



**GROWING UP  
WITH THE MOTHER**

**TARA JAUHAR**

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# GROWING UP WITH THE MOTHER

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Tara Jauhar



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Growing Up With The Mother

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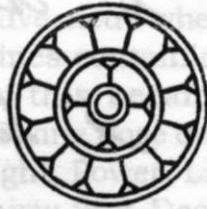
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### Growing Up With The Mother



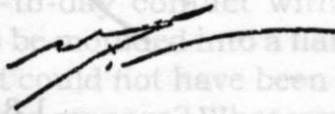
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To a true child of her true Mother, on the way to the true consciousness.  
With my love and my blessings  
- The Mother



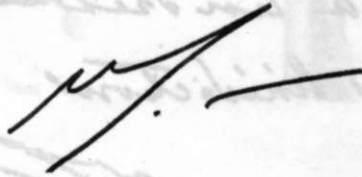
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*à une vraie enfant  
de sa vraie mère,  
en route vers la  
vraie conscience.  
avec ma tendresse  
et mes bénédictions*



1. 8. 71

27 ans de croissance  
de progrès et de travail  
utile et ont gagné  
une place spéciale  
dans l'Ashram avec  
l'amour spécial de  
Sri Aurobindo; ainsi que  
ma grande tendresse et  
mes constantes bénédictions



1.8.71

To a true child of her true Mother, on the way to the true  
con. 27 years of growth of progress and useful work have given  
you a special place in the Ashram with special love from Sri  
Aurobindo; as well as my great tenderness and constant  
blessings.

*The Mother*

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## Foreword

### Rose of God

Sri Aurobindo was actually trying to compose a poem in a quantitative metre when 'Rose of God' burst forth, each of its lines containing six stresses. Like the Vedic mantra, this became a prayer for the blossoming of the Divine Rose on earth, its five petals blazoning Bliss, Light, Power, Life and Love.

This was on thirty-first December, 1934. From the first of January, 1935 the prayer must have begun to act. Even as the forces of Evil set up the Second World War, the roses of God bloomed defying Darkness and soon some of them had been drawn to Pondicherry for divine nurturing by the Mother. Tara happens to be one of them.

The earliest recollection I have of Tara is when I met her sometime in 1962. I had gone to Pondicherry with father and Tara demonstrated a recent arrival, a typewriter from Germany. As father loved to handle typewriters, he had many questions to ask and Tara answered them all in clear tones. Later on father told me whether I noticed she did not waste a single word. Yes, Tara has always been following the Mother's dictum:

"Don't speak; act.  
Don't announce; realise."

To have been in day-to-day contact with the Mother as a willing clay to be moulded into a flaming warrior of the Omnipotent could not have been easy for a girl-child. How did Tara manage? What was the methodology of the Mother in educating a child?

Reading this book gave me quite a few existential shocks. For forty years I have known Chachaji's family and during all these decades I have been quoting the Mother's answers to questions on flowers, on the ideal of woman's beauty, on women and physical exercises, on education and on yoga. But I never knew Tara was the questioner! Sri Aurobindo himself would have enjoyed the humour of this situation!

In a sense, then, a good deal of this book will be familiar for the readers also. And yet, we will be coming to it again and again because the golden thread of connection with Tara makes the message a special guide for teachers online. Take the word that is the very basis of this divine living: sadhana. How does the Mother manage when a twenty-three year old young lady asks seriously: 'Sweet Mother, What exactly are the subconscious and the unconscious?' But there is no hemming and hawing. The answer comes clear, direct and with full faith in the listener's sincerity.

"The unconscious is that part of Nature which is so obscure and asleep that it seems to be wholly devoid of consciousness; at any rate, as in the stone, the mineral kingdom, the consciousness there is entirely inactive and hidden. The history of the earth begins with this inconscience.

We too carry it in ourselves, in the substance of our body, since the substance of our body is the same as that of the earth.

But by evolution, this sleeping and hidden consciousness gradually awakens through the vegetal and animal kingdoms, and in them subconsciousness begins; this subconsciousness, with the appearance of mind in man, culminates in consciousness. This consciousness likewise is progressive, and as man evolves, it will change into superconsciousness.

We too, then, carry in ourselves the subconsciousness which links us to the animal, and the supercon-science which is our hope and assurance of future realisation."

The Mother was a rare teacher; a teacher who wanted questions to be asked! She would be upset if students remained dumb as if the lesson had just flown away with the wind. Tara asks a variety of questions: how to teach, how to manage exceptional children, the nagging worries a woman has about her body, the strength needed to come to terms with the physical loss of a dear one. The answers are dipped in the molten gold of Truth and hence one finds a rapier-sharpness in the replies conveying a message never to be forgotten. Here is a request whether some relations could come over to Pondicherry as the conflict with Pakistan makes Delhi somewhat unsafe. The Mother's reply: They can come to Pondicherry - but those who are afraid, are afraid everywhere. And one who has faith is safe wherever he may be."

There are then the birthday messages to Tara and the Mother's reactions to exclamations of ecstasy as well as forlorn cries of a soul in pain. A letter from the Mother dated July 1972 when Tara is away at Europe:

"I am always with you and will be with you throughout your journey to help you to find the Divine - the only way to have lasting happiness.

I expect to see you again on your next birthday; pray for this grace which is the true aim of your life.

I ask only that you have faith and trust. I am curling myself up in your heart so that you will always find me there.

With love and blessings."

The Mother is also the Universal Mother. Hence the messages addressed to Tara become messages for all of us, even if they are interactions at a very close personal level (the Mother on how She divides the photographs given by Tara: on the continuation of a medical treatment); a casual sketch of Tarini by the Mother is revealed as a silent message on how to meditate; and the information about Tara's indexing 10,000 photographs of the Mother moves us to meditate on the Maka Meru Yantra. For who can exhaust the facets of the Divine Mother?

That is why Tara reveals only lightning flashes of those days in Pondicherry when it was as if gods walked on earth while the Supreme kept busy fashioning the Next Future. And how was it done? By explaining 'A God's Labour', by sketching two birds from two drops of ink that had fallen on a paper, by jotting down meditations ("Do not live to be happy, live to serve the Divine, and the happiness you enjoy will exceed all expectation") in the notebook which Tara carried around, by playing The Magic Circle or Precious Stones with the Ashram children. Growing Up with The Mother thus turns out to be the Book of Beginnings for aspirants in the world of Aurobindonian Yoga. We realise that it is also an Ananda Yoga thanks to the visual presence of sweet Mother as the flames grow up in the Ashram and become lifetime achievers. The photographs in this volume are not mere results of man's technological advance; they are an armour against all fear, helplessness, depression. They make us hear the anahata nada the Mother recorded in Her

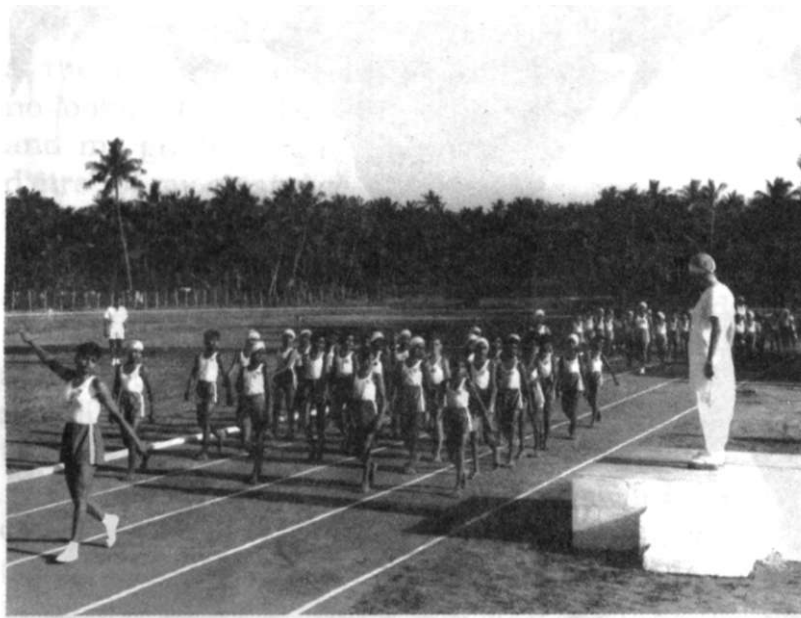


Prayers and Meditations: "And in my heart is the song of gladness of Thy sublime magnificence."

Sri Aurobindo has spoken of the Gita ideal of Yoga as "skill in works". We find this yoga in the patient manner in which plans were laid to bring out a Book of Flowers and how the compassionate Mother agreed to record the significance on condition that She could "actually see the real flowers before writing the caption under the significance". There was so much enthusiastic activity that the Ashram gardeners began to grow rare flowers and even produced new flowers!

The Rose of God, then, is no impossible dream. We shall certainly march behind our always-young Captain Tara Jauhar!

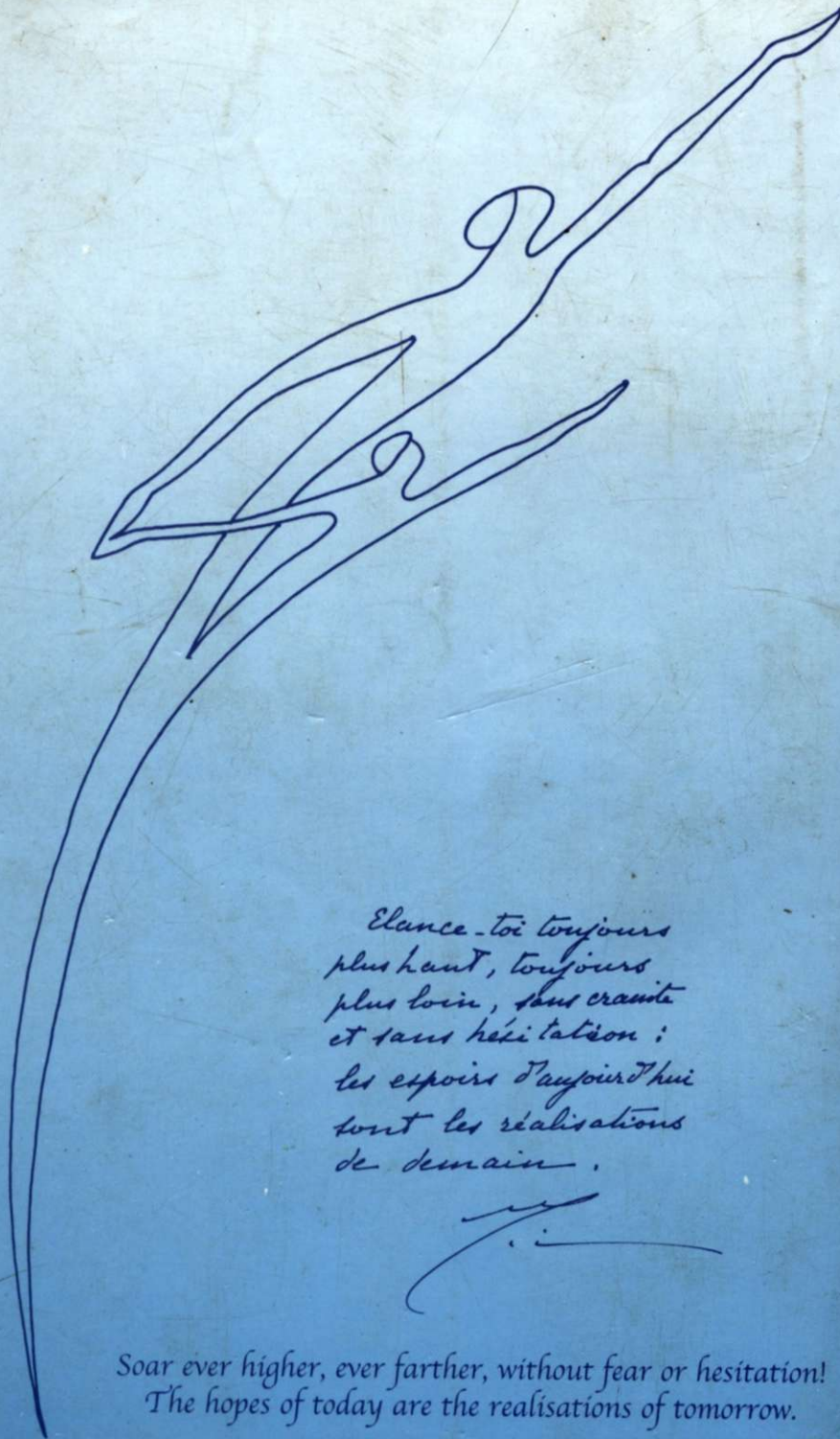
24.11.1999 *Prema Nandakumar*



Tara leading the March-Past at the Sportsground



Sri Aurobindo has spoken of the *Ota* ideal of Yoga as "a manner in which plans were laid to bring out a Book of Flowers" and the compassionate Mother agreed



*Elance-toi toujours  
plus haut, toujours  
plus loin, sans crainte  
et sans hésitation :  
les espoirs d'aujourd'hui  
sont les réalisations  
de demain.*

Soar ever higher, ever farther, without fear or hesitation!  
The hopes of today are the realisations of tomorrow.

**The Mother**

## Preface

Growing up with The Mother is an experience not easy to put into words.  
"Bliss it was in that dawn to be alive but to be young was very heaven."

It is not often that a person gets the privilege of close proximity, guidance and love from the Divine incarnate in a human form and that too of a wonderful Mother. "A Mother to our wants, a friend in our difficulties, a persistent and tranquil counsellor and mentor, chasing away with Her radiant smile the clouds of gloom and fretfulness and depression, reminding always of the ever present help, pointing to the eternal sunshine." My destiny took me to Pondicherry and engulfed me into Her Divine embrace at the tender age of eight. Since then there has been no looking back. The Mother has been my pole star and my guiding light and will ever be the "raison d'etre" of my existence.

Over the years I received Her boundless love, affection, guidance and protection through personal contact and through letters and correspondence which helped me through my difficulties and failures and through the ups and downs of life which I would now like to share with my friends, and seekers on the path.

Most of these questions and answers, in the original French & English translations, have been printed in the Ashram Bulletins and have appeared in different volumes of The Collected Works of The Mother, but are being published as a collection for the first time showing how the Mother patiently and persistently helped and guided a young girl towards the discovery of her inner being and held out Her ever helping hand, nurtured her growth, and led her on to the path of spirituality.

This long overdue book contains my correspondence and conversations with the Mother between 1959 and 1973. It also has some personal letters and messages given by the Mother before 1959. What She wrote in my notebooks between 1950 and 1958 for the Group A (Green Group) classes of which I was the captain from the age of 10 %t however, has not been incorporated. I hope to bring these out as a separate book in the near future.

My questions and answers of the Mother on Thoughts & Aphorisms are also not included here, since these have appeared as a separate book entitled On Thoughts & Aphorisms.

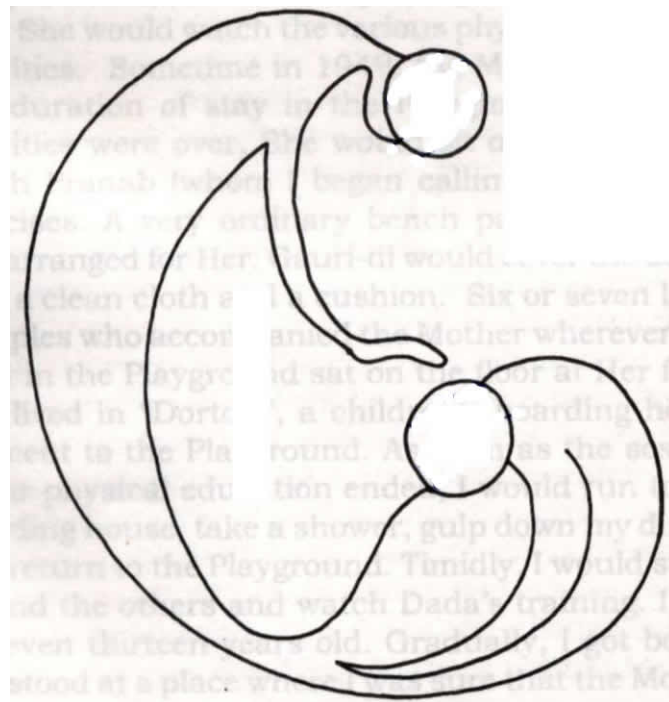
While working with the Mother on the book Flowers & Their Messages in which the Mother gave a short commentary on each flower, I also asked many questions on flowers and vegetal life which did not find place in the final print of the book Flowers & Their Messages. Hence, these have been incorporated here as a separate chapter on Flowers. But the innumerable questions and answers on clarifications of colours of flowers, significances, their translations into English etc., have not been included since it would not make interesting reading for everybody.

I owe a deep debt of gratefulness to kindred souls, too numerous to acknowledge separately, who have helped me to collect, compile, correct, illustrate and prepare the materials for this book. They have inspired me with words of encouragement throughout. For me they have been the instruments of the Mother's love.

