the life in Alipore jail as he began to contemplate and meditate on the *Gita*, on the *Upanishads* and when he heard the Supreme Lord himself Sri Krishna telling him: "There is a big work to be done. You have to tread a path of yoga, and a new path

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of yoga has to be created for mankind.” When he came to learn this, then retrospectively he understood why he was taken to the jail. It is retrospective; it is the Lord himself as a master, as a teacher.

“For now we begin to understand the sense of our struggles and efforts, successes and failures. At last we are able to seize the meaning of our ordeals and sufferings and can appreciate the help that was given us by all that hurt and resisted and the utility of our very falls and stumblings.” When we fall we complain why should I fall? But the divine takes you through various kinds of paths of successes, of victories, of failures, of disasters, calamities, all kinds of methods. At that time we repel or we rejoice according to our immediate concern but behind all that is the preparation of the path. *“We recognise this divine leading afterwards, not retrospectively but immediately...”* Once we have gained this retrospective understanding of God leading you then you apply it even now. Earlier you were trying to understand the Divine retrospectively but now once you have learnt it you can apply the method now and say that in what is happening to you surely the Divine is present. You should see in the present situation also how the Divine is present ? not retrospectively but now itself. How the divine leading *“...in the moulding of our thoughts by a transcendent Seer, of our will and actions by an all-embracing Power, of our emotional life by an all-attracting and all-assimilating Bliss and Love. We recognise it too in a more personal relation that from the first touched or at the last seizes us; we feel the eternal presence of a supreme Master, Friend, Lover, Teacher.”* These are the four terms which we recognise in the true teacher. He is a Master, he is a Friend, he is the Lover, he is the Teacher. The Teacher basically instructs, the Lover attracts you with his love, the Friend is a companion and gives you solace, gives you happiness, pleasure, gives you all kinds of play; but he is also the Master and that is the real recognition of the Teacher as the Master. It is he who commands everything and who has the authority of giving command to you. That is the mark of the Teacher. A good teacher can tell you: “Do this!” He commands with a complete responsibility. Whatever is to happen will happen, do not grieve because I am in every circumstance. That is the Master. He is sure, confident, infallible. That is the mark of the Master. A friend can make a mistake, a lover can make a mistake, even a teacher can make a mistake but the master makes no mistake. When the teacher tells you authoritatively he is the master, when the teacher explores with you he is the teacher but when he is authoritative, he is certain, that is the mastery. The Lord, the Divine comes to us in our process of learning as the Master, Friend, Lover, Teacher.

“We recognise it in the essence of our being as that develops into likeness and oneness with a greater and wider existence...” This is another mark of your entering into being. When you begin to become like your teacher in your behaviour, in your thinking, in your movements, in your seekings. A good teacher always has the power of creating imitation among the pupils; a good teacher becomes an example and the pupils begin to imitate, begins to become like the teacher. This is not the accumulation of more and more information. To become like your teacher, if your teacher is kind you become kind; if your teacher is authoritative you become authoritative; your teacher is very friendly you become very friendly; the teacher is very forgiving you become very forgiving; the teacher is a seer you become a seer, the teacher is your leader you become a leader. Whenever you have a real growth of being, real knowledge, as distinguished from information this is the special mark you will find. You not only become more informed, something happens to the very essence of your being, you are moulded in the image of your teacher. *“We recognise it in the essence of our being as that develops into likeness and oneness with a greater and wider existence; for we perceive that this miraculous development is not the result of our own efforts...”* When you begin to become like your teacher it is not your effort it is he because of the supreme attractiveness of his being who mingles his being with your being, who wrestles and embraces your being and then you become like him. And then Sri Aurobindo gives a great statement: *“...an eternal Perfection is moulding us into its own image.”* That is the mark of a great education. The true education is an eternal perfection *moulding us into its own image*. We become perfect not by gaining lot of information; it is by becoming ourselves the lightness, the image of the master himself.

Now Sri Aurobindo gives various ways by which you come to know this master, by different names we call him. *“One who is the Lord or Ishwara of the Yogic philosophies, the Guide in the conscious being (caitya guru or antaryamin), the Absolute of the thinker, the Unknowable of the Agnostic, the universal Force of the materialist, the supreme Soul and the supreme Shakti, the One who is differently named and imaged by the religions, is the Master of our Yoga.”* If you are a materialist God comes to you as the force of matter; if you are the agnostic then he comes to you in the form of the unknowable; if you are a yogi he comes to you as *Ishwara*; if you are a thinker he comes to you as the absolute. In whatever form you are he takes an appropriate form but it is he who

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takes you in his hands; it is he who walks with you and trains you in his own mastery and makes you like him.

"To see, know, become and fulfil this One in our inner selves and in all our outer nature, was always the secret goal and becomes now the conscious purpose of our embodied existence." If you are now in the real presence of the Master you recognise what is the goal of your life. Your goal of life is actually nothing but to become like the master of your being. To grow into his likeness. That is the reason why without the *guru* you cannot have the real knowledge because what is knowledge is to be like the master, growth into the image of the master. Therefore unless you meet your master how can you be educated? The very aim of education, the very aim of life is to become like your teacher. Therefore teacher becomes indispensable.

"To be conscious of him in all parts of our being and equally in all that the dividing mind sees as outside our being, is the consummation of the individual consciousness. To be possessed by him and possess him in ourselves and in all things is the term of all empire and mastery. To enjoy him in all experience of passivity and activity, of peace and of power, of unity and of difference is the happiness which the Jiva, the individual soul manifested in the world, is obscurely seeking. This is the entire definition of the aim of integral Yoga; it is the rendering in personal experience of the truth which universal Nature has hidden in herself and which she travails to discover. It is the conversion of the human soul into the divine soul and of natural life into divine living." This paragraph is so beautiful and so masterly that you should read it again and again. It is the entire definition of yoga, the entire aim of life, the entire thing that you are obscurely seeking can be fulfilled only when this happens. As long as this does not happen do not think that you have reached. There are many-many stages in which we are told the destination has come and if you want to be sure whether the destination has come or not read this paragraph, see whether this has happened. This is only the introduction so far of the Divine Teacher. Now we go forward and look at this Divine Teacher in our world.

"The surest way towards this integral fulfilment is to find the Master of the secret who dwells within us, open ourselves constantly to the divine Power which is also the divine Wisdom and Love and trust to it to effect the conversion. But it is difficult for the egoistic consciousness to do this at all at the beginning. And, if done at all, it is still difficult to do it perfectly and in every strand of our nature. It is difficult at first because our egoistic habits of thought, of sensation, of feeling block up the avenues by which we can arrive at the perception that is needed. It is difficult afterwards because the faith, the surrender, the courage requisite in this path are not easy to the ego-clouded soul. The divine working is not the working which the egoistic mind desires or approves; for it uses error in order to arrive at truth, suffering in order to arrive at bliss, imperfection in order to arrive at perfection. The ego cannot see where it is being led; it revolts against the leading, loses confidence, loses courage. These failings would not matter; for the divine Guide within is not offended by our revolt, not discouraged by our want of faith or repelled by our weakness; he has the entire love of the mother and the entire patience of the teacher. But by withdrawing our assent from the guidance we lose the consciousness, though not all the actuality — not, in any case, the eventuality — of its benefit. And we withdraw our assent because we fail to distinguish our higher Self from the lower through which he is preparing his self-revelation. As in the world, so in ourselves, we cannot see God because of his workings and, especially, because he works in us through our nature and not by a succession of arbitrary miracles. Man demands miracles that he may have faith; he wishes to be dazzled in order that he may see. And this impatience, this ignorance may turn into a great danger and disaster if, in our revolt against the divine leading, we call in another distorting Force more satisfying to our impulses and desires and ask it to guide us and give it the Divine Name."

The difficulty of discovering the Divine Master, this is what Sri Aurobindo describes to us. Why is it that we cannot discover the Divine Master who is within us? Sri Aurobindo gives us the analysis. *"It is difficult at first because our egoistic habits of thought, of sensation, of feeling block up the avenues by which we can arrive at the perception that is needed."* What are the egoistic habits of thoughts? Habit means a constant turn towards what has already been established. That is a habit. We habitually smile when we meet people who come to meet us. Similarly there are many kinds of habits. When somebody praises you, habitually we like it. It is our egoistic habit to dislike blame. If somebody blames you, habitually you withdraw. It is a habit of the ego: "I cannot have done wrong." Because of our habitual way of thinking we cannot see when the Divine comes to us. He may come to us in a not very agreeable form, he may come to us blaming us and we may not like him so we may not recognise him ? Oh! he is my master. The master who is within us may come to us in many ways which are opposed to our egoistic ways of thinking, to our egoistic habit of thought, of sensation, of feeling. We think habitually, we sense habitually, we feel habitually and all are egoistic in our normal turn of consciousness. That is why we do not recognise the Master when he comes.