As we step onto the threshold of the new millennium which is the harbinger of a new light and force and life, I feel a deep joy in sharing this treasure of messages, correspondence and conversations, that give a wonderful insight and guidance to

seekers of the spiritual path. It also shows the natural unfolding of the Mother's relationship with a child of the Ashram and Her persistent guidance towards the flowering of a psychic being. Her encouragement, love and compassion were boundless and infinite. She has nourished my soul, my mind and my heart in the process of their growth.

In deep gratitude I offer this work at Her feet.  
New Delhi, I.I. 2000 *Tara Jauhar*



# Chapter 1

## SADHANA AND LIFE

### Introduction

This section contains the Mother's replies to my questions on spiritual life and other related topics. In introducing this text, I would like to explain how this correspondence came about and share with the reader a few reminiscences which show how much interest the Mother took in us during the early years of our school. She tried to mould our characters by pouring into us Her personal love as well as Her constant advice.

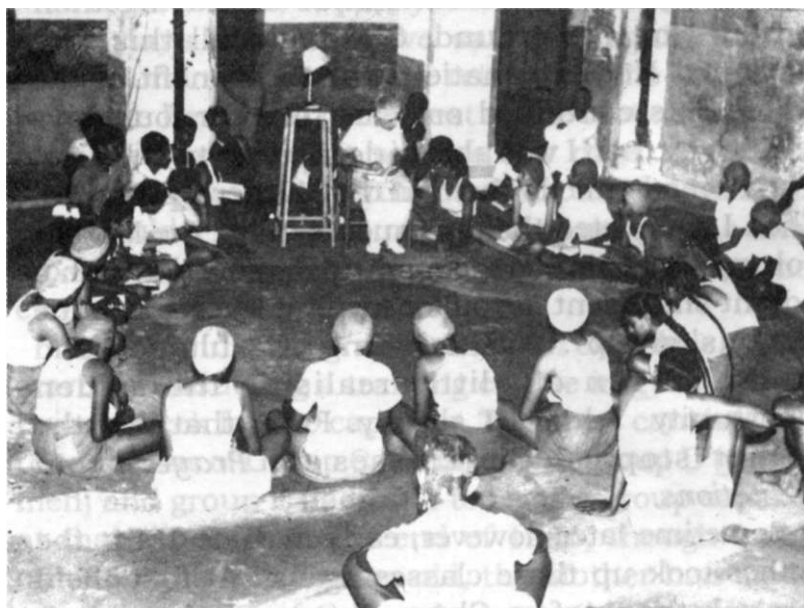
The Mother started coming out of the Ashram in the evenings towards the end of 1947. At first She played table tennis and when the tennis courts were ready in 1948, She started playing tennis. After Her play, She would watch the various physical education activities. Sometime in 1949, the Mother extended Her duration of stay in the Playground. After the activities were over, She would sit on a bench and watch Pranab (whom I began calling Dada) do his exercises. A very ordinary bench painted in green was arranged for Her. Gauri-di would cover the bench with a clean cloth and a cushion. Six or seven lady-disciples who accompanied the Mother wherever She went in the Playground sat on the floor at Her feet.

I lived in "Dortoir", a children's boarding house adjacent to the Playground. As soon as the session of our physical education ended, I would run to the boarding house, take a shower, gulp down my dinner and return to the Playground. Timidly, I would stand behind the others and watch Dada's training. I was not even thirteen years old. Gradually, I got bolder and stood at a place where I was sure that the Mother would see me. And indeed She saw me and gave me a big smile as soon as I came and took my place a little away from Her. Thus encouraged, I went closer each day, until the day I found myself touching the extremity of the bench on which She was sitting. That day She gave me a big smile, called me to Her, and asked the lady who was sitting at Her feet on the right side to shift a little and make place for me. This lady was a doctor from France who was staying in the Ashram for a year or two. While the Mother watched Dada's exercises, this lady sat near the Mother's feet, just to Her right. When the Mother asked her to make place for me, she became very annoyed and walked straight out.

In 1948, instead of doing his own exercises, Dada started conducting a training course in gymnastics, twice a week for the captains. The class consisted of the captains of Group C (young boys), group D (young men) and group E (ladies). I too was a group captain at that time, for at the end of 1946, though I was only ten and a half years old, the Mother had made me the captain of Group A, consisting of children from six to nine years of age. I was very keen to join the training course of the captains but Dada felt that I was too young. I kept pleading and finally, early in 1950 he said that if I could execute correctly twenty-five straight dips he would allow me to join the course. That evening, while I was seated at the Mother's feet, observing the class with Her, he came and told Her about the condition I would have to fulfil in order to get admitted to the captains' training course. I started working hard and practised several times a day.

Sometime during this period, the Mother asked Parul to come twice a week during the captain's training course and sit next to me. She told us both to bring our copies of Prayers and Meditations. Alternately Parul and I would read a prayer in French and the Mother would give long explanations for the benefit of the ladies around Her. Parul and I did not listen to Her at all. We would watch the training programme or would play with the Mother's feet, measuring them with our hands or tracing their contours on the ground. She knew all this, but continued Her explanations for the benefit of the ladies. This continued only for three or four days because by then I was able to do the twenty-five dips. Pranab made me do them in the Mother's presence. When I completed the dips successfully, the Mother took my hands in Hers, congratulated me and with a radiant smile sent me off for my first lesson with the captains' group . With a feeling of exultation and triumph I ran off, little realising the golden opportunity I had let slip by. From that day the Mother stopped the classes on Prayers and Meditations.

Sometime later however, early in June 1951, the Mother took up these classes again. At first there were only the six of us, Chum, Jhumur, Bubu, Gauri, Parul and me who went together daily to see the Mother upstairs in Her room. One day while we were with Her, She announced that She was going to hold special classes for us on Wednesday at the Playground. On 6 June, She gave each of us a copy of the second edition (individually numbered) of Prayers and Meditations in French and began our classes in the Guest House verandah of the children's courtyard. Besides the six of us, the Mother asked my sister, Chitra, to join. So there were seven of us. From then onwards, on every class day, the Mother accepted new members. The number of students grew rapidly and at the end of a few sessions we were almost thirty. All the students were from group B, except for Manqj (group D) and Chitra (group A). After this, for sometime the Mother did not accept any new students, but people continued to ask for permission, hoping to participate. She gave them permission to come and sit at the back of the circle of regular students. By then, the classes had become so large that they were held in the children's courtyard of the Guest House. The Mother sat on a chair and we sat cross-legged on the floor, making a big circle around Her.



But as the rains sometimes disturbed us, the Mother decided to take the classes in Her own room in the Playground. When Her room became too small for the increasing number of participants, She brought



the class outdoors, onto the Playground itself. She sat in front of the map of India, we students sat around Her and the others who wanted to listen to Her, sat at the back. Most of the Ashramites, even those who did not understand French, came to the classes. Eventually, loud-speakers were installed so that everyone could hear. From 1953, whatever She said was tape-recorded. Portions of Her talks were first published in the Bulletin and later as a series of books titled Questions and Answers. These Wednesday classes continued until December 1958 when the Mother stopped all Her activities at the playground.

After December 1958, the Mother did not see us often, but whenever I went to see Her, She would ask questions about my work with the children at the Playground. I always told Her how much we missed Her. Very often I asked Her to restart our classes but She never gave any definite answer to my request.

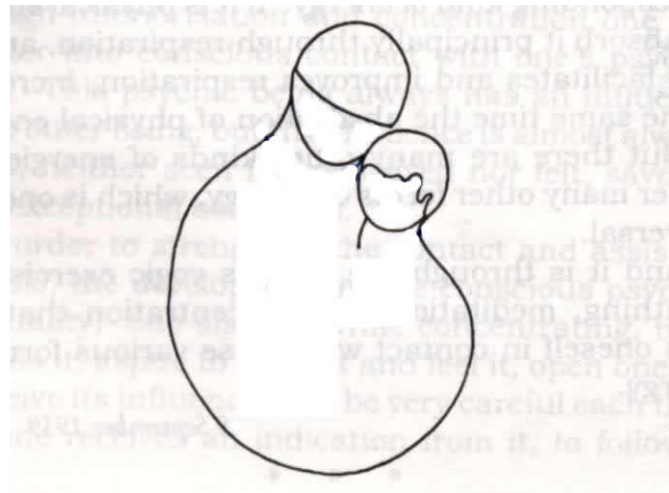
On 6 September 1959, when I went to see the Mother, She asked me what I would like to have from Her . Spontaneously I said, " Mother I would like You to resume the Wednesday classes." She took my hands in Hers, and said with great force and strength, almost in anger, "I have no intention of starting the classes again. The students were not interested, they did not come prepared; nobody asked any questions." She continued in this tone for quite some time. There I was, kneeling before Her, totally dazed and shaken, tears streaming down my face. I knew that what She said was true. Often She had scolded the six of us when we went to Her upstairs for not asking any questions during the class, but She always excluded me from these scoldings because I was one of the few who did ask questions. Most probably the majority of the students did not open their lips out of fear, timidity or shyness. The Mother tried many times in different ways to make us ask questions. She would point a finger at each child and say, "Do you have anything to ask? and you, and you ..." But even this did not succeed. Later She



asked us to put our questions in writing, but the written questions generally came from older sadhaks and not from the students themselves. Now kneeling before Her, I knew that what She said was true and that we had lost an invaluable opportunity. I felt miserable and the tears continued to run down my face. Suddenly the Mother looked at me compassionately, took me in Her arms, pulled me to Her breast, kissed me and consoled me saying, "I did not say all this for you, my little one, it was for the whole class. You always asked questions. To you I have nothing to say. You had interest, but most of the others were content to sit there without ever opening their lips. That is why I don't want to start the classes again. But you, you can send me your notebook with your questions and I will answer them."

Thus during the thirteen years, from 1959 to 1972, with short and long intervals, according to the time at the Mother's disposal, I continued to ask questions. I started with questions on the last chapters of The Life Divine from the point which the Mother had reached when She discontinued Her Wednesday classes at the Playground. I also took up the Thoughts & Aphorisms again from the point She had reached before discontinuing Her Friday classes with the Group A. All of this, including Her answers to my questions subsequently came out as a book entitled, On Thoughts and Aphorisms. Over the years, I also asked other questions which occurred to me in the course of my study of Sri Aurobindo's books, and also questions about my work and my life.

What follows are questions and answers on sadhana and life. They reflect the Mother's patient and loving guidance towards the growth of my inner being.



## Questions and Answers on Sadhana and Life

Sweet Mother,

What is the difference between the psychic change and the spiritual change?

The psychic change is the change that puts you in contact with the immanent Divine, the Divine who is at the centre of each being and of whom the psychic being is the vesture and the expression. By the psychic change one passes from the individual Divine to the universal Divine and finally to the Transcendent.

The spiritual change puts you directly in contact with the Supreme.

8 September 1959

\* \* \*

Sweet Mother,

*How can one draw energy into oneself from outside?*

That depends on the kind of energy one wants to absorb, for each region of the being has a corresponding kind of energy. If it is physical energy, we absorb it principally through respiration, and all that facilitates and improves respiration, increases at the same time the absorption of physical energy.

But there are many other kinds of energies, or rather many other forms of Energy, which is one and universal.

And it is through the various yogic exercises of breathing, meditation and concentration that one puts oneself in contact with these various forms of Energy.

9 September 1959

\* \* \*

Sweet Mother,

*What are these other forms of Energy and how do they help us in our sadhana?*

Each region of the being and each activity has its energies. We may classify them generally into vital energies, mental energies, spiritual energies. Modern science tells us that Matter is ultimately nothing but energy condensed.

Our yoga being integral, all these various forms or kinds of energy are indispensable to our realisation.

10 September 1959

\* \* \*

Sweet Mother,

*How can one make one's psychic personality grow?*

It is through all the experiences of life that the psychic personality forms, grows, develops and finally becomes a complete, conscious and free being.

This process of development goes on tirelessly through innumerable lives, and if one is not conscious of it, it is because one is not conscious of one's psychic being—for that is the indispensable starting-point. Through interiorisation and concentration one has to enter into conscious contact with one's psychic being. This psychic being always has an influence on the outer being, but this influence is

almost always occult, neither seen nor perceived nor felt, save on truly exceptional occasions.

In order to strengthen the contact and assist, if possible, the development of the conscious psychic personality, one should, while concentrating, turn towards it, aspire to know it and feel it, open oneself to receive its influence, and be very careful each time that one receives an indication from it, to follow it very scrupulously and sincerely. To live in a great aspiration, to take care to become inwardly calm and remain so always as far as possible, to cultivate a perfect sincerity in all the activities of one's being— these are the essential conditions for the growth of the psychic being.

12 September 1959

\* \* \*

*Sweet Mother,*

*What is meant by "a subtle physical prolongation of the superficial form of the mental envelope"?*\*

It means that the ghost one sees and wrongly takes for the departed being itself, is only an image of it, an imprint (like a photographic imprint) left in the subtle physical by the superficial mental form, an image that can become visible under certain conditions. These images can move about (like cinema images), but they have no substantial reality. It is the fear or emotion of those who see these images that sometimes gives them the appearance of a power or an action they do not possess in themselves. Hence the necessity of never being afraid and of recognising them for what they are—a deceptive appearance.

14 September 1959

\* Sri Aurobindo, *The Life Divine*

\* \* \*

*Sweet Mother,*

*How can one silence the mind, remain quiet, and at the same time have an aspiration, an intensity or a widening? Because as soon as one aspires, it is the mind that aspires, isn't it?*

No; aspiration, as well as widening and intensity, come from the heart, the emotional centre, the door of the psychic or rather the door leading to the psychic.

The mind by its nature is curious and interested; it sees, it observes, it tries to understand and explain; and with all this activity it disturbs the experience and diminishes its intensity and force.

On the other hand, the more calm and silent the mind is, the more can aspiration rise up from the depths of the heart in the fullness of its ardour.

17 September 1959

\* \* \*

*Sweet Mother,*

*How can one eliminate the will of the ego?*

This amounts to asking how one can eliminate the ego. It is only by yoga that one can do it. There have been, throughout the spiritual history of humanity, many methods of yoga—which Sri Aurobindo has described and explained for us in *The Synthesis of Yoga*.

But before eliminating the will of the ego, which takes a very long time, one can begin by surrendering the will of the ego to the Divine Will at every opportunity and finally in a constant way. For this, the first step is to understand that the Divine knows better than we do what is good for us and what we truly need, not only for our spiritual progress but also for our material welfare, the health of our body and the proper functioning of all the activities of our being.

Naturally, this is not the opinion of the ego, which thinks it knows better than anyone else what it needs, and claims for itself independence of judgment and decision. But it thinks and feels this way because it is ignorant, and gradually one has to convince it that its perception and understanding are too limited for it truly to be able to know and that it judges only according to its desires, which are blind, and not according to truth.

For the desires are not the expression of needs but of preferences.

*19 September 1959*

\* \* \*

*Sweet Mother,*

*Why has the Divine made His path so difficult? He can make it easier if He wants to, can't He?*

First of all, one should know that the intellect, the mind, can understand nothing of the Divine, neither what He does nor how He does it and still less why He does it. To know something of the Divine, one has to rise above thought and enter into the psychic consciousness, the consciousness of the soul, or into the spiritual consciousness.

Those who have had the experience have always said that the difficulties and sufferings of the path are not real, but a creation of human ignorance, and that as soon as one gets out of this ignorance one also gets out of the difficulties, to say nothing of the inalienable state of bliss in which one dwells as soon as one is in conscious contact with the Divine.

So according to them, the question has no real basis and cannot be posed.

*21 September 1959*

\* \* \*

*Sweet Mother,*

*You have written that to enter into conscious contact with one's psychic being, one must "aspire to know it and feel it, open oneself to receive its influence, and be very careful ...to follow it very scrupulously and sincerely". But, Sweet Mother, I don't know how to do this. I find it easier when I think of You, try to enter into contact with You and open to You.*

This too is a way which is certainly as good as the other.

There are many ways to attain self-realisation, and each one must choose the way that comes to him most naturally.

But each way has its demands in order to be truly effective.

In thinking of me, you must think not only of the outer person, but of what She represents, what stands behind Her. For you must never forget that the outer person is only the form and symbol of an eternal Reality, and it is to this higher Reality that you must turn through the physical appearance. The physical being can become truly expressive of the eternal Reality only when it is completely transformed by the supramental manifestation. And until then, it is through it that you must find the Truth.

22 September 1959

\* \* \*

*Sweet Mother,*

*Is it possible to have control over oneself during sleep? For example, if I want to see You in my dreams, can I do it at will?*

Control during sleep is entirely possible and it is progressive if you persist in the effort. You begin by remembering your dreams, then gradually you remain more and more conscious during your sleep, and not only can you control your dreams but you can guide and organise your activities during sleep. If you persist in your will and your effort, you are sure to learn how to come and find me at night during your sleep and afterwards to remember what has happened.

For this, two things are necessary, which you must develop by aspiration and by calm and persistent effort.

(1) Concentrate your thought on the will to come and find me; then pursue this thought, first by an effort of imagination, afterwards in a tangible and increasingly real way, until you are in my presence.

(2) Establish a sort of bridge between the waking and the sleeping consciousness, so that when you wake up you remember what has happened.

It may be that you succeed immediately, but more often it takes a certain time and you must persist in the effort.

25 September 1959

\* \* \*

*Sweet Mother,*

*What is the role of the soul?*

But without the soul we wouldn't exist!

The soul is that which comes from the Divine without ever leaving Him, and returns to the Divine without ceasing to be manifest.

The soul is the Divine made individual without ceasing to be divine.

In the soul the individual and the Divine are eternally one; therefore, to find one's soul is to find God; to identify with one's soul is to unite with the Divine.

Thus it may be said that the role of the soul is to make a true being of man.

29 September 1959

\* \* \*

Sweet Mother,

*Is there anything like good luck and bad luck, or is it something that one creates for oneself?*

There is nothing that can truly be called luck. What men call luck are the effects of causes they do not know.

Nor is there anything that in itself is good or bad luck; each one characterises circumstances as good or bad depending on whether they are more or less favourable to him; and this estimation itself is very superficial and ignorant, for one must already be a great sage to know what is truly favourable or unfavourable to oneself.

Moreover, the same event may be very good for one person and at the same time very bad for another. These estimations are purely subjective and depend on each one's reaction to contacts coming from outside.

Finally, the circumstances of our life, the surroundings we live in and the way people regard us are the expressions, the objective projection of what we ourselves are, within and without. So we may say with certainty that what we carry in ourselves in all our states of being, mentally, vitally and physically, is that which constitutes our life objectified in what surrounds us.

And this is easily verifiable, for in proportion as we improve ourselves and advance towards perfection, our circumstances also improve.

Likewise, in the case of those who degenerate and fall back, the circumstances of their lives also worsen.

5 October 1959

\* \* \*

Sweet Mother,

*What do You give us in the morning at the balcony\*, and what should we try to do in order to receive what You are giving?*

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

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

12 October 1959



*\* Balcony Darshan was an opportunity for the Ashraites and devotees to see the Mother early each morning. Between 6 A. M. to 15 A. M. she would come to the Ashram's rear balcony above Rue Saint Gilles, and all those standing below be above to have Her darshna*

\* \* \*

*Sweet Mother,*

*What is meant by the "silence of the physical consciousness"\* and how can one remain in this silence?*

The physical consciousness is not only the consciousness of our body, but of all that surrounds us as well, all that we perceive with our senses. It is a sort of apparatus for recording and transmission which is open to all the contacts and shocks coming from outside and responds to them by reactions of pleasure and pain which welcome or repel. This makes in our outer being a constant activity and noise which we are only partially aware of, because we are so accustomed to it.

But if through meditation or concentration we turn inward or upward, we can bring down into ourselves or call forth from the depths, calm, quiet, peace and finally silence. This is a concrete, positive silence (not the negative silence of the absence of noise), immutable as long as it remains, a silence one can experience even in the outer tumult of a hurricane or battlefield. This silence is synonymous with peace and it is all-powerful; it is the perfectly effective remedy for the fatigue, tension and exhaustion arising from that internal over-activity and noise which generally escape our control and cease neither by day nor night.

This is why the first thing required when one wants to do Yoga is to bring down and establish in oneself the calm, the peace, the silence.

*15 October 1959*

\* Sri Aurobindo, The Life Divine

\* \* \*

*Sweet Mother,*

*How can one enter into the feelings of a piece of music played by someone else?*

In the same way that one can share the emotions of another person—by sympathy, spontaneously, by an affinity more or less deep, or else by an effort of concentration which ends in identification. It is this latter process that we adopt when we listen to music with an intense and concentrated attention, to the point of stopping all other noise in the head and obtaining a complete silence into which fall, drop by drop, the notes of the music whose sound alone remains; and with the sound all the feelings, all the movements of emotion can be captured, experienced, re-felt as if they were being produced in ourselves.

*20 October 1959*



The Mother playing the organ

\* \* \*

*Sweet Mother,*

*How can one distinguish between good and evil in a dream?*

In principle, to judge the activities of sleep one needs the same capacity of discrimination as to judge the waking activities.

But since we usually give the name "dream" to a considerable number of activities that differ completely from one another, the first point is to learn to distinguish between these various activities—that is, to recognise what part of the being it is that "dreams", what domain it is that one "dreams" in, and what the nature of that activity is. In his letters, Sri Aurobindo has given very complete and detailed descriptions and explanations of all the activities in sleep. Reading these letters is a good introduction to the study of this subject and to its practical application.

*25 October 1959*



*Sweet Mother,*

*How should we read Your books and the books of Sri Aurobindo so that they may enter into our consciousness instead of being understood only by the mind?*

To read my books is not difficult because they are written in the simplest language, almost the spoken language. To get help from them, it is enough to read with attention and concentration and an attitude of inner goodwill, with a desire to receive and live what is taught.

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

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

It is preferable to read regularly, a little every day and at a fixed hour if possible; this facilitates the brain's receptivity.

*2 November 1959*

\* \* \*

*Sweet Mother,*

*What exactly are the subconscious and the inconscient?*

The inconscient is that part of Nature which is so obscure and asleep that it seems to be wholly devoid of consciousness; at any rate, as in the stone, the mineral kingdom, the consciousness there is entirely inactive and hidden. The history of the earth begins with this inconscience.

We too carry it in ourselves, in the substance of our body, since the substance of our body is the same as that of the earth.

But by evolution, this sleeping and hidden consciousness gradually awakens through the vegetal and animal kingdoms, and in them subconsciousness begins; this subconsciousness, with the appearance of mind in man, culminates in consciousness. This consciousness likewise is progressive, and as man evolves, it will change into superconscience.

We too, then, carry in ourselves the subconsciousness which links us to the animal, and the superconscience which is our hope and assurance of future realisation.

*7 November 1959*

\* \* \*

*Sweet Mother,*

*What should one try to do when one meditates with Your music at the Playground?*

This music aims at awakening certain profound feelings.

In listening to it, one should make oneself as silent and passive as possible. And if, in the mental silence, a part of the being can take the attitude of the witness who observes without reacting or participating, then one can notice the effect that the music produces on the feelings and emotions; and if it produces a state of deep calm and semi-trance, that is very good.

15 November 1959

\* \* \*

*Sweet Mother,*

*What is the work of the Overmind\*?*

The overmind is the region of the gods, the beings of divine origin who have been charged with supervising, directing and organising the evolution of the universe; and more specifically, since the formation of the earth they have served as messengers and intermediaries to bring to the earth the help of the higher regions and to preside over the formation of the mind and its progressive ascension. It is usually to the gods of the overmind that the prayers of the various religions are addressed. These religions most often choose, for various reasons, one of these gods and transform him for their personal use into the supreme God.

In the individual evolution, one must develop in oneself a zone corresponding to the overmind and an overmind consciousness, before one can rise above it, to the Supermind, or open oneself to it.

Almost all the occult systems and disciplines aim at the development and mastery of the overmind.

27 November 1959

\*This question and the three that follow are based on terms used by Sri Aurobindo in the last chapters of *The Life Divine*

\* \* \*

*Sweet Mother,*

*What is meant by "a zone corresponding to the overmind" and how can one develop it in oneself? What is meant by the "mastery of the overmind"?*

The individual being is made up of states of being corresponding to cosmic zones or planes, and as these inner states of being are developed one becomes conscious of those domains. This consciousness is double, at first psychological and subjective, within oneself, expressing itself through thoughts, feelings, emotions, sensations; then objective and concrete when one is able to go beyond the limits of the body in order to move about in the various cosmic regions, grow conscious of them and act freely in them—this is what is called "mastery"; it is this I spoke of when I mentioned the mastery of the overmind.

It goes without saying that all this is not done in a day, not even in a year. This mastery, in whatever domain it may be, vital, mental, overmental, demands assiduous effort and great concentration. These masteries are no easier than the mastery of the physical world; and everyone knows how much time and effort are needed merely to learn the things indispensable for leading one's life properly, not to speak of "mastery", which is truly something exceptional on earth.

28 November 1959

Sweet Mother,

*What is Supernature?*

Supernature is the Nature superior to material or physical Nature—what we usually call "Nature". But this Nature that we see, feel and study, this Nature that has been our familiar environment since our birth upon earth, is not the only one. There is a vital nature, a mental nature, and so on. It is this that, for the ordinary consciousness, is Supernature.

Very often the word "Nature" is used as a synonym for Prakriti, the executive force of Purusha. But to answer your question more precisely, the context would be needed in order to know the occasion on which Sri Aurobindo spoke about Supernature.

15 December 1959

\* \* \*

Sweet Mother,

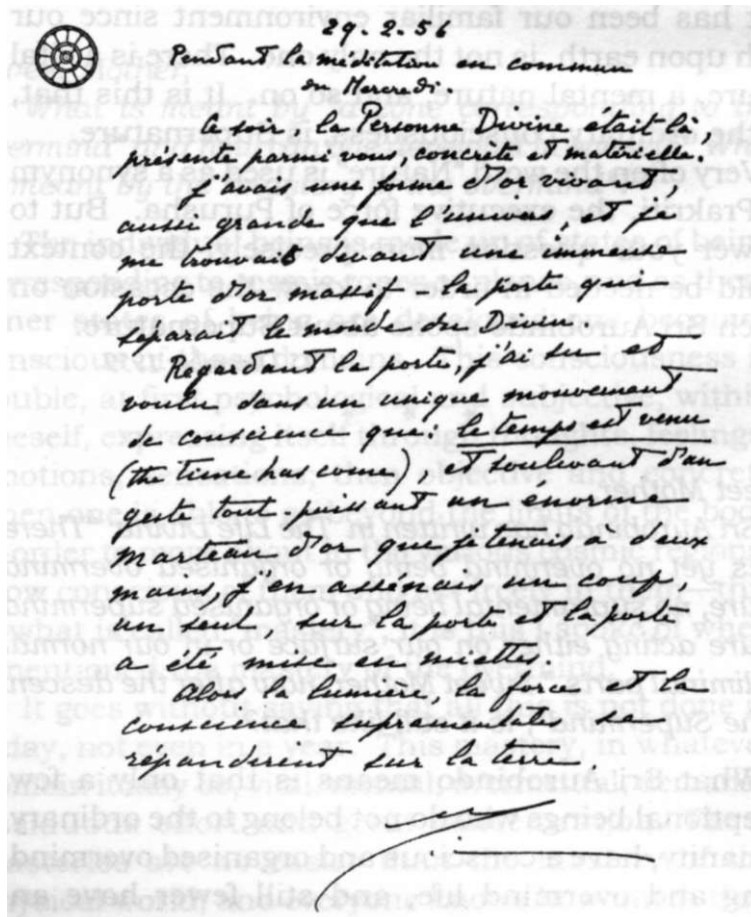
*Sri Aurobindo has written in The Life Divine: "There is as yet no overmind being or organised overmind nature, no supramental being or organised supermind nature acting either on our surface or in our normal subliminal parts." Sweet Mother, now after the descent of the Supermind\*, is it still like that?*

What Sri Aurobindo means is that only a few exceptional beings who do not belong to the ordinary humanity, have a conscious and organised overmind being and overmind life, and still fewer have an organised supramental being and supramental life, even admitting that there are any at all. Certainly the very recent descent of the first elements of the Supermind into the earth's atmosphere (not yet quite four years ago) cannot have changed this state of things.

We are still only in a period of preparation.

18 December 1959

\*On 29 February 1956 during our class there took place, in the Mother's words, "the manifestation of the Supramental upon earth"; "Then the supramental Light and Force and Consciousness rushed down upon earth in an uninterrupted flow."



Written in the leap year 1956, this statement was first publicly distributed as the message for 29 February 1960, the first "anniversary" of the Supramental Manifestation upon earth.

29 February 1956

This evening the Divine Presence, concrete and material, was there present amongst you. I had a form of living gold, bigger than the universe, and I was facing a huge and massive golden door which separated the world from the Divine. As I looked at the door, I knew and willed, in a single movement of consciousness, that "the time has come", Then the supramental Light and Force and Consciousness rushed down upon earth in an uninterrupted flow.

\* \* \*

Sweet Mother,

*What is meant by the yoga of devotion and the yoga of knowledge?*

The yoga of knowledge is the path that leads to the Divine through the exclusive pursuit of the pure and absolute Truth.

The yoga of devotion is the path that leads to union with the Divine through perfect, total and eternal love.

In the integral yoga of Sri Aurobindo, the two combine with the yoga of works and the yoga of self-perfection to make a homogeneous whole, culminating in the yoga of supramental realisation.

5 February 1960

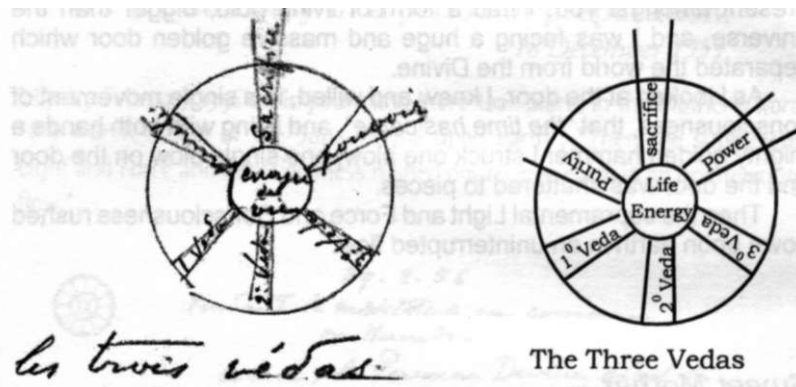
\* \* \*

Sweet Mother,

I have not understood the passage Sri Aurobindo has quoted from the Upanishads: "As the spokes of a wheel in its nave, so in the Life-energy is all established, the triple knowledge and the Sacrifice and the power of the strong and the purity of the wise.

Under the control of the Life-energy is all this that is established in the triple heaven." What is the meaning of the "triple knowledge"?

These are the three Vedas. The Sanskrit word "Veda" means knowledge.



(The Mother then orally explained in greater detail the meaning of this passage from the Prashna Upanishad and drew the sketch above, with Life-Energy in the nave of the wheel, and in its spokes purity, sacrifice, power and the three Vedas.)

11 February 1960

\* \* \*

Sweet Mother,

What are the "supreme faculties"?

It is difficult to reply without having the context. Which "supreme faculties" are being referred to here? Those of man on the way to becoming superman, or those that the supramental being will possess when he appears on earth?

In the first case, they are the faculties that develop in man as he opens to the higher mind and overmind, and through those regions he receives the light of the Truth. These faculties are not a direct expression of the supreme Truth, but a transcription, an indirect reflection of it. They include intuition, foreknowledge, knowledge by identity and certain powers such as that of healing and, to an extent, of acting upon circumstances.

If it refers to the supreme faculties of the supramental being, we cannot say much about them, for all we can say at the moment belongs more to the realm of imagination than to the realm of knowledge, since this supramental being has not yet manifested on earth.

23 April 1960

\* \* \*

Sweet Mother,

*What are "the different psychological divisions of the human being"?*

These divisions are merely arbitrary. They have been established in order to facilitate the study of human nature and especially to establish a definite basis for the various methods of self-development and self-discipline. That is why each philosophic, educational or Yogic system has, as it were, its own division based on the experience of its founder. Nevertheless, despite these divergences, there is a sort of tradition which, behind the different terms, makes for an essential analogy. This analogy can be expressed by a quaternary: the physical, the vital, the mental and the psychic or soul.

Sri Aurobindo has written on this subject in great detail in some of his letters, in *The Synthesis of Yoga* and in *Essays on the Gita*.

30 May 1960

\* \* \*

Sweet Mother,

*Is it possible to have a correct conception of the Divine?*

No conception of the Divine can be correct; for conceptions are mental activities, and no mental activity is fit to manifest the Divine.

It is only by experience that one can know Him, and the experience cannot be translated into words.

20 June 1960

\* \* \*

Sweet Mother,

*Are You with us during the collective meditation at the Playground?*

*Certainly, I am always there.*

*To benefit from it, what should we meditate on?*

*And how?*

The method is always the same. Gather together the energies in you that are usually dispersed outside; concentrate your consciousness within, beneath the surface agitation, and establish, as far as possible,

a perfect quietness in your heart and head; then formulate your aspiration, if you have one, and open yourself to receive the divine force from above.

1 July 1960

*Sweet Mother,*

*If a soul has taken birth as a boy in one life, does it always remain a boy in future lives, or can it be born as a girl?*

Theories differ greatly according to school and sect, and each teaching gives excellent reasons to support its contentions.

Certainly there is an element of truth in all these statements; and not only are all cases possible, but they must have occurred in the course of earth's history and still do.

The only thing I can speak of with certainty on this subject, is my own experience.