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"It is difficult afterwards because the faith, the surrender, the courage requisite in this path are not easy to the ego-clouded soul." If you don't have enough faith in the leading of the Master and then the Master says: "Now proceed" but the faith is not there, therefore we give up. We do not move forward. Surrender is not there, therefore we do not move forward. The courage is not there, therefore we do not move forward. These are the blockades as to why we cannot recognise the Master and cannot allow him to work in our life.

"The ego cannot see where it is being led; it revolts against the leading, loses confidence, loses courage." But the Divine Master therefore does not leave us because we do not follow his leading. He is not offended and he continues in his own way. Even through our revolt, even through our loss of courage or faith he continues because he is deeply interested in us ? even more interested in us that we may be interested in him because he knows who we are and what we are.

Therefore Sri Aurobindo says: *"These failings would not matter; for the divine Guide within is not offended by our revolt, not discouraged by our want of faith or repelled by our weakness; he has the entire love of the mother and the entire patience of the teacher. But by withdrawing our assent from the guidance we lose the consciousness, though not all the actuality — not, in any case, the eventuality — of its benefit. And we withdraw our assent because we fail to distinguish our higher Self from the lower through which he is preparing his self-revelation. As in the world, so in ourselves, we cannot see God because of his workings and, especially, because he works in us through our nature and not by a succession of arbitrary miracles."* It is a very special method of God. We want to see miracles to believe in God but he precisely does not do it because he wants to prepare our nature. If only miracles happen our nature will not be trained, we will not be able to see even in the leaf of a tree the miracle of God ? because it is so familiar. Only in a miracle we will see God but not in the leaves, in the ordinary ripple of a river, in the smile of a child. All these are very familiar, very small things in life and this is what God wants to tell us, he is present not only in extraordinary events but even in ordinary events. God is everywhere, omnipresent and it is that while he wants to teach us, so why should he do miracles? He does not teach us *by a succession of arbitrary miracles*. *"Man demands miracles that he may have faith; he wishes to be dazzled in order that he may see."* One day, a disciple went to the Mother and said: "Mother, so many teachers are doing so many miracles why don't you give miracles to the people?" She said: "What miracles do you want to see? Shall I bring a big tree here before you? Even if that happens you will not believe it." So many miracles are happening in the world, the people have to be trained to see God in every event. Why only in the miracle? Every event is a miracle if you want to see the miracle. What is happening to you now is a miracle. Reading of this book itself is a miracle. If you consider the events and the situation of life, if you just want to see the cause and effect and relationship the very fact that this words comes to us now is a miracle. We are impatient and this impatience may turn into a great danger and disaster. Don't therefore demand miracles.

Miracles in any case will happen. Not that there are no miracles. Miracles are what? The entrance of a higher principle into a lower principle is miracle. In a lower working when a higher working begins to operate is a miracle. If with our physical eyes we can see an invisible being, it is a miracle. The invisible being is a higher principle. Our eyes are trained to see only physical things and if your physical eyes begin to see the invisible it is a miracle. Actually, this is what happens every time, every moment because the invisible exists and our eyes are capable of seeing only they are not trained. But when necessary the Divine also gives us miracles, it is not as if he denies miracle but he does not follow our egoistic demands: "Now make a miracle and we believe in you." because then he will not be a good teacher. He is not in a hurry at all that we should believe in him. He has a greater purpose he wants to show you miracles in every day life, in every moment. What Arjuna saw in Sri Krishna at the battlefield is one of the greatest miracles in fact. You should read sometime the eleventh chapter of the *Bhagavad Gita*. How Sri Krishna manifests the divinity in a great splendour as if thousand suns were blazing at once in the sky. That is how Arjuna describes the vision of Sri Krishna. That also can happen. But before starting his teaching Sri Krishna did not say, "Now look, I am miraculous God and you should have faith in what I tell you." No! He took the disciple little by little through the difficult process of understanding. It is only when he had already the faith in him, ? not to create faith in him ? already he had the faith in him, that the great miracle happened and Arjuna saw the Supreme Divine in physical form. If the Divine creates miracles it is not because he wants to create faith in you. It is for a specific purpose he can always do it. But to show miracles is not the sign of the Master. The sign of the Master is that he shows you miracle even in those things which are familiar; when he trains you to see God in everything. I see you and I see God — that is the miracle.

But human beings sometimes are impatient. When God does not show you the miracle but ordinary men do it, you turn away from God and you go to the ordinary man. This is a disaster.

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Therefore Sri Aurobindo says don't be impatient, don't be dazzled, don't demand a miracle. *"And this impatience, this ignorance may turn into a great danger and disaster if, in our revolt against the divine leading, we call in another distorting Force more satisfying to our impulses and desires and ask it to guide us and give it the Divine Name. But while it is difficult for man to believe in something unseen within himself, it is easy for him to believe in something which he can image as extraneous to himself."* Now Sri Aurobindo brings us to that argument as to why human beings need human teachers. Although the Divine Teacher is always there within us and therefore we can do without a human teacher. Why it is necessary that we need human teachers? This is because *while it is difficult for man to believe in something unseen within himself, it is easy for him to believe in something which he can image as extraneous to himself.*

"The spiritual progress of most human beings demands an extraneous support, an object of faith outside us. It needs an external image of God; or it needs a human representative, — Incarnation, Prophet or Guru; or it demands both and receives them. For according to the need of the human soul the Divine manifests himself as deity, as human divine or in simple humanity — using that thick disguise, which so successfully conceals the Godhead, for a means of transmission of his guidance. The Hindu discipline of spirituality provides for this need of the soul by the conceptions of the Ishta Devata, the Avatar and the Guru." These are only ladders, crutches. When you need a human teacher the Divine comes also to you as a human teacher, he will provide you a human teacher because it is easier for a human being to approach the Divine outwardly instead of inwardly. That is why in India particularly, it is said that if you do not find the Divine Teacher within you find a human teacher and approach him and treat him as the Divine Teacher. Because even if the human teacher is inadequate and has imperfections the Divine Teacher will come to you through him because you want to meet him. The Divine takes the human instrument even if it is defective; he fills the defects and presents himself to you as the perfect Divine. The human teacher himself may be imperfect but because the Divine Teacher uses him as his representative, because you choose him, therefore his defects are blurred, obliterated, cancelled by the Divine when he deals with you. It is also like a doctor. The doctor himself may not be capable but if you go to him and pray to the Divine: "Please act through him" then the doctor will be immediately transfigure into that divinity and will treat you as the Divine will treat you. This is the miracle you might say: how the human person approached as a teacher, becomes for you the Divine himself. That this why in India this discipline has been cultivated for ages, thousands of years. In fact, it is said that everybody even if he has found God within him, he should still go to a human teacher. It is so much embedded in the Indian culture, and there is a seeking for a human teacher, one in whom you can see the Divine.

Or at least you find an *ishta devata*. This concept of *ishta devata* is very important. There is God himself, there are many gods and there are a number of human beings. God himself is the Divine, the gods are also divine, and human beings also are divine. In the eye of integrality there is nothing which is not divine, and yet there are limitations. The human beings are very limited, the Gods are not so limited and God is fully unlimited. You may not find a human teacher in whom you may see many-many human defects therefore you may not be able to approach him. Then you approach a deity, a god. India recognises the presence of gods. There are gods and each god has a special quality and each one of us vibrates with this quality or that quality. According to your vibration the god of that particular vibration becomes more favourable to you; he is nearer to you. He is more like you because ultimately you have to become like God himself. So any god who seems to be like you becomes your favourite god: *ishta devata*. If you are in a hurry for transformation, if you are extremely devoted to transformation you will automatically find Shiva as your favourite deity because he is the impetuous power of transformation. If you are very intolerant of your defects, if you don't want your defects at all, then you will find Shiva is your very favourite because he does not tolerate any defect. In his presence no defect can be present. To get *Shiva* with you is the most difficult thing because you should be prepared to throw away all your defects at once. If you want charming smiles of the Divine then Mahalakshmi will always become your favourite. She does not see your defects, she does not want to remove your defects, she only wants to attract you, to uplift you, to fondle you. And if you need to be fondled, Mahalakshmi will become your favourite deity. If you are a patient labourer, a good student, a good worker, Saraswati will become your favourite deity. You will always turn to her. You will like her very much because in your being there is a vibration of Saraswati. So, this idea of favourite deity is not a wrong idea. It is a very effective and powerful and true idea. The Divine has many forms and you can take any form which is appropriate to your nature and climb up the ladder. Only you should agree not to limit yourself to this or that or that... You take the help, you take the ladder and then go beyond, because ultimately it is the Supreme Divine that you have to meet. You may take the human teacher, you may take a god as *ishta devata* but ultimately you have to find the

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Lord within yourself. That is the real aim of the Integral Yoga. Even if you have human *guru*, ultimately you have to discover the Lord himself within you.

"The Hindu discipline of spirituality provides for this need of the soul by the conceptions of the Ishta Devata, [Ishta means that which is desired, that which is liked, admired] the Avatar and the Guru. By the Ishta Devata, the chosen deity, is meant, — not some inferior Power, but a name and form of the transcendent and universal Godhead. Almost all religions either have as their base or make use of some such name and form of the Divine. Its necessity for the human soul is evident. God is the All and more than the All. But that which is more than the All, how shall man conceive? And even the All is at first too hard for him; for he himself in his active consciousness is a limited and selective formation and can open himself only to that which is in harmony with his limited nature. There are things in the All which are too hard for his comprehension or seem too terrible to his sensitive emotions and cowering sensations. Or, simply, he cannot conceive as the Divine, cannot approach or cannot recognise something that is too much out of the circle of his ignorant or partial conceptions. It is necessary for him to conceive God in his own image..."

This is now the other way round. In the true learning you become like God that is our ultimate course of action. But in the beginning you like God to be like you, not yourself becoming like God, but you like that form of God which is like you and you turn more easily to this aspect of the Divine which is more like you.

There is a very difficult word in English: anthropomorphism. To make God in the image of man. To think of God as if he is a human being, regarding him as a human being is anthropomorphism. Because human beings are pleased when you praise them therefore they approach God to praise him so he may be pleased with them. We believe, just as human beings are pleased by flattery, God also is pleased by flattery. It is not true but it is to look upon God as if he is a human being. When you strike somebody you feel that he will take revenge against you similarly you revolt against God and you believe that God will take revenge against you. God will not like you; God will be offended. You do not know that God is never offended ? he is the Divine. Sri Aurobindo says, God is not offended by your revolts. He is like a mother. He understands your revolts and even in your revolts he comes to you and embraces you. But that requires a higher knowledge of the Divine otherwise normally we think that he will be offended, but he is not offended. To image God in man's image, that is anthropomorphism. But even that has its use because God uses everything. Every method of man is used by God for his purposes. So this idea of looking upon the Divine in the form in which we like him, God also takes that form. If you like a certain form of God and say that you like it very much then God takes that form also and treats you through that. *"It is necessary for him to conceive God in his own image or in some form that is beyond himself but consonant with his highest tendencies and seizable by his feelings or his intelligence. Otherwise it would be difficult for him to come into contact and communion with the Divine."* Anthropomorphism has its uses ? you start with it and ultimately you will come to God himself and then throw away anthropomorphism.

"Even then his nature calls for a human intermediary so that he may feel the Divine in something entirely close to his own humanity and sensible in a human influence and example." Even *ishta devata* may not be enough. A god who is very near to you may not be enough for you to approach God. You may come to a human form that is why the human *guru* is needed. *"This call is satisfied by the Divine manifest in a human appearance, the Incarnation, the Avatar — Krishna, Christ, Buddha. Or if this is too hard for him to conceive, the Divine represents himself through a less marvellous intermediary, — Prophet or Teacher. For many who cannot conceive or are unwilling to accept the Divine Man, are ready to open themselves to the supreme man, terming him not incarnation but world-teacher or divine representative. This also is not enough; a living influence, a living example, a present instruction is needed."* You may have *ishta devata* or you may have incarnation as a great being who lived in the physical but as an incarnation. Even that may not be enough. You may have a teacher, a prophet, but a prophet of the past may not be enough you need sometimes a living teacher one who can talk to you physically, one you can see living day after day: *a living influence, a living example, a present instruction is needed.*

"For it is only the few who can make the past Teacher and his teaching, the past Incarnation and his example and influence a living force in their lives. For this need also the Hindu discipline provides in the relation of the Guru and the disciple. The Guru may sometimes be the Incarnation or World-Teacher [as Arjuna found in Krishna his living teacher and it so happened that Krishna was not only a human teacher but also an incarnation] but it is sufficient that he should represent to the disciple the divine wisdom, convey to him something of the divine ideal or make him feel the realised relation of the human soul with the Eternal." He may not be a great prophet; he may not be a great

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incarnation. If the teacher can give him the knowledge of the Divine, can take him to the experience of the Divine, even that is enough and even that should be provided for.

"The sadhaka of the integral Yoga will make use of all these aids according to his nature..." There is nothing that is denied in the Integral Yoga. You can worship a human teacher who may not be a great incarnation, you can worship a teacher who is an incarnation or a prophet either of the present day or of the past or you can go to a god [*ishta devata*, favourite god or goddess] or you go directly to the Supreme Teacher within yourself. Any and all, everything is admitted in the Integral Yoga. *"The sadhaka of the integral Yoga will make use of all these aids according to his nature; but it is necessary that he should shun their limitations and cast from himself that exclusive tendency of egoistic mind which cries, 'My God, my Incarnation, my Prophet, my Guru' and opposes it to all other realisation in a sectarian or a fanatical spirit."* this is the evil which be avoided. You may love your teacher, but to say, "My teacher is the only teacher in the world and none other. My prophet is the only prophet in the world", this exclusiveness. The Supreme God is the only God, the one without a second, all other forms are secondary forms and we should take them all in their supreme light. *"All sectarianism, all fanaticism must be shunned; for it is inconsistent with the integrity of the divine realisation."* There is a beautiful prayer of Sri Aurobindo where he praises all the gods and then he says, "Now liberate me from all the gods."

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he sadhaka of the integral Yoga will make use of all these aids according to his nature; but it is necessary that he should shun their limitations and cast from himself that exclusive tendency of egoistic mind which cries, "My God, my Incarnation, my Prophet, my Guru," and opposes it to all other realisation in a sectarian or a fanatical spirit. All sectarianism, all fanaticism must be shunned; for it is inconsistent with the integrity of the divine realisation."

What are *all these aids*? Sri Aurobindo has said that the Divine himself is the teacher but human nature being what it is, with its limitations, we may conceive of many others first such as *ishta devata*. The words *Ishta devata* mean favourite God. Some may consider Ganapati as *ishta devata*, or Shiva or Vishnu or Durga according to our nature one or another becomes the one we desire and worship. Favourite means one in whose image we would like to be moulded. You would like to be like him or like her. If I am a worshipper of Durga I would like to be like Durga, if I am a worshiper of Shiva I would like to be like Shiva. When you admire you like to become. Admiration, adoration these are the first steps but you become satisfied only when you become like that which you admire. That is *ishta devata*. You may consider *ishta devata* as your *guru*, as your teacher or you may like an incarnation to be your *guru* ? either Christ or Buddha or Krishna or Rama as *guru* ? or you may like a Prophet as your *guru*. There is a difference between an incarnation and a prophet. Incarnation is the one in whom the Divine himself descends; a Prophet is a very great man who has contact with the Divine but in whom Divine himself has not descended. Like Mohammed is a prophet. So you may like to have *ishta devata* as your teacher or you may like an incarnation to be your teacher or you may like a prophet to be your teacher or you may like a human being as your teacher. These are all the aids.

"On the contrary, the sadhaka of the integral Yoga will not be satisfied until he has included all other names and forms of Deity in his own conception, seen his own Ishta Devata in all others, unified all Avatars in the unity of Him who descends in the Avatar, welded the truth in all teachings into the harmony of the Eternal Wisdom. Nor should he forget the aim of these external aids which is to awaken his soul to the Divine within him. Nothing has been finally accomplished if that has not been accomplished. It is not sufficient to worship Krishna, Christ or Buddha without, if there is not the revealing and the formation of the Buddha, the Christ or Krishna in ourselves. And all other aids equally have no other purpose; each is a bridge between man's unconverted state and the revelation of the Divine within him."

We have now a full description of our teacher: first that the Divine himself is our teacher; secondly that he has no method and every method and that his system varies according to each one nature; thirdly that he is a teacher who teaches by suggestion and not by imposition, he teaches by his own example and he teaches by his own influence, influence that proceeds from the closeness of his being with our own being; and that his entire aim is to take us through the vicissitude of experiences, varieties of experiences so that you may awake, which is the central thing ? awakening. The Divine

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Teacher awakes to his presence, to his working in the world, his hand in everything that happens to you whether success or failure, stumbling or fall or catastrophe or glory. Unveiling of the Divine in you is what the Divine ultimately aims and accomplishes. But since it is difficult for the human being to open directly to the Divine Teacher there are other aids: *ishta devata*, incarnations, prophet or a human teacher. In any case the important thing is that the teacher must awaken and that awakening is to the integral Divine who is not limited to one form or another form, to one *ishta devata* or another but includes all so that once again we can say that our teacher is the Supreme Lord who is the Teacher of all.