According to my experience, the soul is divine, an eternal portion of the Supreme Divine, and therefore it cannot be limited or bound by any law whatever, except its own. These souls are emanated by the Lord to do His work in the world, and each one comes upon earth with a particular purpose, for a particular work and with a particular destiny; each has its own law which is binding on itself alone and cannot be made a general rule.

So in the eternity of the becoming, every possible case, imaginable and unimaginable, must obviously occur.

*14 July 1960*

\* \* \*

*Sweet Mother,*

*Why have You started to allow marriage in the Ashram?*

I have allowed it to people who declare that they do not want any sexual relationship—in the hope that they are sincere. It is a matter between them and their conscience.

And those who are not sincere (the birth of a child being the proof) will have to go to Auroville.

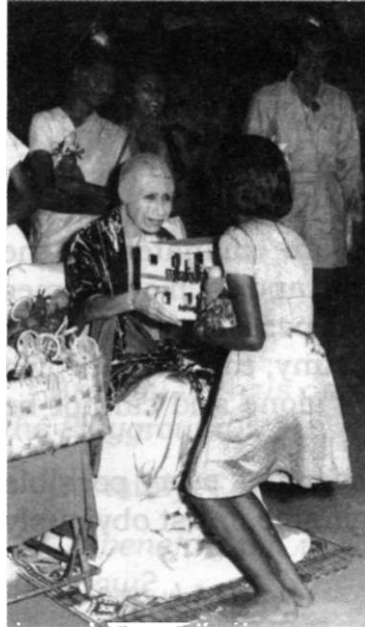
Blessings.

*23 December 1969*

\* \* \*

*Sweet Mother,*

*Why do we celebrate Christmas here? What special meaning does this day have for us? And Why is a distinction made here between Europeans and Indians on Christmas Day?*



The Mother during the general X'mas distribution

Long before the Christian religion made December 25th the day of Christ's birth, this day was the festival of the return of the sun, the Day of Light. It is this very ancient symbol of the rebirth of the Light that we wish to celebrate here.

As far as I know, everyone in the Ashram is allowed to come to the Christmas tree and the distribution.

The custom of sending Special baskets to the Europeans and Americans comes from the fact that in those countries they usually give presents to each other on Christmas Day, instead of on January 1st. That is all. Blessings.

*26 December 1969*

\* \* \*

*Sweet Mother,*

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

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

*1 January 1970*

\* \* \*



Sweet Mother,

Satprem told me yesterday that You asked him whether he had seen the latest text You wrote in my notebook the day before yesterday, the one in which You began with "Tu" (Thou) and addressed the whole of humanity. It is strange because You did not write this in my notebook, and while I was talking to Satprem I suddenly remembered that the day before yesterday, just before sleeping, I was reading the Bulletin and then during the night I dreamt that I was with You in Your room and You were writing something in my notebook. But I don't remember at all what You wrote.

Maybe now that You have my notebook before You, You could write it for me really.

I can no longer recall what I wrote. But I remember that at the very moment I was writing (it was like a proclamation), I was surprised by my inspired tone; I was addressing the human race, saying "Thou" and I was telling it what it must do. I can no longer get the thread of it now.

Blessings.

26 February 1970

\* \* \*

Sweet Mother,

I would like Your comment on Your message of February 21st:

"Truth is a difficult and strenuous conquest. One must be a real warrior to make this conquest, a warrior who fears nothing, neither enemies nor death, for with or against everybody, with or without a body, the struggle continues and will end by Victory."

What is this truth You speak of? How can the struggle continue without a body?

The sole and unique eternal Truth, beyond all manifestation and dependent on none. Blessings.

1 March 1970

\* \* \*

The more one knows, the more one realises that one knows nothing.  
For one who has total trust in the Divine, in His wisdom and mercy, there are no more problems.

Blessings

29 March 1970

\* \* \*

Sweet Mother,

When there are special dates, are there special forces at work in the world on those days?

What special thing is happening today on the sixtieth anniversary of Sri Aurobindo's arrival?

The forces are always present, waiting to be received. The function of special dates is mainly to awaken sluggish memories and blunted receptivity. Actually it is

the town of Pondicherry that should have celebrated this sixtieth anniversary, for Sri Aurobindo's arrival has altered its destiny considerably.  
Blessings.

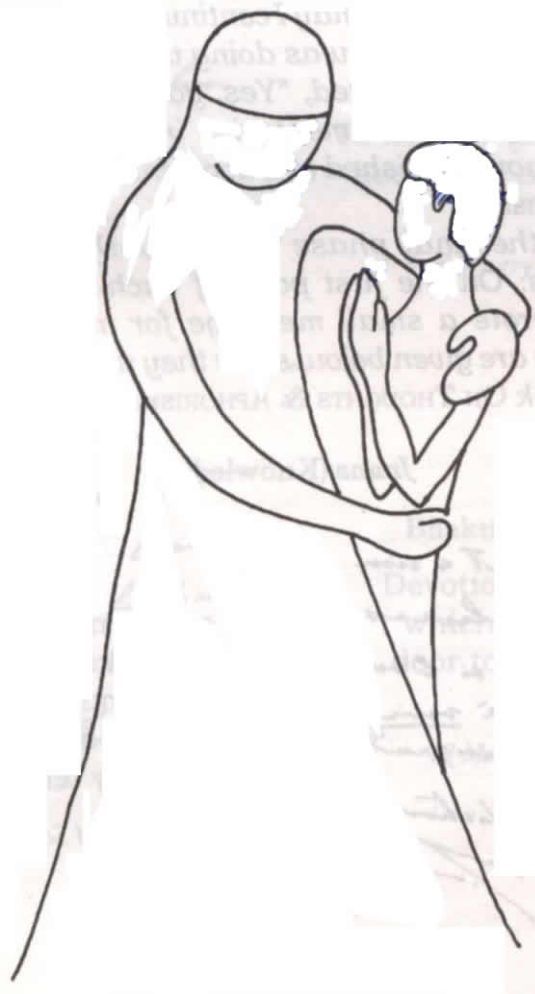
4 April 1970

\* \* \*

*Sweet Mother,*

*What attitude should we take towards the war between Pakistan and India?*  
Psychologically, the only thing to do is to keep a quiet and unshakable faith.  
Materially, it will depend on circumstances. Blessings.

3 December 1971

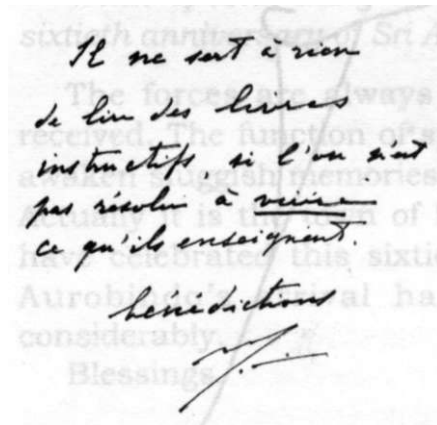


## Thoughts and Aphorisms

The Mother began Her commentaries on Sri Aurobindo's Thoughts and Aphorisms in September 1958 in our Friday classes at the Playground, but when the classes ended in December the commentaries also stopped. Sometime later She took up the work once more, first in correspondence with me in 1960-61, then in conversations with Satprem in 1962-66, but then the work was again discontinued. Hoping to complete it, I wrote to the Mother on 30 July 1969, "Sweet Mother, if You have time now, may I continue with the Thoughts and Aphorisms that I was doing with You before?" To my great joy She replied, "Yes, you may." In this way She finished the commentaries in less than a year. They are now published in a book entitled On Thoughts and Aphorisms.

For the final phase of our work, I used four notebooks. On the first page of each notebook the Mother wrote a small message for me. These four messages are given below since they were not included in the book On Thoughts & Aphorisms.

### Jnana (Knowledge)



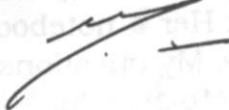
It serves no purpose to read books of guidance unless and until one is determined to live what they teach.

4 September 1969

\* \* \*

Le développement  
intérieur et l'aspiration  
spirituelle rendent capable  
de maîtriser son karma

bénédictine



### **Karma (Works)**


Inner development  
and spiritual  
aspiration enable one  
to master one's  
Karma.

25 November 1969

\* \* \*

Apprendre est bon  
Devenir est mieux.

bénédictine



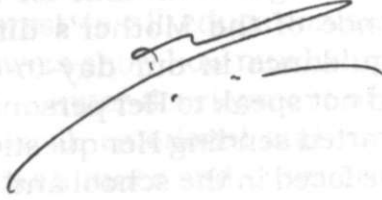
### **Karma (Works)**

To learn is good. To  
become is better.

4 February 1970

\* \* \*

La dévotion est  
la clé qui ouvre  
la porte de la libération



### **Bhakti (Devotion)**

Devotion is the key  
which opens the  
door to liberation.

19 March 1970

## Chapter 2

### EDUCATION

#### Introduction

My heart leaped up with joy when in September 1959 the Mother told me that I could start corresponding with Her. "You can send me your notebook with your questions," She said, "and I will answer them." I at once sent Her a notebook with questions from The Life Divine. My questions began from the point where the Mother had left off explaining the book in December 1958 during our Wednesday classes at the Playground.

In January 1960 I started another notebook, this one with questions on Thoughts and Aphorisms from the point where the Mother had stopped discussing the book in the Group A classes, which were being held every Friday at the Playground. These were later published as a book entitled On Thoughts & Aphorisms.

In July 1960 I started a third notebook with questions on education. The Mother's replies to my questions aroused a lot of interest among the teachers, but soon the Mother got so busy that my notebook often remained in Her room for weeks before She could answer. There were long gaps in our correspondence, especially between 1962 and 1969.

In 1969 the Mother reduced the number of people She was seeing and again had time for me. All of us felt the absence of the Mother's direct physical contact and guidance in our day-to-day activities. Since we could not speak to Her personally about our problems, I started sending Her questions on the difficulties that we faced in the school and the Playground. This led to an interesting collection of questions and answers on education. Whenever the Mother answered my questions, I would type out two copies and send one to Her. The other copy would often circulate amongst my friends, captains and teachers, some of whom started giving me questions for asking the Mother. Most of these questions were based on the experiment conducted at our Centre of Education at Pondicherry and are characteristic of the research work in the Ashram. Though the Mother's replies deal specifically with the type of education She envisaged, they will be of general interest to all educationists. These questions and answers show how much importance the Mother gave to the inner development of the child along with his physical, emotional and mental development. And for both inner and outer growth, She created ample opportunities, and Herself guided us with unfailing patience, encouragement and love towards a conscious and constant progress.

## Diplomas and Certificates

*Sweet Mother,*

*Why are no diplomas and certificates given to the students of the Centre of Education?*

For the last hundred years or so mankind has been suffering from a disease which seems to be spreading more and more and which has reached a climax in our times; it is what we may call "utilitarianism". People and things, circumstances and activities seem to be viewed and appreciated exclusively from this angle. Nothing has any value unless it is useful. Certainly something that is useful is better than something that is not. But first we must agree on what we describe as useful—useful to whom, to what, for what?

For, more and more, the races who consider themselves civilised describe as useful whatever can attract, procure or produce money. Everything is judged or evaluated from a monetary angle. That is what I call utilitarianism. And this disease is highly contagious, for even children are not immune to it.

At an age when they should be dreaming of beauty, greatness and perfection, dreams that may be too sublime for ordinary common sense, but which are nevertheless far superior to this dull good sense, children now dream of money and worry about how to earn it.

So when they think of their studies, they think above all about what can be useful to them, so that later on when they grow up they can earn a lot of money.

And the thing that becomes most important for them is to prepare themselves to pass examinations with success, for with diplomas, certificates and titles they will be able to find good positions and earn a lot of money.

For them study has no other purpose, no other interest.

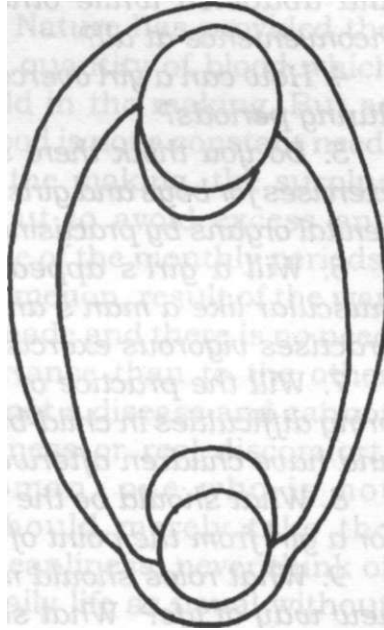
To learn for the sake of knowledge, to study in order to know the secrets of Nature and life, to educate oneself in order to grow in consciousness, to discipline oneself in order to become master of oneself, to overcome one's weaknesses, incapacities and ignorance, to prepare oneself to advance in life towards a goal that is nobler and vaster, more generous and more true—they hardly give it a thought and consider it all very Utopian. The only thing that matters is to be practical, to prepare themselves and learn how to earn money.

Children who are infected with this disease are out of place at the Centre of Education of the Ashram. And it is to make this quite clear to them that we do not prepare them for official examinations or competitions or give them diplomas or titles which they can use in the outside world.

We want here only those who aspire for a higher and better life, who thirst for knowledge and perfection, who look forward eagerly to a future that will be more totally true.

There is plenty of room in the world for all the others.

17 July 1960



### To Women About Their Body

Sweet Mother,

*While handling children in the Group for Physical Education we meet certain problems with girl students. Most of these are suggestions put upon them by their friends, older girls, parents and the doctor. Please throw light on the following questions so that we may be better equipped in our knowledge to execute our responsibilities more efficiently.*

- 1. What attitude should a girl take towards her monthly periods?*
- 2. Should a girl participate in her normal programme of Physical Education during her periods?*
- 3. Why are some girls completely run down during their periods and suffer from pains in the lower back and abdomen while others may have slight or no inconvenience at all?*
- 4. How can a girl overcome her suffering and pains during periods?*
- 5. Do you think there should be different types of exercises for boys and girls? Will a girl bring harm to her genital organs by practising the so-called manly sports?*
- 6. Will a girl's appearance change and become muscular like a man's and make her look ugly if she practises vigorous exercises?*
- 7. Will the practice of vigorous types of exercises bring difficulties in child-birth if the girls want to marry and have children afterwards?*



8. *What should be the ideal of Physical Education for a girl from the point of view of her sex?*

9. *What roles should man and woman play in our new way of life? What shall be the relation between them?*

10. *What should be the ideal of a woman's physical beauty?*

Before answering your questions I wish to tell you something which you know no doubt, but which you must never forget if you wish to learn how to lead a wise life.

It is true that we are, in our inner being, a spirit, a living soul that holds within it the Divine and aspires to become it, to manifest it perfectly; it is equally true, for the moment at least, that in our most material external being, in our body, we are still an animal, a mammalian, of a higher order no doubt, but made like animals and subject to the laws of animal Nature.

You have been taught surely that one peculiarity of the mammal is that the female conceives the child, carries it and builds it up within herself until the moment when the young one, fully formed comes out of the body of its mother and lives independently.

In view of this function Nature has provided the woman with an additional quantity of blood which has to be used for the child in the making. But as the use of this additional blood is not a constant need, when there is no child in the making, the surplus blood has to be thrown out to avoid excess and congestion. This is the cause of the monthly periods. It is a simple natural phenomenon, result of the way in which woman has been made and there is no need to attach to it more importance than to the other functions of the body. It is not a disease and cannot be the cause of any weakness or real discomfort. Therefore, a normal woman, one who is not ridiculously sensitive, should merely take the necessary precautions of cleanliness, never think of it any more and lead her daily life as usual without any change in her programme. This is the best way to be in good health.

Besides, even while recognising that in our body we still belong dreadfully to animality, we must not therefore conclude that this animal part, as it is the most concrete and the most real for us, is one to which we are obliged to be subjected and which we must allow to rule over us. Unfortunately this is what happens most often in life and men are certainly much more slaves than masters of their physical being. Yet it is the contrary that should be, for the truth of individual life is quite another thing.

We have in us an intelligent will more or less enlightened which is the first instrument of our psychic being. It is this intelligent will that we must use in order to learn to live not like an animal man, but as a human being, candidate for Divinity.

And the first step towards this realisation is to become master of this body instead of remaining an impotent slave.

One most effective help towards this goal is physical culture.

For about a century there has been a renewal of a knowledge greatly favoured in ancient times, partially forgotten since then. Now it is reawakening, and with the progress of modern science, it is acquiring quite a new amplitude and importance. This knowledge deals with the physical body and the extraordinary mastery that can

be obtained over it with the help of enlightened and systematised physical education.

This renewal has been the result of the action of a new power and light that have spread upon the earth in order to prepare it for the great transformations that must take place in the near future.

We must not hesitate to give primary importance to this physical education whose very purpose is to make our body capable of receiving and expressing the new force which seeks to manifest upon earth.

This said, I now answer the questions you put to me.

*1. What attitude should a girl take towards her monthly period?*

The attitude you take towards something quite natural and unavoidable. Give it as little importance as possible and go on with your usual life, without changing anything because of it.