Now is the description of the human teacher because that is easier for human beings to obtain rather than the Supreme Teacher directly. *"The Teacher of the integral Yoga will follow as far as he may the method of the Teacher within us. He will lead the disciple through the nature of the disciple."* This is the ultimate justification of what we call free progress system. Since every one has a different nature the system or the method will be such as to be suitable to each one, to his own nature. Even when there is a collective class like this he looks upon each one differently and he addresses in such a way that each one can derive, according to his own nature, what is suitable for him or to her. *"Teaching, example, influence, — these are the three instruments of the Guru. But the wise Teacher will not seek to impose himself or his opinions on the passive acceptance of the receptive mind..."* He does not become a propagandist. A good teacher is not a propagandist; he does not make any propaganda. He does not want that his opinions should be accepted by his pupils. *"... he will throw in only what is productive and sure as a seed which will grow under the divine fostering within."* It is a very important statement. The task of the teacher is only to throw a few seeds in the soil of the child and then it is the divine who will foster, it is the Divine himself who will water the seeds so that they will grow and become a tree. *"He will seek to awaken much more than to instruct..."* This is the mark of a good teacher. He does not like to instruct, he does like to say do this, do that. He might do it but much more important for him is to awaken. *"... he will aim at the growth of the faculties and the experiences by a natural process and free expansion."*

There are many courses in the world for education: bachelor of education, master of education... If all the courses are distilled and made as briefest possible ? this paragraph is enough. All the courses of education ultimately can be reduced to this. If you master this one paragraph I will give you a B. Ed. Only this one paragraph is enough. These words *growth of the faculties* are very important. Our education is normally by books and subjects whereas a good teacher is very concerned with the growth of faculties. It may be this subject or that subject or any other subjects what is important is to develop the faculties.

There are four important faculties in the human being. One is the faculty of sensation — senses. Development of sense faculty is the development of the powers which are inherent to senses: power of observation, of seeing accurately, of enjoying correctly. Experience of hearing, when you hear music and you are able to appreciate different tunes of music, different notes of music, pitches of music, then you have cultivated the faculty of hearing. And when you hear music, if you can hear the inaudible sounds. The sounds which are audible are, of course, heard but between the sounds there are inaudible sounds and if you can hear the inaudible sounds ... it is just as in a picture, what is painted is of course good but, if you can observe what is not painted that is a deeper sight, the deeper eye of the artist. So first, the faculty to be developed is the sense. The second faculty is the faculty of the mind. Mind is also sense but it is a coordinating sense, it is the sense which coordinates all the other senses. When you can coordinate sound and sight as in the cinema ? the medium of cinema gives you sound and sight together, it is like a mind. Our mind is an automatic cinematographic faculty. It coordinates variety of experiences. Cinema is not a complete coordinative faculty because you can't taste; when you see somebody eating you do not taste what he tastes; you cannot experience also the sensation of touch as yet in cinema. But the mind can do all this together. So the faculty of the mind is very important ? a coordinating activity. The third faculty is the faculty of imagination. Without experience, or based on experience you can make images in the mind. That is imagination, the capacity to make an image as accurately as possible. That takes you to the experience of metaphors, similes, and analogies and try to image an experience, or expand the experience into an image. That is the third faculty.

The fourth faculty is the faculty of reason. The capacity of deduction, of induction, the faculty of ratiocination, of connecting cause and effect. When there is a long chain of connections and you can successfully make the full chain that is the process of ratiocination. A is the cause of B; B is the cause of C; C is the cause of D... therefore A is the cause of D. Faculty of reason is the faculty by which you deduce, you induce. Deduction is where from a larger proposition you derive a smaller proposition; from all you derive something that is applicable to one or to some. Induction is the

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opposite process you go from particular to universal, from one example you conclude that in all cases it will happen in the same way. And then you have implication. All these are processes of inference. Inference is to start from one proposition and derive another proposition. Inference is done by deduction, induction, implication and ratiocination. Reason is supposed to be the instrument of inference. You are rational when you can infer correctly and objectively that is called power of inference. To infer is a great faculty in the human mind. It goes beyond experience. In sensation you have experience but in reason you have further capacity, you go beyond experience. Because we have the experience here in India of earth and water and air you can be sure that even if you go to California there will be earth and water and air. You have not experienced it but you infer. Basically there is no difference between India and California therefore if it is possible to have here earth, water, fire, etc in California also we will have. Without experience we can say, we can infer. Rational faculty is a faculty by which you can infer accurately, decisively. These are the four faculties: sensation, mind, imagination, and reason. And the fifth faculty is intuition, the capacity of intuition. It is called knowledge by identity; but knowledge by identity even with the invisible. This is the speciality of intuition. Even what is invisible, inaudible to our senses, even with that you can be identified. Of course, intuition itself has many other faculties in which we will not go just now; it is a big science by itself.

But the important point is that the good teacher has his eyes on the faculty of his students. He may teach any subject: mathematics, history, geography, science, whatever but his concern is whether you are developing the faculties. In ordinary systems of education what is tested is only whether you know this fact or that fact, whether you are informed of this or that and very few teachers try to understand development of the faculties, whether your ideas become clear, whether your spelling is correct or not, whether you can reason properly or not, whether your observations are correct or not. You may write very briefly, not at length, but your brief statement should convey the development of your faculties and the good teacher's experience is with the faculty development. "... *he will aim at the growth of the faculties and the experiences by a natural process and free expansion.*" In one sentence Sri Aurobindo has put so much. A good teacher is one who does not allow the student to feel burdened. He gradually grows, does not give lot of homework and does not load the child. He repeats several times, he is not tired of repeating so that the child has not the burden of memorising too many things. You might have learned what is deduction earlier and you forgot after sometimes, it does not matter; he will repeat again and say what is deduction, what is induction, what is implication, again and again so there is a natural expansion. The expansion will be natural; it will not be by hammering it should be a joyous experience, every time there is freshness and you grow with that freshness. "*He will give a method as an aid, as a utilisable device, not as an imperative formula or a fixed routine.*" Every individual needs a method but a good teacher remembers that a method is not a fixed thing; it is not a routine to be followed; it is not something that binds you. It only helps you and the moment you are helped you can fling away the method and you become more free. "*And he will be on his guard against any turning of the means into a limitation, against the mechanising of process. His whole business is to awaken the divine light and set working the divine force of which he himself is only a means and an aid, a body or a channel.*" For a good teacher his main business is not sensation, is not imagination, not ratiocination; these are good things, they should be included, but his main interest is how much you are awakened to the presence of the Divine in your being. You see that in one paragraph Sri Aurobindo has put down the entire process of education, the entire process of the method of education, the entire role of the teacher ? its beginning, its middle and its end. That is why if you master this paragraph you have got a complete science and art of education. All the rest are footnotes.

Now, Sri Aurobindo expands upon the three instruments of the teacher: instruction, example and influence. Since these are the three most important instruments of the teacher. "*The example is more powerful than the instruction...*" Once I told you that education is what remains after you have forgotten all that you have learned. What remains with you is the example of the teacher. You may have forgotten everything that he has taught you but what remains is his example. "... *but it is not the example of the outward acts nor that of the personal character which is of most importance. These have their place and their utility; but what will most stimulate aspiration in others is the central fact of the divine realisation within him governing his whole life and inner state and all his activities. This is the universal and essential element...*" When you say example of the teacher it is his own inner realisation and how much his realisation is reflected in his life, in his activities. It is that which is of central importance. "... *the rest belongs to individual person and circumstance. It is this dynamic realisation that the sadhaka must feel and reproduce in himself according to his own nature; he need not strive after an imitation from outside which may well be sterilising rather than productive of right and natural fruits.*" You may imitate the teacher outwardly and for sometimes you may feel happy but

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afterwards it becomes sterile. The real imitation has to be the realisation of the teacher and if you can reproduce his realisation that is a real imitation.

"Influence is more important than example." Last time I told you the meaning of influence. Influence is a radiation of the inner contact, of the intimacy of the soul of the teacher with the soul of the student because it is the only thing that is intimate. Everything else is outward. The touch of the soul with the soul, there is nothing more intimate than the soul. What you are is your soul, what the teacher is, is his soul. His soul touching your soul is influence, radiation of that touch that is influence. *"Influence is not the outward authority of the Teacher over his disciple..."* It is not the position that you occupy with your students. Very often most of the teachers exercise influence because they sit on a platform, a higher position and therefore influence the pupils but that is not a real influence. *"Influence is not the outward authority of the Teacher over his disciple, but the power of his contact, of his presence, of the nearness of his soul to the soul of another, infusing into it, even though in silence, that which he himself is and possesses."* These words are so important and so beautiful that one would like to read again and again. *"This is the supreme sign of the Master. For the greatest Master is much less a Teacher than a Presence pouring the divine consciousness and its constituting light and power and purity and bliss into all who are receptive around him. And it shall also be a sign of the teacher of the integral Yoga that he does not arrogate to himself Guruhood in a humanly vain and self-exalting spirit."* The unripe men when they want to be teachers, they want to have the authority of the teacher, they want to exercise influence upon people by arrogating to themselves *guruhood*. "I am a guru, you are my disciples, you must follow me." They impose themselves upon the pupils. That is the sign that they are not teachers. A true teacher is extremely humble. *"His work, if he has one, is a trust from above, he himself a channel, a vessel or a representative. He is a man helping his brothers, a child leading children, a Light kindling other lights, an awakened Soul awakening souls, at highest a Power or Presence of the Divine calling to him other powers of the Divine."* In every experience he finds that his pupil is a living god. He deals with every pupil as god. And if he is himself is a god, he is calling all other gods. This is the highest condition of a good teacher. He does not deal with a child as if he is ignorant; this is only the outward experience of the child but inwardly he is himself a living god. Therefore he deals with every one as if he is god himself. We have come to the culmination of the experience of a good teacher.

Now what remains is very little. We have done three great aids: the *shastra*, *utsaha* and the *guru*. Now we shall come to *kala*.

"The sadhaka who has all these aids is sure of his goal. Even a fall will be for him only a means of rising and death a passage towards fulfilment. For once on this path, birth and death become only processes in the development of his being and the stages of his journey. Time is the remaining aid needed for the effectivity of the process. Time presents itself to human effort as an enemy or a friend, as a resistance, a medium or an instrument. But always it is really the instrument of the soul." Every dramatist knows that no drama can be successful unless he knows the secret of time. He knows that everything has a movement. No event can occur without a preceding development within a certain time frame. It is the same for a musician, a good musician is one who knows the time to be taken to organise different tunes. You cannot come to crescendo unless you have developed a certain movement of musical process. You cannot have mango fruit immediately after planting a seed of mango into the soil. There is a time element. The whole world is nothing but a series of processes in which time is the ripener. Without time nothing ripens and therefore all wise people are very patient because they all know the value of time. They do not say that they have taken one year and nothing has happened. Every process has its own rhythm and you may have all the aids but if you do not honour time then you may feel great frustrations, disappointments and it weakens your processes therefore you must know what is time and how time has to be utilised. That is the reason why every one has to be careful about making a timetable; every student should make a good timetable, it is a very good art. At what time what you have natural tendency to do, depending you have to organise your timetable. What you have to do, according to Sri Aurobindo, is the human effort which is impatient, ignorant to make it wise. When a human being becomes wise he treats time as an instrument. Otherwise the more egoistic you are, the more you feel that time is your enemy. There is one very nice sentence in *Hamlet*: "Time is out of joint" Whenever he goes to do something he is always too late. He does not do things at the right moment and this is our experience constantly. When you are very egoistic you find time is out of joint. When you need something exactly at that moment that thing is not found, it may be all the time with you but at the exact moment you need it, it is not there. That means that you have not organised your time properly. Time is found to be an enemy.

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"Time is a field of circumstances and forces meeting and working out a resultant progression whose course it measures." In two lines Sri Aurobindo has given the best definition of time. There are many definition of time. For example: time is a succession of moments. But Sri Aurobindo however gives a more comprehensive definition of time. *Time is a field*, you can see that a field is not successive, field is holistic, every field is holistic. Therefore time here is not linear time, it is not something successive, step by step moving forward. *Time is a field of circumstances and forces* not only circumstances but also forces. Unless circumstances and forces working within circumstances meet, criss-cross, are assembled there is no real process of time. Time measures of course a process, but that process is a resultant of circumstances, forces which meet each other, cross each other and then produce a sequence as a result of which that which is in the process becomes a product ? there is a result which comes out. *"Time is a field of circumstances and forces meeting and working out a resultant progression whose course it measures."* It is a beautiful and really comprehensive definition of time which you should memorize.

If you become a storywriter, if you become a dramatist you have to understand the secret process of time. In fact, Aristotle who wrote a book on drama said that a good drama is one which has unity of space and time ? unity of space and time, not in a succession. A good dramatist is the one who knows at what point of time movement a drama should start. All great stories, all great dramas measure the starting point: at what point of time the drama starts? So that what has already happened is not necessarily described it will come in the very course of unfoldment. If you read *Hamlet* for example, it is one of the greatest dramas. If you study *Hamlet* as a drama, the very first scene — how it starts! It is dark night, not a mouse stirring, complete hush. All suspense of the moment, the time is pregnant. What has happened in the past is filled in that moment; what is to happen if the future is also held in that moment. It is a very pregnant moment and Shakespeare begins the drama with the 'dong' and enquires because all have heard that a ghost appeared in the castle and they wanted to see whether today, tonight the ghost will appear or not. And the whole story hangs up on the ghost and the appearance of the ghost and what the ghost communicates. The whole drama, the whole tragedy is based upon that time, that moment. It is the meeting of forces; it is the circumstances and the meeting of forces in which a resultant progression is worked out. It is a very brief description of time, but very comprehensive.

"To the ego it is a tyrant or a resistance, to the Divine an instrument." Why is time a tyrant or a resistance? Because the ego does not respect circumstances; it does not respect the meeting of forces. Ego is interested only in itself: what it wants, its own assertion, its own affirmation and its immediate need of realisation. This is the mark of the ego. It is unaware of the circumstances, of the forces which are at work. As Sri Aurobindo says, the ego considers the whole world as moving around itself, as if everything is created for itself. He looks upon the world as its own instrument ? not that it is itself the instrument of all. To it all is insignificant; itself is the most significant. This is the limitation of the egoistic consciousness and therefore when it meets the circumstances, when it meets the forces which have been worked out it finds resistance because circumstances do not respect the ego, the forces that are around do not respect the ego. They all go their own way, for themselves. The Divine has a complete good account of everything, of the ego and the all, the relationship between this little finite and the all. Therefore for the Divine everything is an instrument.

"Therefore, while our effort is personal, Time appears as a resistance, for it presents to us all the obstruction of the forces that conflict with our own. When the divine working and the personal are combined in our consciousness, it appears as a medium and a condition. When the two become one, it appears as a servant and instrument." When the Divine will and my will become identical then time is only an instrument, a servant. Whatever time you need for the accomplishment of the work, exactly that much time you will get for your work and you will find during that time everything is smooth, nothing uninvited, unexpected comes into the picture, everything that happens is just on the spot.

I have seen with the Mother very often if she was in need of a fountain pen it just came to her as a gift from somebody, exactly at the right moment. If she wanted information from somebody it was found that the person with the information was just at the door and came exactly at the right moment and gave the information. When you are the master of time you find exactly this condition. Whenever you need X, X is available. If you think that X is not needed now X will not be available at that time. Whatever you need, happens exactly at the right time ? in fact everything happens at the right time if you know the Divine way of doing things. But because of our egoistic willing, egoistic eagerness, egoistic tyranny we find time is out of joint. Basically time is never out of joint, everything is measured out, everything happens at the right moment. When I need you, you are with me, when you need me I am with you. This is the tune and the harmony and the rhythm of life. If you get out of the egoistic

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preoccupation everything becomes an instrument. Therefore Sri Aurobindo gives the greatest advice, the greatest formula of dealing with time ? how to deal with time.

"The ideal attitude of the sadhaka towards Time is to have an endless patience as if he had all eternity for his fulfilment and yet to develop the energy that shall realise now and with an ever-increasing mastery and pressure of rapidity till it reaches the miraculous instantaneousness of the supreme divine Transformation." Let us read again. We should read it five time because it is one of the most important sentences in this chapter.

"The ideal attitude of the sadhaka towards Time is to have an endless patience as if he had all eternity for his fulfilment..." Therefore never to be in haste, no hurry, endless patience. That is the first attitude. Don't demand that you must realise God today. It is an ignorant demand, an egoistic demand as if you are important rather than God being important. You should have endless patience as if he had all eternity for his fulfilment. So imagine the kind of patience that one must have. Many people who turn to the path of yoga egoistically they demand so much from the Divine that they become frustrated easily and they fall in their yoga. They destroy their own efforts by becoming too impatient. But that it is not enough it is only half the sentence! While being very patient you have something to do here and now. Don't say that there is a lot of time and everything will happen. This is an attitude of patience which is good but at the same time couple it with another attitude: we should *develop the energy...* Whatever faculties you have, whatever faculties you can develop now without postponement you develop them *now*. "... and yet to develop the energy that shall realise now and with an ever-increasing mastery and pressure of rapidity till it reaches the miraculous instantaneousness of the supreme divine Transformation." You should develop your energy now and more and more, as rapidly as possible so that a day may come when what is needed to be done can be done immediately, instantaneously. Ask, it is given on the spot; complete transformation you want, on the spot you can have, immediately. So you combine two attitudes. Mother once said to me a good definition of time, first: "Have no ambition ? *n'ambitionne jamais*" Because ambition always breaks you down. You have a goal but no ambition. Then, "whatever you can do, without pretension, whatever you want to do, whatever you have to do, do it as perfectly and as quickly as possible." You combine both the things, quickness and perfection. You combine them together and you get the exactly right rhythm of the time movement. Do as perfectly as you can and do as quickly as you can. You combine these two together.

I have now finished this chapter and in my programme we have come to the end of Act One. There are five acts in our drama and we have finished the first Act.

We started with the first chapter of *The Life Divine* when we finished it, it was half of the Act. Now we did the first chapter of *The Synthesis of Yoga* and with the completion of it we have now a complete balance. The first chapter of *The Life Divine* convinced us that divine life is possible and inevitable. How to do it? We have now the answer. In a certain sense we may say that you can now be left to yourselves. You know what is the goal to be achieved; you have now the aids: *shastra, utsaha, guru* and *kala*. In a sense you can say to yourself that now you know and you have only to do; it is to be accomplished.