*2. Should a girl participate in her normal programme of Physical Education during her period?*

Certainly if she is accustomed to physical exercise, she must not stop because of that. If one keeps the habit of leading one's normal life always, very soon one does not even notice the presence of the menses.

*3. Why are some girls completely run down during their periods and suffer from pain in the lower back and abdomen while others may have slight or no inconvenience at all?*

It is a question of temperament and mostly of education. If from her childhood a girl has been accustomed to pay much attention to the slightest uneasiness and to make a big fuss about the smallest inconvenience, then she loses all capacity of endurance and anything becomes the occasion for being pulled down. Especially if the parents themselves get too easily anxious about the reactions of their children. It is wiser to teach a child to be a bit sturdy and enduring than to show much care for these small inconveniences and accidents that cannot always be avoided in life. An attitude of quiet forbearance is the best one can adopt for oneself and teach to the children.

It is a well-known fact that if you expect some pain you are bound to have it and, once it has come, if you concentrate upon it, then it increases more and more until it becomes what is usually termed as "unbearable", although with some will and courage there is hardly any pain that one cannot bear.

*4. How can a girl overcome her suffering and pain during periods?*

There are some exercises that make the abdomen strong and improve the circulation. These exercises must be done regularly and continued even after the pains have disappeared. For the grown-up girls, this kind of pain comes almost entirely from sexual desires. If we get rid of the desires we get rid of the pain. There are two ways of getting rid of desires; the first one, the usual one, is through

satisfaction (or rather what is called satisfaction, because there is no such thing as satisfaction in the domain of desire); this means leading the ordinary human-animal life, marriage, children and all the rest of it.

There is, of course, another way, a better way, — control, mastery, transformation; this is more dignified and also more effective.

*5. Do you think there should be different types of exercises for boys and girls? Will a girl bring harm to her genital organs by practising the so-called manly sports?*

In all cases, as well for boys as for girls, the exercises must be graded according to the strength and the capacity of each one. If a weak student tries at once to do hard and heavy exercises, he may suffer for his foolishness. But with a wise and progressive training, girls as well as boys can participate in all kinds of sports, and thus increase their strength and health.

To become strong and healthy can never bring harm to a body, even if it is a woman's body!

*6. Will a girl's appearance change and become muscular like a muscular man's and make her look ugly if she practises vigorous exercises?*

Weakness and fragility may look attractive, in the view of a perverted mind, but it is not the truth of Nature nor the truth of the Spirit.

If you have ever looked at the photos of the women gymnasts you will know what perfectly beautiful bodies they have; and nobody can deny that they are muscular!

*7. Will the practice of vigorous types of exercises bring difficulties in child-birth if the girls want to marry and have children afterwards?*

I never came across such a case. On the contrary, women who are trained to do strong exercises and have a muscular body go through the ordeal of child-formation and child-birth much more easily and painlessly.

I heard the authentic story of one of these African women who are accustomed to walk for miles carrying heavy loads. She was pregnant and the time of delivery came during one of the day's marches. She sat on the side of the track, under a tree, gave birth to the child, waited for half an hour, then she rose and adding the new-born babe to the former luggage, went on her way quietly, as if nothing had happened. This is a splendid example of what a woman can do when she is in full possession of her health and strength.

Doctors will say that such a thing cannot occur in a civilised world with all the so-called progress that humanity has achieved; but we cannot deny that, from the physical point of view, this is a more happy condition than all the sensitiveness, the sufferings and the complications created by the modern civilisations.

Moreover, usually doctors are more interested in the abnormal cases, and they judge mostly from that point of view. But for us, it is different; it is from the normal that we can rise to the supernormal, not from the abnormal which is always a sign of perversion and inferiority.

8. *What should be the ideal of physical education for a girl from the point of view of her sex?*

I do not see why there should be any special ideal of physical education for girls other than for boys.

Physical education has for its aim to develop all the possibilities of a human body, possibilities of harmony, strength, plasticity, cleverness, agility, endurance, and to increase the control over the functioning of the limbs and the organs, to make of the body a perfect instrument at the disposal of a conscious will. This programme is excellent for all human beings equally, and there is no point in wanting to adopt another one for girls.

9. *What roles should man and woman play in our new way of life? What shall be the relation between them?*

Why make at all a distinction between them? They are all equally human beings, trying to become fit instruments for the Divine Work, above sex, caste, creed and nationality, all children of the same Infinite Mother and aspirants to the one Eternal Godhead

10. *What should be the ideal of a woman's physical beauty?*

A perfect harmony in the proportions, suppleness and strength, grace and force, plasticity and endurance, and above all, an excellent health, unvarying and unchanging, which is the result of a pure soul, a happy trust in life and an unshakable faith in the Divine Grace. One word to finish:

I have told you these things, because you needed to hear them, but do not make of them absolute dogmas, for that would take away their truth.

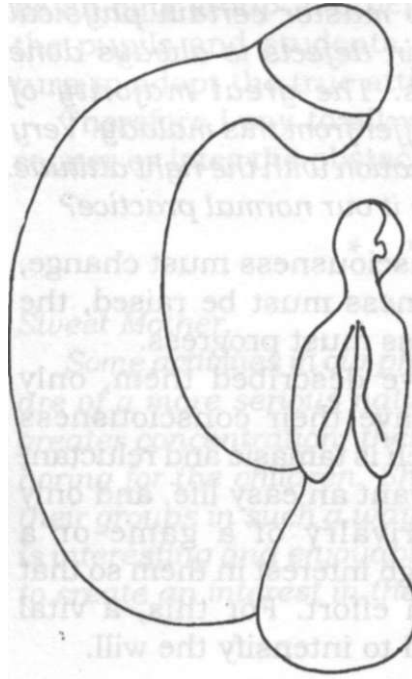
23 July 1960

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Note: Soon after answering my questions on separate sheets of paper, the Mother took them back for getting a small booklet published. The following two paragraphs were later added and printed on the cover of the booklet:

1. For God's sake can't you forget that you are a girl or a boy and try to become a human being?

2. Each idea (or system of ideas) is true in its own time and place. But if it tries to be exclusive or to persist after its time is over, then it ceases to be true.



## Questions and Answers

Sweet Mother,

*In the Physical Education Section, you have made all the necessary arrangements so that by physical training we may be able to develop our bodies in every possible way and thus become ready to participate in the great work of integral transformation.*

*We have been teaching games, sports and all sorts of physical activities for several years, but we find that most of our students cannot catch the fundamental spirit. They are usually distracted by amusement, excitement, impulsive moods and all kinds of likes and dislikes. As a result the discipline, the will, the determination, the hard work and the right attitude which ensure our progress are lacking on the whole. A football match or an exciting game arouses a lot of enthusiasm, but a conscientious and concentrated effort that will help us to master certain physical qualities and correct certain defects is always done without much eagerness. The great majority of students, big and small, suffer from this malady. Very few approach physical education with the right attitude. How can we learn to make it our normal practice?*

The contents of the consciousness must change, the level of the consciousness must be raised, the quality of the consciousness must progress.

Things are as you have described them, only because most children have their consciousness centred in the physical which is tamasic and reluctant to make any effort. They want an easy life, and only the excitement or the rivalry of a game or a competition awakens enough interest in them so that they consent to make an effort. For this, a vital passion has to be aroused to intensify the will.

The idea of progress belongs to the intelligent will which is active only in the very few who are in contact with their psychic being, and later on, in those who are mentally more developed and begin to understand the need to develop and control themselves.

I said that the remedy is to raise the consciousness to a higher level. But, naturally, one must start with the level of the consciousness of the captains and instructors themselves.

First of all, they should have a clear conception of what they want to obtain from those for whom they are responsible; and not only that, but they should also have realised in themselves the qualities they demand from others. Over and above these qualities, they should have developed in their character and action a great deal of patience, endurance, kindness, understanding and impartiality. They should have no likes or dislikes, no attractions or repulsions.

That is why the new group of captains must really be an elite group in order to set a good example to the pupils and students, if we want them in their turn to adopt the true attitude.

Therefore I say to all: set to work sincerely and sooner or later the obstacles will be overcome.

5 July 1961

\* \* \*

*Sweet Mother,*

*Some activities in our physical education programme are of a more serious nature than others and call for greater concentration; these activities tend to become boring for the children. Should the captains organise their groups in such a way that everything they teach is interesting and enjoyable, or should the children try to create an interest in themselves?*

Both are indispensable and, as far as possible, should always be present.

With a little imagination and inventive flexibility, the instructors should give charm and novelty to what they teach.

On their part, the children, by cultivating in themselves the will and inclination for progress, should create a constant interest in what they do.

In the meanwhile, the captains can partly entrust to the children the responsibility for organising their own exercises, using as far as possible whatever ingenious ideas may occur to them.

If the sense of collaboration and responsibility is awakened in the children, then they will take an interest in what they do and do it with pleasure.

21 July 1961

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*Sweet Mother,*

*We have a minute of concentration before and after group every day. What should we try to do during this concentration?*

Before, make an offering to the Divine of what you are going to do, so that it may be done in a spirit of consecration.

Afterwards, ask the Divine to increase the will for progress in us, so that we may become instruments that are more and more capable of serving Him.

You may also, before starting, offer yourselves to the Divine in silence.

And at the end, give thanks to the Divine in silence. I mean a movement of the heart without any words in the head.

24 July 1961

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Sweet Mother,

*Yesterday I read my last question and your reply to the children of our group (AI). It was our combatives day, and though most of the children usually don't enjoy doing it very much, yesterday they did it with great enthusiasm and zest.*

*Sweet Mother, I feel that there is this lack of interest because we captains cannot guide them in the true direction, and they don't even have the direct contact with You that we had before.*

*Mother, if you could give us something in writing from time to time, something we could try to do in group when we are together, that would push us forward. I think it would be good for the children and we also would learn to do our work better.*

*I am writing this because I wanted you to know the result. Today they will type it out and distribute it to the captains so that they can read it out to their groups.*

26 July 1961

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Sweet Mother,

*This evening we heard one of the tapes of your Wednesday class regarding the same physical education programme for boys and girls. It was for our captains' class. But as we were listening to your voice, a number of others came to attend. It is not often these days that we have the opportunity to listen to your voice, except sometimes during the meditation. And today we were very inspired, and we even felt your presence, just as before at the playground during your classes.*

*Some of us discussed the possibility of being able to listen regularly to tapes of your classes, at least once a week.*

*If you give me permission, Sweet Mother, I will take the initiative to arrange everything, and I am sure that many young boys and girls will come to attend and will profit from it*

*It is very good. The idea is good and you have my full approval.*

*With my love and blessings.*

30 July 1965

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Sweet Mother,

*How should we choose the kind of things that we ought or ought not to read? Is it good to do "light reading"—newspapers and magazines, for instance?*

Ordinary newspapers, magazines and books such as novels are meant for lazy-minded people who do not read in order to learn anything, but simply for amusement and relaxation. This is a pursuit for people who take life as it comes and are quite unconcerned about progress or a deeper understanding of things.

Some people read to find out what is going on in the world and is indicative of human progress; in addition to reading, they may go to the cinema and listen to the radio.

People who read in order to develop a good style ought to read a lot, and they should choose books of literary merit.

Some people read in order to learn. They should choose instructive books on the subject or subjects they are interested in: philosophy, science, art, etc.

And then there are the very few who want to understand life, its purpose and its goal. For them, Sri Aurobindo's books are the best reading of all. Blessings.

10 September 1969

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*Sweet Mother,*

*Some children ask me what is the best way of spending their holidays here.*

It is an excellent opportunity to do some interesting work, to learn something new or develop some weak point in their nature or their studies.

It is an excellent opportunity to choose some activity freely and thus discover the true capacities of their being.

Blessings.

1 November 1969

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*Sweet Mother,*

*Do you approve of students going to spend their holidays at home or elsewhere?*

Rather one could say that what the children do during their holidays shows what they are and how far they are capable of profiting from their stay here. Thus it is different for each one and the quality of his reactions indicates the quality of his character.

Truly speaking, only those who would rather stay here than do anything else, are ready to take full advantage of their education here and are capable of fully understanding the ideal they are taught.

Blessings.

2 November 1969

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*Sweet Mother,*

*Does this mean that those who go out are incapable of fully understanding the ideal they are taught, or are we unable to make them understand the ideal?*

I do not say that the teaching here is perfect and exactly what it should be. But it is certain that a number of students are very interested and understand very well that there is something here which is not to be found elsewhere.



So, it is those students who should remain here, and as we do not have enough room to accept all the applications, the choice would be easier.

Blessings.

3 November 1969

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*Sweet Mother,*

*Is it possible to teach the ideal to those who do not understand it, and how can it be taught to them? Are we, instructors and teachers, worthy of this formidable task?*

What we want to teach is not merely a mental ideal but a new conception of life and a realisation of consciousness. This realisation is new for everyone, and the only true way to teach others is to live according to this new consciousness oneself and allow oneself to be transformed by it. There is no better lesson than that of an example. To tell others, "Do not be selfish", is not much use, but if somebody is free from all selfishness, he becomes a wonderful example to others; and someone who sincerely aspires to act according to the Supreme Truth, creates a kind of contagion for those around him. So the first duty of those who are teachers or instructors is to give an example of the qualities they are teaching to others.

And if, among these teachers and instructors, some are not worthy of their position, because by their character they are giving a bad example, their first duty is to become worthy by changing their character and their behaviour; there is no other way.

Blessings.

4 November 1969

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*Sweet Mother,*

*What qualifications do you consider essential for an instructor or a teacher in the Ashram? Wouldn't it be better not to do this work if one feels incapable of doing it well? For then it is the children who suffer because of us, isn't it?*

Whatever imperfections the teachers and instructors here may have, they will always be better than those from outside. For all who are working here do so without remuneration and in the service of a higher cause. It is understood that each one, whatever his worth or capacity, can and must always progress to realise an ideal that is still much higher than the present realisation of humanity.

But if one is truly eager to do one's best, it is by doing the work that one progresses and learns to do it better and better.

Criticism is seldom useful. It discourages more than it helps. And all goodwill deserves encouragement, for with patience and endurance, there is no progress that cannot be made.

The main thing is to keep the certitude that whatever may have been accomplished, one can always do better if one wants to.

The ideal to attain is an unwavering equality of soul and conduct, an unflinching patience and, of course, the absence of any preference or desire.

It is obvious that for one who teaches, the essential condition for the proper fulfilment of his task is the absence of all egoism; and no human being is exempt from the necessity of this effort.

But, I repeat, this effort is easier to make here than anywhere else.

Blessings.

5 November 1969

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*Sweet Mother,*

*Should those who are strongly attracted by the pleasures of ordinary life, such as cinemas, restaurants, social life, etc., come to study in our school? For, as a rule, one feels that this is why most of our students go out during the holidays, and each time they come back they take quite a long time to re-adjust themselves here.*

Those who are strongly attached to ordinary life and its excitement should not come here, for they are out of their element and create disorder.

But it is difficult to know this before they come, for most of them are very young and their character is not yet well formed.

But as soon as they are caught by the frenzy of the world, it would be better, for themselves and for others, that they return to their parents and their habits.

Blessings.

14 November 1969

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*Sweet Mother,*

*There are a number of children here who are sent by their parents only for their education. This idea that they are only students and will go away from here after their studies, is already firmly fixed in their minds.*

*Once we know that these children have a clear idea of what they want to do is it not better to advise them officially to go and study elsewhere? Or because they have already been accepted, should we allow them to remain and finish their studies here?*

Unfortunately, there are many parents who send their children here not because they think that they will have a special education here but because the Ashram does not ask money for their studies and therefore the parents need to spend much less money here than elsewhere.

But the poor children are not responsible for this commercial bargaining and we must give them a chance to develop fully if they are capable of it. Thus we accept them if we see a possibility in them. It is only when they clearly show that they are unable to benefit from their education here that we are ready to let them go if they want to.

Blessings.

15 November 1969

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*Sweet Mother,*

*For the students who know that they will go away from here after their studies, isn't it necessary for them to go out from time to time in order to be able to adjust themselves later to ordinary life?*

There is no difficulty in adapting to ordinary life; it is a bondage to which one is subjected from birth, for all carry it in themselves by atavism, and even those who are born to be free have to struggle seriously and continually to get rid of this atavism in order to be truly free.

Blessings.

16 November 1969

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*Sweet Mother,*

*What do you expect of those students who are going to leave after their studies here? Surely there must be a great difference between them and ordinary people. What is the difference?*

Often, as soon as they find themselves in the midst of ordinary life, many of them realise the difference and regret what they have lost. Few of them have the courage to give up the comforts they find in their ordinary surroundings, but even the others no longer face life with the same unconsciousness as those who have never been in contact with the Ashram.

The work we are doing is not done with the expectation of something in return, but simply to help the progress of humanity.

Blessings.

18 November 1969

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*Sweet Mother,*

*How far do you consider it the duty of a teacher or an instructor to impose discipline on the students?*

To prevent the students from being irregular, unmannerly or negligent is obviously indispensable; unkind and harmful mischief cannot be tolerated.