Our programme henceforth will be to remind ourselves of the knowledge that we have in the first chapter of *The Life Divine* and secondly to implement what we have learned in the first chapter of *The Synthesis of Yoga*. This is *Applied Philosophy*. You have the theory, you have the knowledge of the practice and this practice has to be done now. What shall we do next?

My concern basically is the development of your faculties. So, while you will practice now in your own daily life, it is a long process, as if eternity is available to us for realisation, but you will also practice everyday to develop such energies that gradually you will reach a point where there will be at once the realisation of what you want.

Our emphasis is now upon the energy ? development of energies. This is our programme now. What energies will be now developed? There are so many energies in you. Each one has a programme of integral development. When I ask you which energies are to be developed I have also to ask myself also in what way I can help, because my own energies are limited and I must do my very best by offering whatever energies I have so that your energies and my energies can mingle and also give lot of space for other energies to come into you, so that the rivers that you all are can become oceanic in development.

I want to read with you a good deal of *The Life Divine* and *The Synthesis of Yoga* although I have read the first chapter in both the cases. What I want to do now is to expand your horizons towards the East and towards the West. I want to develop your energies of comparison and contrast. I want to develop your energies which can reflect, reflect impartially, reflect without impatience. There is one very nice sentence in *The Life Divine* where Sri Aurobindo says: "If you look for truth and truth

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alone without any impatience..." This is the quality that I want to develop in all of us. So for that purpose I will begin a new Course.

I want to do two systems of philosophy of India and two systems of philosophy of the West. I will concentrate upon Sankhya and Vedanta, these two systems of Indian philosophy and I will study with you the philosophy of Socrates and philosophy of Plato in the West. If you agree.

I will start with Socrates and Plato now as I have done a good deal about India already.

THE SYNTHESIS OF YOGA The Yoga of Divine Works *Chapter I* *The Four Aids*

Yoga-siddhi, the perfection that comes from the practice of Yoga, can be best attained by the combined working of four great instruments. There is, first, the knowledge of the truths, principles, powers and processes that govern the realisation — *shastra*. Next comes a patient and persistent action on the lines laid down by this knowledge, the force of our personal effort — *utsaha*. There intervenes, third, uplifting our knowledge and effort into the domain of spiritual experience, the direct suggestion, example and influence of the Teacher — *guru*. Last comes the instrumentality of Time — *kala*; for in all things there is a cycle of their action and a period of the divine movement.

The supreme Shastra of the integral Yoga is the eternal Veda secret in the heart of every thinking and living being. The lotus of the eternal knowledge and the eternal perfection is a bud closed and folded up within us. It opens swiftly or gradually, petal by petal, through successive realisations, once the mind of man begins to turn towards the Eternal, once his heart, no longer compressed and confined by attachment to finite appearances, becomes enamoured, in whatever degree, of the Infinite. All life, all thought, all energising of the faculties, all experiences passive or active, become thenceforward so many shocks which disintegrate the teguments of the soul and remove the obstacles to the inevitable efflorescence. He who chooses the Infinite has been chosen by the Infinite. He has received the divine touch without which there is no awakening, no opening of the spirit; but once it is received, attainment is sure, whether conquered swiftly in the course of one human life or pursued patiently through many stadia of the cycle of existence in the manifested universe.

Nothing can be taught to the mind which is not already concealed as potential knowledge in the unfolding soul of the creature. So also all perfection of which the outer man is capable, is only a realising of the eternal perfection of the Spirit within him. We know the Divine and become the Divine, because we are That already in our secret nature. All teaching is a revealing, all becoming is an unfolding. Self-attainment is the secret; self-knowledge and an increasing consciousness are the means and the process.

The usual agency of this revealing is the Word, the thing heard (*sruta*). The Word may come to us from within; it may come to us from without. But in either case, it is only an agency for setting the hidden knowledge to work. The word within may be the utterance of the inmost soul in us which is always open to the Divine; or it may be the word of the secret and universal Teacher who is seated in the hearts of all. There are rare cases in which none other is needed, for all the rest of the Yoga is an unfolding under that constant touch and guidance; the lotus of the knowledge discloses itself from within by the power of irradiating effulgence which proceeds from the Dweller in the lotus of the heart. Great indeed, but few are those to whom self-knowledge from within is thus sufficient and who do not need to pass under the dominant influence of a written book or a living teacher.

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Ordinarily, the Word from without, representative of the Divine, is needed as an aid in the work of self-unfolding; and it may be either a word from the past or the more powerful word of the living Guru. In some cases this representative word is only taken as a sort of excuse for the inner power to awaken and manifest; it is, as it were, a concession of the omnipotent and omniscient Divine to the generality of a law that governs Nature. Thus it is said in the Upanishads of Krishna, son of Devaki, that he received a word of the Rishi Ghora and had the knowledge. So Ramakrishna, having attained by his own internal effort the central illumination, accepted several teachers in the different paths of Yoga, but always showed in the manner and swiftness of his realisation that this acceptance was a concession to the general rule by which effective knowledge must be received as by a disciple from a Guru.

But usually the representative influence occupies a much larger place in the life of the sadhaka. If the Yoga is guided by a received written Shastra, — some Word from the past which embodies the experience of former Yogins, — it may be practised either by personal effort alone or with the aid of a Guru. The spiritual knowledge is then gained through meditation on the truths that are taught and it is made living and conscious by their realisation in the personal experience; the Yoga proceeds by the results of prescribed methods taught in a Scripture or a tradition and reinforced and illumined by the instructions of the Master. This is a narrower practice, but safe and effective within its limits, because it follows a well-beaten track to a long familiar goal.

For the sadhaka of the integral Yoga it is necessary to remember that no written Shastra, however great its authority or however large its spirit, can be more than a partial expression of the eternal Knowledge. He will use, but never bind himself even by the greatest Scripture. Where the Scripture is profound, wide, catholic, it may exercise upon him an influence for the highest good and of incalculable importance. It may be associated in his experience with his awakening to crowning verities and his realisation of the highest experiences. His Yoga may be governed for a long time by one Scripture or by several successively, — if it is in the line of the great Hindu tradition, by the Gita, for example, the Upanishads, the Veda. Or it may be a good part of his development to include in its material a richly varied experience of the truths of many Scriptures and make the future opulent with all that is best in the past. But in the end he must take his station, or better still, if he can, always and from the beginning he must live in his own soul beyond the limitations of the word that he uses. The Gita itself thus declares that the Yogin in his progress must pass beyond the written Truth, — *sabdabrahmativartate* — beyond all that he has heard and all that he has yet to hear, — *srotavyasya srutasya ca*. For he is not the sadhaka of a book or of many books; he is a sadhaka of the Infinite.

Another kind of Shastra is not Scripture, but a statement of the science and methods, the effective principles and way of working of the path of Yoga which the sadhaka elects to follow. Each path has its Shastra, either written or traditional, passing from mouth to mouth through a long line of Teachers. In India a great authority, a high reverence even is ordinarily attached to the written or traditional teaching. All the lines of the Yoga are supposed to be fixed and the Teacher who has received the Shastra by tradition and realised it in practice guides the disciple along the immemorial tracks. One often even hears the objection urged against a new practice, a new Yogic teaching, the adoption of a new formula, "It is not according to the Shastra." But neither in fact nor in the actual practice of the Yogins is there really any such entire rigidity of an iron door shut against new truth, fresh revelation, widened experience. The written or traditional teaching expresses the knowledge and experiences of many centuries systematised, organised, made attainable to the beginner. Its importance and utility are therefore immense. But a great freedom of variation and development is always practicable. Even so highly scientific a system as Rajayoga can be practised on other lines than the organised method of Patanjali. Each of the three paths of the *trimarga* (the triple path of Knowledge, Devotion and Works) breaks into many bypaths which meet again at the goal. The general knowledge on which the Yoga depends is fixed, but the order, the succession, the devices, the forms must be allowed to vary; for the needs and particular impulses of the individual nature have to be satisfied even while the general truths remain firm and constant.

An integral and synthetic Yoga needs especially not to be bound by any written or traditional Shastra; for while it embraces the knowledge received from the past, it seeks to organise it anew for the present and the future. An absolute liberty of experience and of the restatement of knowledge in new terms and new combinations is the condition of its self-formation. Seeking to embrace all life in itself, it is in the position not of a pilgrim following the highroad to his destination, but, to that extent at least, of a path-finder hewing his way through a virgin forest. For Yoga has long diverged from life and the ancient systems which sought to embrace it, such as those of our Vedic forefathers, are far away from us, expressed in terms which are no longer accessible, thrown into forms which are no longer

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applicable. Since then mankind has moved forward on the current of eternal Time and the same problem has to be approached from a new starting-point.

By this Yoga we not only seek the Infinite, but we call upon the Infinite to unfold himself in human life. Therefore the Shastra of our Yoga must provide for an infinite liberty in the receptive human soul. A free adaptability in the manner and the type of the individual's acceptance of the Universal and Transcendent into himself is the right condition for the full spiritual life in man. Vivekananda, pointing out that the unity of all religions must necessarily express itself by an increasing richness of variety in its forms, said once that the perfect state of that essential unity would come when each man had his own religion, when not bound by sect or traditional form he followed the free self-adaptation of his nature in its relations with the Supreme. So also one may say that the perfection of the integral Yoga will come when each man is able to follow his own path of Yoga, pursuing the development of his own nature in its upsurging towards that which transcends the nature. For freedom is the final law and the last consummation.

Meanwhile certain general lines have to be formed which may help to guide the thought and practice of the sadhaka. But these must take as much as possible the form of general truths, general statements of principle, the most powerful broad directions of effort and development rather than a fixed system which has to be followed as a routine. All Shastra is the outcome of past experience and a help to future experience. It is an aid and a partial guide. It puts up signposts, gives the names of the main roads and the already explored directions, so that the traveller may know whither and by what paths he is proceeding.

The rest depends on personal effort and experience and upon the power of the Guide.

The development of the experience in its rapidity, its amplitude, the intensity and power of its results, depends primarily, in the beginning of the path and long after, on the aspiration and personal effort of the sadhaka. The process of Yoga is a turning of the human soul from the egoistic state of consciousness absorbed in the outward appearances and attractions of things to a higher state in which the Transcendent and Universal can pour itself into the individual mould and transform it. The first determining element of the *siddhi* is, therefore, the intensity of the turning, the force which directs the soul inward. The power of aspiration of the heart, the force of the will, the concentration of the mind, the perseverance and determination of the applied energy are the measure of that intensity. The ideal sadhaka should be able to say in the Biblical phrase, "My zeal for the Lord has eaten me up." It is this zeal for the Lord, — *utsaha*, the zeal of the whole nature for its divine results, *vyakulata*, the heart's eagerness for the attainment of the Divine, — that devours the ego and breaks up the limitations of its petty and narrow mould for the full and wide reception of that which it seeks, that which, being universal, exceeds and, being transcendent, surpasses even the largest and highest individual self and nature.

But this is only one side of the force that works for perfection. The process of the integral Yoga has three stages, not indeed sharply distinguished or separate, but in a certain measure successive. There must be, first, the effort towards at least an initial and enabling self-transcendence and contact with the Divine; next, the reception of that which transcends, that with which we have gained communion, into ourselves for the transformation of our whole conscious being; last, the utilisation of our transformed humanity as a divine centre in the world. So long as the contact with the Divine is not in some considerable degree established, so long as there is not some measure of sustained identity, *sayujya*, the element of personal effort must normally predominate. But in proportion as this contact establishes itself, the sadhaka must become conscious that a force other than his own, a force transcending his egoistic endeavour and capacity, is at work in him and to this Power he learns progressively to submit himself and delivers up to it the charge of his Yoga. In the end his own will and force become one with the higher Power; he merges them in the divine Will and its transcendent and universal Force. He finds it thenceforward presiding over the necessary transformation of his mental, vital and physical being with an impartial wisdom and provident effectivity of which the eager and interested ego is not capable. It is when this identification and this self-merging are complete that the divine centre in the world is ready. Purified, liberated, plastic, illumined, it can begin to serve as a means for the direct action of a supreme Power in the larger Yoga of humanity or superhumanity, of the earth's spiritual progression or its transformation.

Always indeed it is the higher Power that acts. Our sense of personal effort and aspiration comes from the attempt of the egoistic mind to identify itself in a wrong and imperfect way with the workings of the divine Force. It persists in applying to experience on a supernormal plane the ordinary terms of mentality which it applies to its normal experiences in the world. In the world we act with the sense of egoism; we claim the universal forces that work in us as our own; we claim as the effect of

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our personal will, wisdom, force, virtue the selective, formative, progressive action of the Transcendent in this frame of mind, life and body. Enlightenment brings to us the knowledge that the ego is only an instrument; we begin to perceive and feel that these things are our own in the sense that they belong to our supreme and integral Self, one with the Transcendent, not to the instrumental ego. Our limitations and distortions are our contribution to the working; the true power in it is the Divine's. When the human ego realises that its will is a tool, its wisdom ignorance and childishness, its power an infant's groping, its virtue a pretentious impurity, and learns to trust itself to that which transcends it, that is its salvation. The apparent freedom and self-assertion of our personal being to which we are so profoundly attached, conceal a most pitiable subjection to a thousand suggestions, impulsions, forces which we have made extraneous to our little person. Our ego, boasting of freedom, is at every moment the slave, toy and puppet of countless beings, powers, forces, influences in universal Nature. The self-abnegation of the ego in the Divine is its self-fulfilment; its surrender to that which transcends it is its liberation from bonds and limits and its perfect freedom.

But still, in the practical development, each of the three stages has its necessity and utility and must be given its time or its place. It will not do, it cannot be safe or effective to begin with the last and highest alone. It would not be the right course, either, to leap prematurely from one to another. For even if from the beginning we recognise in mind and heart the Supreme, there are elements of the nature which long prevent the recognition from becoming realisation. But without realisation our mental belief cannot become a dynamic reality; it is still only a figure of knowledge, not a living truth, an idea, not yet a power. And even if realisation has begun, it may be dangerous to imagine or to assume too soon that we are altogether in the hands of the Supreme or are acting as his instrument. That assumption may introduce a calamitous falsity; it may produce a helpless inertia or, magnifying the movements of the ego with the Divine Name, it may disastrously distort and ruin the whole course of the Yoga. There is a period, more or less prolonged, of internal effort and struggle in which the individual will has to reject the darkness and distortions of the lower nature and to put itself resolutely or vehemently on the side of the divine Light. The mental energies, the heart's emotions, the vital desires, the very physical being have to be compelled into the right attitude or trained to admit and answer to the right influences. It is only then, only when this has been truly done, that the surrender of the lower to the higher can be effected, because the sacrifice has become acceptable.

The personal will of the sadhaka has first to seize on the egoistic energies and turn them towards the light and the right; once turned, he has still to train them to recognise that always, always to accept, always to follow that. Progressing, he learns, still using the personal will, personal effort, personal energies, to employ them as representatives of the higher Power and in conscious obedience to the higher Influence. Progressing yet farther, his will, effort, energy become no longer personal and separate, but activities of that higher Power and Influence at work in the individual. But there is still a sort of gulf or distance which necessitates an obscure process of transit, not always accurate, sometimes even very distorting, between the divine Origin and the emerging human current. At the end of the process, with the progressive disappearance of egoism and impurity and ignorance, this last separation is removed; all in the individual becomes the divine working.

As the supreme Shastra of the integral Yoga is the eternal Veda secret in the heart of every man, so its supreme Guide and Teacher is the inner Guide, the World-Teacher, *jagad-guru*, secret within us. It is he who destroys our darkness by the resplendent light of his knowledge; that light becomes within us the increasing glory of his own self-revelation. He discloses progressively in us his own nature of freedom, bliss, love, power, immortal being. He sets above us his divine example as our ideal and transforms the lower existence into a reflection of that which it contemplates. By the inpouring of his own influence and presence into us he enables the individual being to attain to identity with the universal and transcendent.

What is his method and his system? He has no method and every method. His system is a natural organisation of the highest processes and movements of which the nature is capable. Applying themselves even to the pettiest details and to the actions the most insignificant in their appearance with as much care and thoroughness as to the greatest, they in the end lift all into the Light and transform all. For in his Yoga there is nothing too small to be used and nothing too great to be attempted. As the servant and disciple of the Master has no business with pride or egoism because all is done for him from above, so also he has no right to despond because of his personal deficiencies or the stumblings of his nature. For the Force that works in him is impersonal — or superpersonal — and infinite.

The full recognition of this inner Guide, Master of the Yoga, lord, light, enjoyer and goal of all sacrifice and effort, is of the utmost importance in the path of integral perfection. It is immaterial

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whether he is first seen as an impersonal Wisdom, Love and Power behind all things, as an Absolute manifesting in the relative and attracting it, as one's highest Self and the highest Self of all, as a Divine Person within us and in the world, in one of his — or her — numerous forms and names or as the ideal which the mind conceives. In the end we perceive that he is all and more than all these things together. The mind's door of entry to the conception of him must necessarily vary according to the past evolution and the present nature.

This inner Guide is often veiled at first by the very intensity of our personal effort and by the ego's preoccupation with itself and its aims. As we gain in clarity and the turmoil of egoistic effort gives place to a calmer self-knowledge, we recognise the source of the growing light within us. We recognise it retrospectively as we realise how all our obscure and conflicting movements have been determined towards an end that we only now begin to perceive, how even before our entrance into the path of the Yoga the evolution of our life has been designedly led towards its turning-point. For now we begin to understand the sense of our struggles and efforts, successes and failures. At last we are able to seize the meaning of our ordeals and sufferings and can appreciate the help that was given us by all that hurt and resisted and the utility of our very falls and stumblings. We recognise this divine leading afterwards, not retrospectively but immediately, in the moulding of our thoughts by a transcendent Seer, of our will and actions by an all-embracing Power, of our emotional life by an all-attracting and all-assimilating Bliss and Love. We recognise it too in a more personal relation that from the first touched or at the last seizes us; we feel the eternal presence of a supreme Master, Friend, Lover, Teacher. We recognise it in the essence of our being as that develops into likeness and oneness with a greater and wider existence; for we perceive that this miraculous development is not the result of our own efforts: an eternal Perfection is moulding us into its own image. One who is the Lord or Ishwara of the Yogic philosophies, the Guide in the conscious being (*caitya guru* or *antaryamin*), the Absolute of the thinker, the Unknowable of the Agnostic, the universal Force of the materialist, the supreme Soul and the supreme Shakti, the One who is differently named and imaged by the religions, is the Master of our Yoga.