But in general and as an absolute rule, the teachers and especially the physical education instructors must be a constant living example of the qualities demanded from the students; discipline, regularity, good manners, courage, endurance, patience in effort, are taught much more by example than by words. And as an absolute rule: never do in front of a child what you forbid him to do.

For the rest, each case implies its own solution, and one must act with tact and discernment.

That is why to be a teacher or an instructor is the best of all disciplines, if one knows how to comply with it.

Blessings.

20 November 1969

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A child ought to stop being naughty because he learns to be ashamed of being naughty, not because he is afraid of punishment.\*

In the first case, he makes real progress.

In the second, he falls down a step in human consciousness, for fear is a degradation of consciousness.

\* The Mother commented orally: This is the first step. When he has come this far, he can then make further progress and learn the joy of being good."

21 November 1969

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*Sweet Mother,*

*Do the responsibilities of a teacher or an instructor cease after his working hours in the school or the playground?*

I am asking this because our children usually behave very badly in the streets. They walk where they like, they chat in the middle of the road, and the most difficult problem is when they ride their bicycles without lights or brakes, or double (In Pondicherry the traffic rules at that time did not permit double riding on cycles). None of us bother about all this because it is outside our working hours.

And as nothing is being done to stop this, indifference to the law has become so widespread that one even sees responsible people disregarding these laws.

The best remedy for this sorry state of affairs would be, when all the children are assembled (probably at the playground), to give them a short lesson on how to behave in the street—what one may do and what one should not do. Someone who knows how to speak to them and tell them this in an interesting way, and if possible even an amusing way, could surely obtain a result. Blessings.

21 November 1969

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*Sweet Mother,*

*Does this mean that once we have explained properly to the children how to behave in the street, we no longer have any responsibility for what they do outside our working hours?*

It is difficult to interfere in an incident one has not witnessed. Gossip is always suspect. But if one of the instructors personally witnesses the bad behaviour of one of his students, his intervention becomes appropriate, provided, of course, that his relation with the student is friendly and affectionate.

Blessings.

22 November 1969

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*Sweet Mother,*

*Don't you think that as a part of our education children should be taught to do some disinterested work for the Ashram, at least once a week?*

It is always good to do some disinterested work. But it becomes much better if this work becomes enjoyable and not a boring task.  
Blessings.

26 November 1969

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Sweet Mother,

*Every year we give a special prize to the best students of groups A1 and A2 . This year there is a boy Ashok Manvi (A2) who has worked very well throughout the year, but now he has gone home for the holidays and hasn't taken part in the Demonstration of 2nd December. Do you think he should still be given the prize for this year?*

*The others who are receiving the prize are:*

*Kanu Mistry (A1)*

*Ajit Kothari (A1)*

*Aditi Dhandhanian (A2)*

All depends on how he left: whether it was to obey his parents or whether he wanted to go himself. If he wanted to leave, whatever his outer merit, it would perhaps be better not to give him the prize, because that would mean that we attach no importance to the inner attitude and to the student's understanding of the aim we pursue—to prepare the men of tomorrow for the new creation.

Blessings.

9 December 1969

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Sweet Mother, '

*Is it good to give prizes to the children or reward them in order to make them work or to create some sort of interest?*

It is obviously better for the children to study in order to develop their consciousness and learn a little of all they do not know; but to give prizes to those who have been particularly studious, disciplined and attentive, is not bad.

Blessings.

17 December 1969

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Sweet Mother,

*Don't you think that to become a teacher or an instructor here, especially of the little ones, it is necessary to have lived in the Ashram for a certain length of time?*

It is a certain attitude of consciousness that is necessary—and unfortunately, living even several years in the Ashram does not always lead to this right attitude.

Truly speaking, teachers should be taken on trial to see if they can acquire this right attitude and adapt themselves to the needs of their task. Blessings .

18 December 1969

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Sweet Mother,

*What do you mean by "a certain attitude of consciousness?"*

The attitude of consciousness which is required is an inner certitude that, in comparison with all that has to be known, one knows nothing, and that at every moment one must be ready to learn in order to be able to teach. This is the first indispensable point.

There is a second one. It is that outer life, as we know it, is more or less a false appearance and that we must constantly keep a living aspiration for the Truth.

Blessings.

19 December 1969

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Sweet Mother,

*What is the role of parents or guardians in the Ashram? How should they contribute to a better education of their children?*

Here, the first duty of the parents or guardians is not to contradict either by word or example the education that is given to their children.

In a positive way, the best thing they can do is to encourage the children to be willing and disciplined.

Blessings.

24 December 1969

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Sweet Mother,

*What is your opinion about fashion, dress and ornaments?*

*What do you consider to be in good taste in our Ashram life?*

Thank God, I have no opinions.

For me good taste means to be simple and sincere.

Blessings.

4 January 1970

\* \* \*

Sweet Mother,

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

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

Love and blessings.

16 June 1971

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Physical culture is the best way of developing the consciousness of the body, and the more the body is conscious, the more it is capable of receiving the divine forces that are at work to transform it and give birth to the new race.

15 December 1971

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Give us faith in a glorious future and the capacity to realise it.

30 December 1971

Lord, Supreme Truth, We aspire to know You and to serve You. Help us to become children worthy of You.

30 December 1971

\* \* \*

And for this, make us conscious of Your constant blessings, so that gratitude may fill our hearts and govern our lives.

2 January 1972

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*Sweet Mother,*

*How can we teach the children to organise the freedom that you give us here?*

Children have everything to learn. This should be their main preoccupation in order to prepare themselves for a useful and productive life.

At the same time, as they grow up, they should discover in themselves the thing or things that interest them most and that they are capable of doing well. There are latent capacities to be developed. There are also capacities to be discovered.

Children should be taught to enjoy overcoming difficulties and also that this gives a special value to life; when one knows how to do it, it destroys boredom for ever and gives a completely new interest to life.

We are on earth to progress and we have everything to learn.

14 January 1971

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*Sweet Mother,*

*Yesterday you wrote: "There are latent capacities to be developed. There are also capacities to be discovered."*

*What is the role of the teacher or the instructor in the discovery of these capacities?*

The teacher should not be a book that is read aloud, the same for everyone, no matter what his nature and character. The first duty of the teacher is to help the student to know himself and to discover what he is capable of doing.

For that one must observe his games, the activities he is drawn to naturally and spontaneously and also what he likes to learn, whether his intelligence is awake, the

stories he enjoys, the activities that interest him, the human achievements that attract him.

The teacher must find out the category to which each of the children in his care belongs. And if he discovers, after careful observation, two or three exceptional children who are eager to learn and love to progress, he should help them to make use of their energies for this purpose by giving them the freedom of choice that encourages individual growth.

The old method of the seated class to which the teacher gives the same lesson for all, is certainly economical and easy, but also very ineffective, and so time is wasted for everybody.

15 January 1972

\* \* \*

*Sweet Mother,*

*You have written: "If after careful observation, he (the teacher) discovers two or three exceptional children who are eager to learn and love to progress, he should help them to make use of their energies for this purpose by giving them the freedom of choice that encourages individual growth."*

*Do you mean that freedom of choice should be given only to exceptional children? What about the others?*

I said we should give freedom of choice to exceptional children because for them it is absolutely indispensable if we truly want to help them to develop fully.

Of course this freedom of choice can be given to all the children, and after all it is a good way to find their true nature; but most of them will prove to be lazy and not very interested in studies. But, on the other hand, they may be skilful with their hands and willingly learn to make things. This should also be encouraged. In this way the children will find their true place in society, and will be ready to fulfil it when they grow up.

Everyone should be taught the joy of doing well whatever he does, whether it is intellectual, artistic or manual work and, above all, the dignity of any work, whatever it may be, when it is done with care and skill.

16 January 1972

\* \* \*

*Sweet Mother,*

*For the exceptional children, do you think that we should turn their energies towards their special talent or is it better to direct them towards an overall development?*

It depends entirely on the child and his capacities.

18 January 1972

\* \* \*



Sweet Mother,

Once I asked you whether, in our programme of education, we should teach the children to do some disinterested work for the Ashram, at least once a week. And you answered:

"It is always good to do some disinterested work. But it becomes much better if this work becomes enjoyable and not a boring task."

Could you suggest how we could introduce this into our programme?

If the children were able to see the different kinds of work they can do, the inclination to do one thing or another would awaken in them and it would become as enjoyable as a game for them, if they are really intelligent.

18 January 1972

\* \* \*

Sweet Mother,

When you said that we should observe the games of the children, what age did you have in mind?

It depends entirely on the child. Some are already awake at the age of seven, some take longer.

What is important is to give the children the opportunity to see and judge for themselves.

Mother, from seven to what age?

To the above oral question, the Mother replied: One could say about eighteen. It depends on the case. Some children are fully developed at the age of fourteen or fifteen. It is different for each one. It depends on the case.

18 January 1972

\* \* \*

Sweet Mother,

You have written: "The teacher must find out the category to which each of the children in his care belongs."

How can we distinguish the categories of children? By watching them live.

To be able to classify the children one must come to know their character by observing their habits and reactions.

The teacher must not be a machine for reciting lessons, he must be a psychologist and an observer.

19 January 1972

\* \* \*

Sweet Mother,

Should we group the children of each category together?

That has both advantages and disadvantages. The grouping of students should be made according to the resources at our disposal and the facilities we have. The arrangement should be flexible so that it can be improved upon if necessary.

To be a good teacher one must have the insight and knowledge of a Guru with unfailing patience.

19 January 1972

\* \* \*

*Sweet Mother,*

*You have said: "The first duty of the teacher is to help the student to know himself "*

*How can we help a student to know himself? For that, isn't it necessary for us to have attained a higher level of consciousness ourselves?*

Oral Comment: Ok yes, certainly!

The attitude of the teacher must be one of a constant will to progress, not only in order to know ever better what he wants to teach the students, but above all to be a living example to show them what they can become.

(After five minutes of meditation She wrote again) The teacher must be a living example of what he asks the students to become.

*Sweet Mother,*

*Is this the only way of teaching the students to know themselves?*

*The Mother commented:* It is the only right way. You see, if a teacher tells them, "You must not lie" and then he lies himself or "You must not lose your temper" and then loses it himself, what will the result be? The children will not only lose confidence in the teacher but also in what he teaches.

*Mother, ;*

*Every day I type out what you write, and Promesse takes it to the School to show it to the other teachers, and they like it very much. And now some teachers are giving me questions to ask you.*

*The Mother laughed and said: Good ! It is very good !*

19 January 1972

\* \* \*

*Sweet Mother,*

*When we try to organise the children into categories based on their capacity for initiative, we see that there is a mixture of levels of academic achievement in various subjects. That makes the work very difficult for certain teachers who are in the habit of taking ordinary classes in the old conventional way.*

We are here to do difficult things. If we repeat what others do, it is not worth the trouble; there are already many schools in the world.

Men have tried to cure the ignorance of the masses by adopting the easiest methods. But now we have passed that stage and humanity is ready to learn better and more fully. It is up to those who are in the lead to show the way so that others can follow.

21 January 1972

*Sweet Mother,*

*How do you envisage the organisation of our education, so that the children may discover their capacities and then follow the path of their individual development?*

Oral Comment: This is what we are trying to do here. It depends on the teacher. I do not have a theory one could put down on paper.

This is what we are trying to do here. But doing it well depends on the teacher, on the trouble he takes, and on his power of psychological understanding. He must be capable of recognising the character and possibilities of the student, so that he can adapt his teaching to the needs of each one.

22 January 1972

\* \* \*

*Sweet Mother,*

*Should the teachers be classified by the subject they teach? Is that the best way?*

Classification by subject is important when one wants to study one or several subjects in depth, once an overall grounding that is useful for everyone has already been provided equally to all: for example, reading and writing, speaking at least one language correctly, a little general geography, a general outline of modern science and a few indispensable rules of conduct for group or communal living.

For a detailed and thorough study of one subject the appropriate age depends on the child and his capacity to learn.

The precocious ones can start at the age of twelve. For most it will be more like fifteen and even seventeen or eighteen.

And when one wants to master a particular subject, especially a scientific or philosophical subject, one must be ready to spend one's whole life learning; one must never stop studying.

22 January 1972

\* \* \*

*Sweet Mother,*

*I come back to the same question What do you mean exactly by "categories of children"? Do these categories correspond only to their character or also to their interests?*

The categories of character.

In assessing the possibilities of a child, ordinary moral notions are not of much use. Natures that are rebellious, undisciplined, obstinate, often conceal qualities that no one has understood how to use. Indolent natures may also have a great potential for calm and patience.

It is a whole world to discover and easy solutions are not of much use. The teacher must be even more hard-working than the student in order to learn how to distinguish and make the best use of different characters.

23 January 1972

\* \* \*

*Sweet Mother,*

*Yesterday you mentioned rules of conduct. What rules of conduct do you consider indispensable in our community?*

Patience, perseverance, generosity, broad-mindedness, insight, calm and understanding firmness, and control over the ego until it is completely mastered or even abolished.

Mother, this is not exactly what I wanted to ask. What I understood by "rules of conduct" was "etiquette" or "manners".

Etiquettes belong to the moral rules of ordinary life and have no value from our point of view.

23 January 1972

\* \* \*

*Sweet Mother,*

*You have spoken of arranging students according to categories of character. In our present state of ignorance, if we try to impose a classification, will it not be something very arbitrary and even a dangerous game for the growing child?*

Naturally, it is better not to take arbitrary and ignorant decisions. It would be disastrous for the children.

What I have said is for those who are capable of recognising characters and assessing them properly, otherwise the result would be awful and more harmful than the usual mechanical teaching.

24 January 1972

\* \* \*

*Sweet Mother,*

*To be able to do what You have asked of us, isn't it the teacher's first duty to do an intense and sincere yoga instead of acting in a hasty and arbitrary manner?*

Certainly! *Said the Mother* and wrote:

What I have written is an ideal to be realised; you must prepare yourselves to be able to do it.

To be able to adopt this method, the teacher must be a perceptive psychologist and that requires time and experience.

24 January 1972

\* \* \*

*Sweet Mother,*

*You have said that the teacher must be a perceptive psychologist, a Guru. You know very well that we are far from being that. The teachers being what they are, how should the system of education be organised in order to improve our way of teaching?*

By doing what they can, knowing that they have everything to learn. In this way they will gain experience and do things better and better. That is the best way to learn, and if they do it in all sincerity, in two or three years they will become experts and will be truly useful.

Naturally, work done in this way becomes really interesting and makes the teachers as well as the students progress.

25 January 1972

\* \* \*

*Sweet Mother,*

*Should we also have categories for the teachers as we do for the children— according to their way of teaching, of seeing things, and their affinity for certain subjects?*

For that, the teacher who organises the studies must be a perceptive psychologist, observant and full of goodwill, knowing that he too has to learn and progress.

The true attitude is to take life as a field of perpetual study, where one must never stop learning and think that one knows everything there is to know. One can always know more and understand better.

25 January 1972

\* \* \*

*Sweet Mother,*

*If the children want to do practical work from the age of nine in the field of electronics or technology, should they be encouraged?*

Yes, of course.

25 January 1972

\* \* \*

*Sweet Mother,*

*In this method of work, the teacher must devote sufficient time to each one individually. But the teachers are few in number. How can we respect the needs of each one as fully as possible and at the same time satisfy all those who ask for help?*

One cannot make a theory. It depends on each case, on the possibilities and circumstances. What the teacher must have is an attitude that he must apply as well as he can, and better and better if possible .

26 January 1972

\* \* \*

*Sweet Mother,*

*You said the other day that there were teachers who were not capable, and that they should stop teaching. What is the criterion for assessing the capacity of a teacher?*

The Mother answered orally: First, he must understand, he must know what we want to do and understand well how to do it.

Secondly, he must have a power of psychological discernment in dealing with the students, he must understand his students and what they are capable of doing.

Naturally, he must know the subject he is teaching. If he is teaching French, he must know French. If he is teaching English, Geography, Science, he must know what he is teaching.

But the most important thing is that he must have psychological discernment ...

31 January 1972

\* \* \*

*Sweet Mother,*

*Nowadays in schools elsewhere, especially in the West, much importance is given to "sex-education".*

*The Mother said: What is "sex-education"? What do they teach?*

Myself, I don't like people to be preoccupied with these things. In my time we were never preoccupied with these things. Now the children talk about them all the time - it is in their minds, it is in their feelings. It is disgusting. It is difficult, very difficult.

But if they talk about it elsewhere, we have to talk about it here too. We should tell them the consequences of these things. Especially the girls should be told that the consequences can be disastrous. When I was young, we never spoke about all that, we never paid attention to those things. In those days, we didn't talk about all that. Here, I did not want this subject to be discussed. But if everyone outside is talking about it, we also have to talk about it here.

This is why we do physical culture. In this way the energies are used to develop strength, beauty, skill and all that; and one is more capable of control. You will see, those who do a lot of physical culture are much more capable of controlling their impulses.