To see, know, become and fulfil this One in our inner selves and in all our outer nature, was always the secret goal and becomes now the conscious purpose of our embodied existence. To be conscious of him in all parts of our being and equally in all that the dividing mind sees as outside our being, is the consummation of the individual consciousness. To be possessed by him and possess him in ourselves and in all things is the term of all empire and mastery. To enjoy him in all experience of passivity and activity, of peace and of power, of unity and of difference is the happiness which the Jiva, the individual soul manifested in the world, is obscurely seeking. This is the entire definition of the aim of integral Yoga; it is the rendering in personal experience of the truth which universal Nature has hidden in herself and which she travails to discover. It is the conversion of the human soul into the divine soul and of natural life into divine living.

The surest way towards this integral fulfilment is to find the Master of the secret who dwells within us, open ourselves constantly to the divine Power which is also the divine Wisdom and Love and trust to it to effect the conversion. But it is difficult for the egoistic consciousness to do this at all at the beginning. And, if done at all, it is still difficult to do it perfectly and in every strand of our nature. It is difficult at first because our egoistic habits of thought, of sensation, of feeling block up the avenues by which we can arrive at the perception that is needed. It is difficult afterwards because the faith, the surrender, the courage requisite in this path are not easy to the ego-clouded soul. The divine working is not the working which the egoistic mind desires or approves; for it uses error in order to arrive at truth, suffering in order to arrive at bliss, imperfection in order to arrive at perfection. The ego cannot see where it is being led; it revolts against the leading, loses confidence, loses courage. These failings would not matter; for the divine Guide within is not offended by our revolt, not discouraged by our want of faith or repelled by our weakness; he has the entire love of the mother and the entire patience of the teacher. But by withdrawing our assent from the guidance we lose the consciousness, though not all the actuality — not, in any case, the eventuality — of its benefit. And we withdraw our assent because we fail to distinguish our higher Self from the lower through which he is preparing his self-revelation. As in the world, so in ourselves, we cannot see God because of his workings and, especially, because he works in us through our nature and not by a succession of arbitrary miracles. Man demands miracles that he may have faith; he wishes to be dazzled in order that he may see. And this impatience, this ignorance may turn into a great danger and disaster if, in our revolt against the divine leading, we call in another distorting Force more satisfying to our impulses and desires and ask it to guide us and give it the Divine Name.

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But while it is difficult for man to believe in something unseen within himself, it is easy for him to believe in something which he can image as extraneous to himself. The spiritual progress of most human beings demands an extraneous support, an object of faith outside us. It needs an external image of God; or it needs a human representative, — Incarnation, Prophet or Guru; or it demands both and receives them. For according to the need of the human soul the Divine manifests himself as deity, as human divine or in simple humanity — using that thick disguise, which so successfully conceals the Godhead, for a means of transmission of his guidance.

The Hindu discipline of spirituality provides for this need of the soul by the conceptions of the *Ishta Devata*, the Avatar and the Guru. By the *Ishta Devata*, the chosen deity, is meant, — not some inferior Power, but a name and form of the transcendent and universal Godhead. Almost all religions either have as their base or make use of some such name and form of the Divine. Its necessity for the human soul is evident. God is the All and more than the All. But that which is more than the All, how shall man conceive? And even the All is at first too hard for him; for he himself in his active consciousness is a limited and selective formation and can open himself only to that which is in harmony with his limited nature. There are things in the All which are too hard for his comprehension or seem too terrible to his sensitive emotions and cowering sensations. Or, simply, he cannot conceive as the Divine, cannot approach or cannot recognise something that is too much out of the circle of his ignorant or partial conceptions. It is necessary for him to conceive God in his own image or in some form that is beyond himself but consonant with his highest tendencies and seizable by his feelings or his intelligence. Otherwise it would be difficult for him to come into contact and communion with the Divine.

Even then his nature calls for a human intermediary so that he may feel the Divine in something entirely close to his own humanity and sensible in a human influence and example. This call is satisfied by the Divine manifest in a human appearance, the Incarnation, the Avatar — Krishna, Christ, Buddha. Or if this is too hard for him to conceive, the Divine represents himself through a less marvellous intermediary, — Prophet or Teacher. For many who cannot conceive or are unwilling to accept the Divine Man, are ready to open themselves to the supreme man, terming him not incarnation but world-teacher or divine representative.

This also is not enough; a living influence, a living example, a present instruction is needed. For it is only the few who can make the past Teacher and his teaching, the past Incarnation and his example and influence a living force in their lives. For this need also the Hindu discipline provides in the relation of the Guru and the disciple. The Guru may sometimes be the Incarnation or World-Teacher; but it is sufficient that he should represent to the disciple the divine wisdom, convey to him something of the divine ideal or make him feel the realised relation of the human soul with the Eternal.

The sadhaka of the integral Yoga will make use of all these aids according to his nature; but it is necessary that he should shun their limitations and cast from himself that exclusive tendency of egoistic mind which cries, "My God, my Incarnation, my Prophet, my Guru," and opposes it to all other realisation in a sectarian or a fanatical spirit. All sectarianism, all fanaticism must be shunned; for it is inconsistent with the integrity of the divine realisation.

On the contrary, the sadhaka of the integral Yoga will not be satisfied until he has included all other names and forms of Deity in his own conception, seen his own *Ishta Devata* in all others, unified all Avatars in the unity of Him who descends in the Avatar, welded the truth in all teachings into the harmony of the Eternal Wisdom.

Nor should he forget the aim of these external aids which is to awaken his soul to the Divine within him. Nothing has been finally accomplished if that has not been accomplished. It is not sufficient to worship Krishna, Christ or Buddha without, if there is not the revealing and the formation of the Buddha, the Christ or Krishna in ourselves. And all other aids equally have no other purpose; each is a bridge between man's unconverted state and the revelation of the Divine within him.

The Teacher of the integral Yoga will follow as far as he may the method of the Teacher within us. He will lead the disciple through the nature of the disciple. Teaching, example, influence, — these are the three instruments of the Guru. But the wise Teacher will not seek to impose himself or his opinions on the passive acceptance of the receptive mind; he will throw in only what is productive and sure as a seed which will grow under the divine fostering within. He will seek to awaken much more than to instruct; he will aim at the growth of the faculties and the experiences by a natural process and free expansion. He will give a method as an aid, as a utilisable device, not as an imperative formula or a fixed routine. And he will be on his guard against any turning of the means into a limitation, against the mechanising of process. His whole business is to awaken the divine light and set working the divine force of which he himself is only a means and an aid, a body or a channel.

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The example is more powerful than the instruction; but it is not the example of the outward acts nor that of the personal character which is of most importance. These have their place and their utility; but what will most stimulate aspiration in others is the central fact of the divine realisation within him governing his whole life and inner state and all his activities. This is the universal and essential element; the rest belongs to individual person and circumstance. It is this dynamic realisation that the sadhaka must feel and reproduce in himself according to his own nature; he need not strive after an imitation from outside which may well be sterilising rather than productive of right and natural fruits.

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

And it shall also be a sign of the teacher of the integral Yoga that he does not arrogate to himself Guruhood in a humanly vain and self-exalting spirit. His work, if he has one, is a trust from above, he himself a channel, a vessel or a representative. He is a man helping his brothers, a child leading children, a Light kindling other lights, an awakened Soul awakening souls, at highest a Power or Presence of the Divine calling to him other powers of the Divine.

The sadhaka who has all these aids is sure of his goal. Even a fall will be for him only a means of rising and death a passage towards fulfilment. For once on this path, birth and death become only processes in the development of his being and the stages of his journey.

Time is the remaining aid needed for the effectivity of the process. Time presents itself to human effort as an enemy or a friend, as a resistance, a medium or an instrument. But always it is really the instrument of the soul.

Time is a field of circumstances and forces meeting and working out a resultant progression whose course it measures. To the ego it is a tyrant or a resistance, to the Divine an instrument. Therefore, while our effort is personal, Time appears as a resistance, for it presents to us all the obstruction of the forces that conflict with our own. When the divine working and the personal are combined in our consciousness, it appears as a medium and a condition. When the two become one, it appears as a servant and instrument.

The ideal attitude of the sadhaka towards Time is to have an endless patience as if he had all eternity for his fulfilment and yet to develop the energy that shall realise now and with an ever-increasing mastery and pressure of rapidity till it reaches the miraculous instantaneousness of the supreme divine Transformation.