(After meditation) The energies that human beings use for reproduction, which take such a predominant place in their lives, should instead be sublimated and used for progress and higher development, to prepare the advent of the new race. But first the vital and the physical must be freed from all desire; otherwise there is a great risk of disaster.

1 February 1972

\* \* \*

*Sweet Mother,*

*What is the essential difference between the behaviour and responsibility of a teacher towards young children and towards older students (over fourteen or fifteen, for instance)?*

Naturally, as the consciousness and intelligence develop in the children, it is more and more through them that we have to deal with the children.

3 February 1972

*Sweet Mother,*

*Should one punish a child?*

The Mother said: Punish? What do you mean by punish? if a child is noisy in class and prevents the others from working, you must tell him to behave himself; and if he continues, you can send him out of the class. That is not a punishment, it is a natural consequence of his actions. But to punish! To punish! You have no right to punish. Are you the Divine? Who has given you the right to punish? The children can also punish you for your actions. Are you perfect yourselves? Do you know what is good or what is bad? Only the Divine knows. Only the Divine has the right to punish.

She wrote: The vibrations you put forth put you in contact with corresponding vibrations. If you put forth harmful and destructive vibrations, quite naturally you draw similar vibrations towards yourself, and that is the real punishment, if you want to use the word; but it does not correspond at all to the divine organisation of the world.

Every action has its consequences, good or bad, but the idea of reward and punishment is a purely human idea and does not at all correspond to the way the Truth-Consciousness acts. If the Consciousness that rules the world acted according to human principles of punishment and reward, there would have been no men left on earth for a long time.

When men become pure enough to transmit the divine vibrations without distorting them, then suffering will be abolished from the world. That is the only way.

*3 February 1972*

\* \* \*

*The Mother told me:* Some teachers have written to me that they have read what I wrote for you and that it had done them a lot of good. So you can continue showing them.

*This prayer Mother?*

Yes, if you type this out on a piece of paper:

"We want to be true servitors of the Divine."

And then the prayer:

"Supreme Lord, Perfect Consciousness, You alone know truly what we are, what we can do, what progress we must make to be capable and worthy of serving You as we would. Make us conscious of our possibilities, but also of our difficulties, so that we may overcome them in order to serve You faithfully."

And then this, the conclusion:

"The supreme happiness is to be true servitors of the Divine."

There are people whom it helps. Did you show them your notebook?

*I don't show this (meditation) notebook to everyone. I type out the questions on education from the other notebook and give them to the school. But I don't show this notebook to everybody.*

No, this one is for you. But you can copy things like this which are for everybody. You can show it to all those who have goodwill. I have received several letters telling me that it had done them a lot of good. So you can continue.

*Yes, Mother, I don't show this (Meditation) notebook to anyone because I thought that you wanted to use it immediately for the Bulletin.*

Not all of it. For example, I wouldn't put this in the Bulletin.

14 February 1972

\* \* \*

*Sweet Mother,*

*Concerning the categories you have mentioned for the school, should there also be similar categories for physical education?*

For physical exercises, it all depends on the body and its capacities. Easy exercises that are not tiring can be given to everyone.

Afterwards, it all depends on the body, on its strength, its health, its resistance to fatigue, and so on.

Exercises should be given according to capacity and the children should be grouped according to these capacities. It is a matter of experience and observation.

To be a good teacher of physical culture one must know anatomy, the various functions of the body, their development and their functioning.

16 February 1972

\* \* \*

*Sweet Mother,*

*Could you write something on discipline for us?*

Discipline is indispensable to physical life. The proper functioning of the organs is based on discipline. It is precisely when an organ or a part of the body does not obey the general discipline of the body that one falls ill.

Discipline is indispensable to progress.

It is only when one imposes a rigorous and enlightened discipline on oneself that one can be free from the discipline of others.

The supreme discipline is integral surrender to the Divine and to allow nothing else either in one's feelings or one's activities. Nothing should be omitted from this surrender. It is the supreme rigorous discipline.

17 February 1972

\* \* \*

*Sweet Mother,*

*Yesterday You wrote on discipline. But what attitude should we take towards the imposed discipline to which we must conform in communal life?*

Communal life must necessarily have a discipline so that the weaker are not bullied by the stronger; and this discipline must be respected by all those who want to live in that community.

But for the community to be happy, this discipline should be set by the most broad-minded person or persons, if possible the person or persons who are conscious of the Divine Presence and are surrendered to it.

For the world to be happy, power should only be in the hands of those who are conscious of the Divine Will. But for the time being this is impossible because the



number of those who are truly conscious of the Divine Will is very small, and because they necessarily have no ambition.

To tell the truth, when the time comes for this realisation, it will take place quite naturally.

The duty of each one is to prepare himself for it as completely as he can.

18 February 1972

\* \* \*

*Mother,*

*Some people criticise the fact that we have too many rules in our physical education and that we impose too much discipline on the children.*

There can be no physical education without discipline. The body itself could not function without a strict discipline. Actually, the failure to recognise this fact is the principal cause of illness.

*She added orally:* Digestion, growth., circulation of the blood, everything, everything is a discipline. Thoughts, movements, gestures, everything is a discipline, and if there is no discipline people immediately fall ill.

18 February 1972

\* \* \*

*Sweet Mother,*

*The students, especially the adolescents, often complain that they have to do even the physical exercises that they don't like or do not find interesting. Would you reply to this, Mother?*

We are not on earth to follow our own sweet will but to progress.

Physical exercises are not done for fun or to satisfy one's whims, but as a methodical discipline to develop and strengthen the body.

The true wisdom is to take pleasure in everything one does and this is possible if one takes everything one does as a way to progress. Perfection is difficult to attain and there is always a great deal of progress to be made in order to achieve it.

To seek pleasure is certainly the best way to make yourself miserable.

If you truly want peace and happiness, your constant preoccupation should be:

"What progress must I make in order to be able to know and serve the Divine?"

*The Mother then added:* Show this to C. She should not have listened to what the children say. She has been here a long time. She should know this.

That "To seek pleasure is certainly the best way to make yourself miserable" is an absolute truth. It states that if you want to satisfy your little ego, you are sure to be unhappy. For sure ! It is the best way to make yourself miserable. To say: "Oh, that bores me; oh, I must do what I like; oh, that person isn't nice to me; oh, life isn't giving me what I want. Oh!"

"Am I what I should be?"

"Am I doing what I should be doing?"

"Am I progressing as much as I should?"

That becomes interesting! Yes!

"What must I learn to make fresh progress? What weakness do I have to cure? What shortcoming do I have to overcome? What weakness do I have to get rid of?"

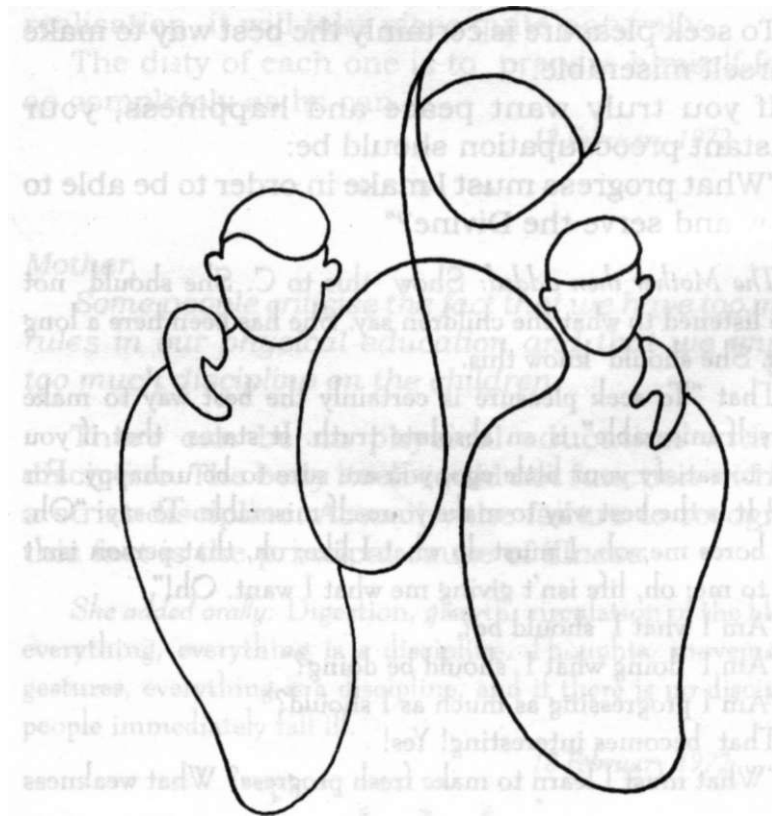
And then naturally, at once comes: "How can I have written it down specially so that you can show it to C.

*Yes, Mother, she knows, but she wanted to know how to explain it to the children.*

The Mother said: Yes, that is all there is to say.

19 February 1972

\* \* \*



## Student Admissions

*In January 1972 I spoke with the Mother about the admission policy of our Ashram school. Because the subject is very specific, I am putting the conversations here instead of in Part 2, which deals with general questions about education. The first two conversations were recorded by me in my notebooks and then seen by the Mother. The third text (January 28) is a note written by the Mother. The final long conversation on January 29th was tape-recorded; some of my remarks have been abridged, but the Mother's comments are complete.*

26 January 1972

**Tara:** Sweet Mother,

*I had something to ask you, but I did not put it in the form of a question.*

*To try out the new methods you speak of, we must have a limited number of students for each teacher. We cannot do it with a large number, can we?*

*And then there is the question of the New Group which I wanted to put before you. I feel that psychologically it is not fair for the children of the same school to have different treatment for physical education. Some have beautiful grounds to play on, enough captains and a good organisation. They have buses to go to the sportsground, while the others have to go on foot and they don't have enough grounds and Captains and so on.*

*Isn't there a solution to this?*

*The Mother:* The solution is not to take any more children. But I don't know — there is pressure from both sides. There are the parents who insist that we take their children. Naturally, if we could tell everybody that we will no longer take anyone, without exception, then it would be possible.

**Tara:** *But, Mother, when we make exceptions they say that you wanted them.*

*The Mother:* Well!!!

*The Mother (after a pause):* To try the new methods, there is only one solution: it is not to take any more children until we have absorbed those who are already there. if you like, I can write this in your book.

*The Mother writes:* From December 1972 and for an indefinite period, no new student of any age will be admitted to the Ashram's Centre of Education (School and Waiting School). It is understood that we will not, under any circumstances, accept students in the middle of the year, that is to say, from 16 December 1971 to 16 December 1972.

I have asked Tara to show what I have just written.

**Tara:** *Mother, you just told me that to try the new methods, this was the only solution. Wouldn't it be good if you wrote this down too.*

*The Mother:* Ok no! We must do this even without trying the new methods. Otherwise, people will say that we should take children without trying the new methods.

You should type out what I have just said and I

When Kireet has recovered, it is best that you show him your

notebook, so that he can read it in the notebook itself.

\* \* \*

27 January 1972

**Tara:** *Sweet Mother,*

*I have heard that if we accept the Government Grant, we have to take at least a hundred new students each year. Is this true?*

*The Mother:* I receive money for the teachers. It has nothing to do with that. if we take a hundred new students, a hundred have to go. I am hearing this for the first time. I am the one who receives the money from the Government to pay the teachers. I don't know.

**Tara:** *Mother, besides the money we receive for the teachers, there is the money we get for the school.*

*The Mother:* I don't know about it. Do you have a question?

**Tara:** *I wanted to know, Mother, whether we should have only a limited number of children, considering the facilities we have at school and the playground.*

*The Mother:* Did you write down everything I said?

**Tara:** *I tried, mother, but I am not sure.*

*The Mother:* Give me your notebook, I will write it.

*The Mother writes:* Naturally, the school can take only a limited number of students because the space we have available is limited and we cannot increase the number of classes. Therefore, according to the number of students who leave the school at the end of the school-year, we have to determine the number of students who can be taken the following year. And all the students who are already waiting in Sailen's Waiting School must be taken before the newcomers. This is what I wanted to say.

I do not know the number of students who are in the school, nor the number who leave each year, nor the number who are waiting with Sailen, so I cannot say anything definite.

It would be very useful if these figures were given to me regularly; then I would have an accurate idea of our possibilities and would be able to determine the best way to organise things with maximum efficiency.

Blessings.

*The Mother:* So, if you bring me these figures, you will do me a favour.

\* \* \*

28 January 1972

*The Mother writes:* It is impossible for me to determine the number of students we can take in the School and the playground, because I don't know the possibilities and I don't want to decide anything arbitrarily. With the space we have

available and the possibilities at our disposal, I want to know the number of students that can comfortably be taken and then we can decide. I must know the facts as they are.

\* \* \*

**(Tape recorded)**

*(This conversation begins after the Mother has listened to statistics indicating the number of students in the different sections of the school.)*

29 January 1972

*The Mother:* I saw Tanmaya today. He told me that he no longer has anything to do, that he no longer has any classes because they have taken in too many students, and that it is impossible, it is impossible to continue this way. Then I told him to tell me himself how many children he thinks can be taken in his class. Is he here?

*Tara:* Yes, Mother, he is here.

*The Mother:* We shall see.

\* \* \*

*Tara:* Chitra does not have a room for her class. After 8:45 when the music classes are over, she has that room for her class, but until 8:45 she does not have a room.

*The Mother:* So what does she do?

*Tara:* She takes her class anywhere, on the verandah or in the courtyard till 8:45.

*The Mother:* That isn't suitable.

\* \* \*

*The Mother:* Tanmaya was telling me that they were forced to increase the number of teachers considerably, and some of them were absolutely unfit to teach. He said that they should stop teaching, that they will have to. I asked him to give me all that in writing.

\* \* \*

*Tara:* Mother, Kireet Joshi wanted me to tell you that we could take a larger number of students in the Forward towards Perfection classes, if there was a better distribution of rooms.

*The Mother:* We must come to an agreement.

\* \* \*

Tara: *We have 1021 members in physical education.*

The Mother: *Ok, that's terrible!*

Tara: *There are 180 children in the school who are not in any group.*

The Mother: *So they are nowhere?*

Tara: *They are in the school's New Group, but they don't have physical education. They have some sort of recreation to keep them busy in the late afternoon, but no physical education.*

The Mother: *They don't go to the playground for physical education. When they come here they simply continue in another group.*

Tara: *Yes, Mother, but as soon as they reach a certain age, they are being pushed into another group, and in groups E, F, G and H we have no number limit. In groups E and F, that is to say, those who are over twenty-one, they do individual activities, they have a choice; so there there is no limit, we can take any number. And Mother, each year we are taking approximately fifty new students into the school.*

The Mother: *We can continue like that.*

Tara: *Yes, Mother, we have to continue, but we also have to stop taking new students in the school; and to be able to take those who are....*

The Mother: *Who are already there, we must not take any new ones.*

Tara: *Yes, Mother, but there are already 180 who are waiting to enter the group, and that is the problem. So either the school has to reduce its number by 180 or physical education has to increase its number. But there has to be a limit. We cannot increase 180 in physical education; it is impossible. But if you give a limit that you think is right we can try to compromise.*

Pranab: *I won't go for a compromise.*

Tara: *Pranab says he will not compromise.*

The Mother: *Who?*

Tara: *Pranab, Mother.*

Pranab: *If I compromise, Mother, it will disturb my programme.*

The Mother: *Yes.*

Pranab: *What is best is that they do not take any more new people and slowly if will be absorbed in three, four, five years' time.*

The Mother: *I see that there is only one way: it is to take nobody new until....*

Pranab: *The number becomes normal.*

The Mother: *Yes, I'm sure it is the only right solution*

Pranab: *Yes, Mother.*

*The Mother:* And we should.... well, I would like to see Tanmaya again, and I will see with him what he can do. And then I would like to see Kireet and tell him that it is like this and it should be like this, and then.... because I know very well that he wanted to increase rather than decrease the number. But I haven't seen him for a long time, he was sick. Is he all right now?

*Tara:* *He is coming tomorrow, Mother.*

*The Mother:* He is coming tomorrow. Then you leave your notepad, the one in which you have written all this. I would like to see it with him and tell him that I don't want to take students in the school until it is stabilised: the number has to be stabilised. And it is only when enough students have reached the age when they can go freely that we will be able to take new ones again.

*Tara:* *Mother, there may be another problem if we don't take new students for some years till the number is stabilised: there won't be a Kindergarten any more.*

*The Mother:* But in the Kindergarten we take children, don't we?

*Tara:* *But as soon as you take them in the Kindergarten, the number will continue to increase here, Mother.*

*The Mother:* How many go from the Kindergarten to the school every year?

*Tara:* *I am not sure, Mother, but I think that according to the figures it must be twenty or twenty-five.*

*The Mother:* And how many leave the school every year?

*Tara:* *Kireet told me that it might be about fifty in 1972.*

*The Mother:* Fifty! And then, you say the children here are ...

*Tara:* *From twenty to twenty-five, Mother.*

*The Mother:* Well then, that's enough. That means twenty-five fewer every year.

*Tara:* *Yes, Mother, so that means you will take new students only in Kindergarten.*

*The Mother:* Only in Kindergarten. And I will not take everybody. I will take mainly the children from here, the Ashram children. We will not even take twenty-five every year, if I take only those from the Ashram, there won't be twenty-five children every year; like that the number of children won't increase. In Auroville they have their education and that doesn't concern us, but here there are not twenty-five children every year. Not so many. It will end quickly, you see. If I say that I am taking only Ashram children, we will soon stop increasing the number.

*Tara:* *There are families who are coming to live here.*

*The Mother:* Not so many. Two, three, four maybe. But I will see. If the decision is taken, I will see that we don't take people with small children. And I will tell the big ones, "I am sorry, but there is no school." No, you see, with the playground, I feel supported because I know that Pranak feels the same way. So for me it is very easy: I say "no" and then "no", and there you are! For the school, I must convince Kireet to take only the children coming from below, those who are already with us. Not to take new ones. That is the only way — but I must have the papers.

Tara: *Yes, Mother, I am leaving the papers for you. There is one statistic per subject.*

*The Mother:* This is very interesting, it is very interesting, ok it is very interesting. Like this I can arrange things. Now this year should continue as it is because it has already started, hasn't it? We cannot send students away now, so it will continue. But for these few months till the end of the school year, it will in any case be necessary to arrange everything, to begin the thing really as it should be at the end of the year, next December. So we will warn those who say, "I want to put my children...." and all that, and we will send a letter to everybody saying that because we have no space we can take no more than a certain number of students and it is impossible to take any new ones. There! We will prepare a letter to send to those who ask for the next year. There! Like that it is all right. There is no other way. It becomes a mess. Now I have to see Kireet to find out what he has to tell me. It is not that I am going to change my opinion, not at all, because that is impossible. I know that this is the only way to ...

(Note: Here there is a big gap as one side of the tape was over and I realised it a bit late.)

\* \* \*

*The Mother:* There are not enough English teachers?

Tara: *Only for the Higher Course. And also for geography and history.*

*The Mother:* I know they don't have enough. Ok, History is not so important. Geography is quite necessary.

Tara: *For the whole school there are only three geography teachers.*

*The Mother:* Tkree! {Laughter} Geography, one should be able to teach geography with maps. We don't have maps? We don't have what we need?

Tara: Yes, Mother, I think we have everything. We are well equipped in the school.

*The Mother:* Only we need people who will give their time. How many geography teachers do we need?

Tara: *I don't know, Mother. There are two hundred students.*

*The Mother:* It depends on the age of the children.

Tara: *And also on how many hours each teacher will give.*

*The Mother:* One teacher can take forty students if he is intelligent. That means six teachers would be enough, six geography teachers. But we need.... all that, good, we'll have to arrange that for the end of the year, for the beginning of the next school-year. We have time to prepare and anticipate.

Only the problem of the playground remains.

Tara: *Mother, if the number decreases by twenty-five each year, the problem will be solved by the end of six or seven years.*



*The Mother (laughing):* Six or seven years!

Tara: *Maybe less, now that we no longer give certificates.*

*The Mother:* Yes, that is the only way, there is no other way. We can't send away those who are already here. That is the only way. We will see, tomorrow we will see what Kireet will say.

It is only this story that you told me, but it was the first time I heard it. We have made promises to the Government? I don't think so. I never promised anything.

Tara: *No, Mother, I asked Kireet and he told me it wasn't true.*

*The Mother:* Ah, then it is all right. Then it is very simple. It is like this, it will be like this, and.... Or else, they will have to tell me not to interfere in anything any more. But if I continue to decide, it is decided. And when I have an idea in my head, it doesn't budge. There!

Tara: *In 1960, Sweet Mother, you had said at the playground, that when you look into the affairs of the school, you will upset everything.*

*The Mother:* if they want me to look into things, it will be like that. There! It is good, it is very good. You have done some good work. It is very useful. This (tapping the papers), you have worked well. It is all right. Good bye my child.

Tara: *Good bye, Sweet Mother.*

*The Mother:* It is very good, you have helped a lot.

29 January 1972

\* \* \*

*The Mother made an oral comment as well:* I have told Tanmaya, I have found a project to get going the students that are here. I told him - all those students who want to learn to succeed in life and make money are not wanted here. We want only those who want to live a higher life. The children have to decide whether they want to belong to the new life or to be "successful" and live an ordinary life. I think that some of the children will go away ...

I have signed copies. You will ask him to show you when he will come to you this evening.

This, this makes the situation absolutely clear.

30 January 1972

\* \* \*



## "Dortoir"

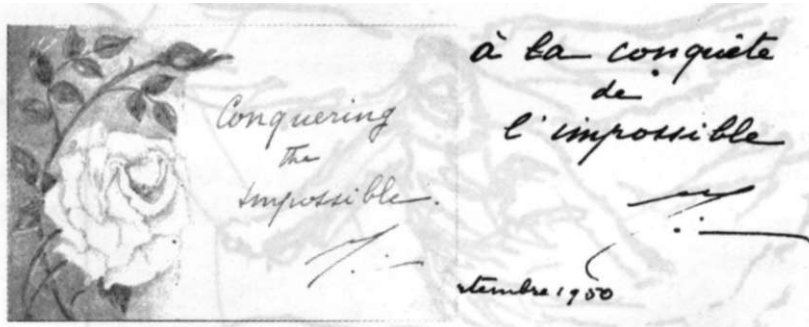
### Our Boarding

*For two years 1947 & 1948 our school boarding house, "Dortoir", had a handwritten magazine. After a gap of several years we decided to bring it out again in 1967, our Silver Jubilee. I asked the Mother for a cover design for our magazine. She made the little sketch below and gave it to me. However, we could not bring out the magazine at that time. The sketch was eventually used for the handwritten magazine brought out on Dortoir's fiftieth anniversary in 1995.*

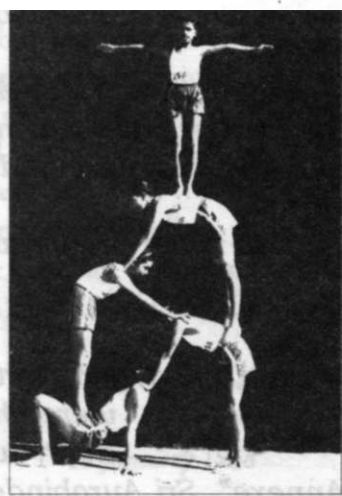


### The Conquerors of impossibility

*During the year 1950, some of us "Dortoir" children decided to make an acrobatic group. When we told the Mother, She encouraged us and even said that She would like to see our acrobatics from time to time. Thus encouraged, Parul, Sumedha, Ravibala, Badal and I set to work. Soon we were able to put up a few pyramids in front of Her at the playground She praised and enthused us with so much affection that not only did we decide to do more difficult things, but even asked Her to give our group a special name. She wrote a few different combinations on little pieces of paper & cards and finally selected "Conquering the Impossible" (a la conquete de impossible).*



# The Conquerors of Impossibility



*Thus encouraged, our young group set out in all enthusiasm to do justice to the name the Mother had given us. We continued to practise over several years and even put up some performances on Darshan days in front of the Mother, ashramites and visitors. Sometime in 1957, our group of Jive was joined by Himangshu to increase our number to six. Our acrobatics stopped, however, when the Mother discontinued Her activities in the Playground from December 1958 onwards.*

### **Dortoir Prayer**

*When "Dortoir" (our hoarding house) started on 15.1.45 the Mother gave us a prayer which we always used as our Dortoir prayer for all functions:*

*"Sweet Mother*

*We would all like to be the true children of our Divine Mother.*

*But for that Sweet Mother, give us the patience and the courage, the obedience, the goodwill, the generosity, and the disinterestedness, and all the necessary virtues.*

*This is our prayer and our aspiration."*

*15 January 1945*

*In 1955 When Dortoir expanded, we older ones were shifted to the guest house next*

*jjsUeu MA*

*In 1968 the Mother gave me a prayer for our Dortoir Annexe anniversary:*

*15 January 1968*

*On this day which unites us in a common remembrance, we aspire that this intimacy may be the symbol of true union based on a common effort towards ever truer and more perfect realisations.*

*When we, the members of our boarding went together to the Mother, She was very happy to see us. After we recited the prayer She had given us, She said:*

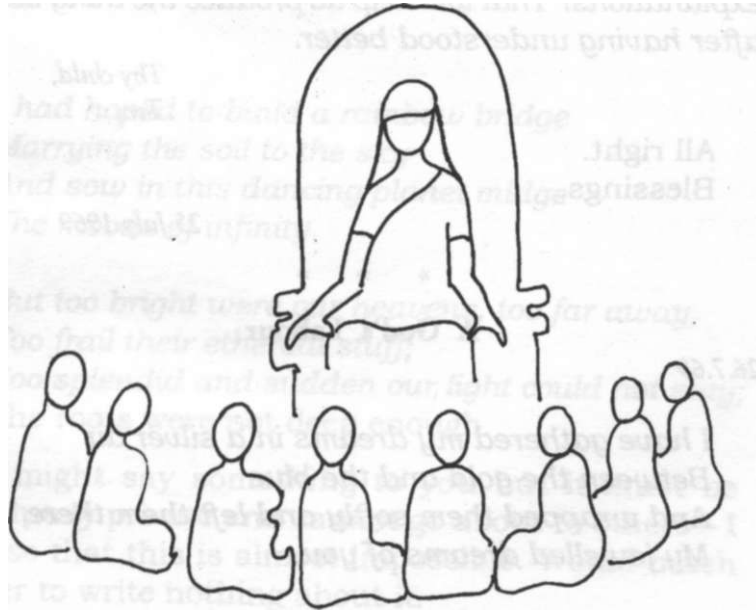
*What you are doing, what you are achieving is very fine. You are very nice, good workers. You are like a nice little family. You are very intimate in the atmosphere I know; you are all there. There are very small children now, but you, you are intimate: I see you as I saw you in the Wednesday classes, all around me like this, as I see you now. You are good workers and I hope that one day you will be good yogis, and later on, candidates for supermanhood, yes, surely candidates.*

*You have a meditation room? Do you go? I will see you again next year. I see each of you on your birthday, but seeing you all together is something else. This is a nice little family. I love you all, I love you very much.*

*Good bye, my children. Happy New Year. Good work and good progress to you all.*

*15 January 1968*

*\* \* \**



### **A Gods Labour**

*Every year, on 15\* January, the anniversary of Dortoir, our boarding house, we would put up a programme and invite our friends to see it. Although in 1955, we, the older ones had been shifted to the Guest House which came to be known as Dortoir Annexe, we still continued to put up the programme together with the Dortoir children. In 1969, we decided to stage Sri Aurobindo's poem "A God's Labour", in mime, dance and recitation for the 15\* January, 1970, our 25th anniversary. Naturally we needed to first understand the poem more deeply.*

*Since I was taking my notebook to the Mother, almost daily, I decided to request Her to explain us the poem.*

*Sweet Mother*

*For the 25\* anniversary of the boarding we propose "A God's Labour" in mime and dance with the recitation. It is a difficult piece. Can I send you everyday one or two stanzas of the poem for your commentary and explanations? That will help us produce the thing better after having understood better.*

*Thy child,  
Tara*

*All right  
Blessings.*

*25 July 1969*

## A God's Labour

26.7.69

*I have gathered my dreams in a silver air  
Between the gold and the blue  
And wrapped them softly and left them there,  
My jewelled dreams of you.*

The silver air is the spiritual realm. The gold is the supramental and the blue is the mind.

The "dreams" means all the unrealised expectations that have to be realised in future - these "dreams" are kept softly and lovingly protected for the possibility of their realisation.

\* \* \*

27 July 1969

(1) Sweet Mother, It is said that "A God's Labour" describes Sri Aurobindo's own experiences on earth. Is that true?

*You have explained that "the 'dreams' means all the unrealised expectations that have to be realised in future". In the last line of the stanza Sri Aurobindo says "My jewelled dreams of you"., For whom does the "you" stand?*

It is better to keep what Sri Aurobindo wanted us to understand: God speaking to his creation, the earth.

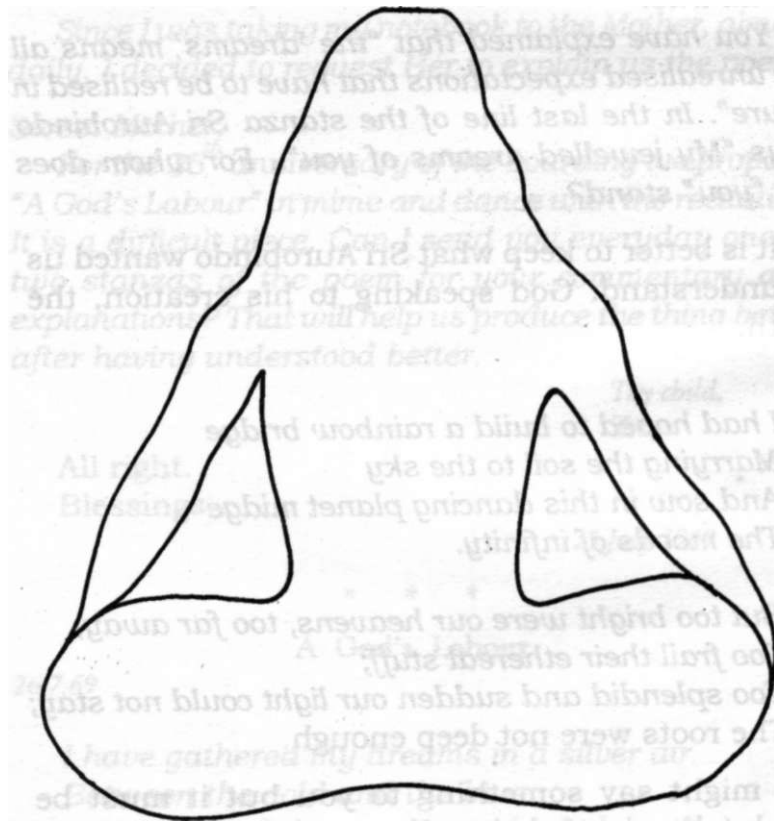
*I had hoped to build a rainbow bridge  
Marrying the soil to the sky  
And sow in this dancing planet midge  
The moods of infinity.*

*But too bright were our heavens, too far away,  
Too frail their ethereal stuff;  
Too splendid and sudden our light could not stay;  
The roots were not deep enough.*

I might say something to you but it must be absolutely private and cannot go about to others - I realise that this is almost impossible. Would much prefer to write nothing about it.

*The next time, when I went to see Her, She spent more than an hour explaining the entire poem which basically is Sri Aurobindo's own yoga and sadhana written in poetic form.*

Note - Finally the programme on 15\* January 1970 at Dortoir was not held and the dance drama never took shape.





## Chapter 3

### MEDITATIONS

#### Introduction

I came to Pondicherry on the 1 of August, 1944 at the age of eight. Ever since I can remember, I had made it a point to commemorate my arrival by asking the Mother for a special audience on that day. The early years have faded in my memory, but in later years, the Mother always gave me special time and attention every year, on the 1 of August.

In 1970 I was working with the Mother daily in the evenings on a new book of flowers. When I went to Her at the usual time on 1 August, I carried a new notebook with me, for Her to write something for me in it. In answer to my request, She said She would write something at the end of the little meditation that we had each day after our work on the "book of flowers." On that day we had a long meditation together at the end of which She wrote:

"In the very depths of your being, deep within your breast, the Divine Presence is permanently there, luminous and peaceful, full of love and wisdom. It is there so that you may unite with it and it may transform you into a luminous and radiant consciousness.

Together you and I are going to try to silence the outer noise on the surface of your being, so that in silence and peace you may unite with this inner glory.

That day will then become the day of your new birth."

From that day onwards the practice continued. This was the period of my life in which I was passing through a difficult time. Through these meditations, the Mother patiently and affectionately guided me towards my inner goal. Many times She explained things to me verbally, but unfortunately I did not write them down. There were days when we would meditate together but She did not write anything.

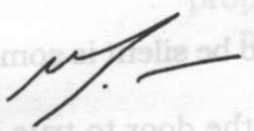
Sometimes our work on the flower book took more time than usual, and we could not have a meditation session. Sometimes She would explain things orally, but would not write anything. Sometimes She was indisposed or too busy. And sometimes we just meditated together, with the Mother holding my hands and looking deep into my eyes.



Tara with the Mother on her birthday, 5-7-1971

The following year on 1.8.71 She wrote:

1. 8. 71  
 27 ans de croissance  
 le progrès et le travail  
 utile qu'ont gagné  
 une place spéciale  
 dans l'Ashram avec  
 l'amour spécial de  
 Sri Aurobindo, ainsi que  
 ma grande tendresse et  
 mes constantes bénédictions



1.8.71

**27 years of growth of progress and useful work have given you a special place in the Ashram with special love from Sri Aurobindo; as well as my great tenderness and constant blessings.**

These meditation sessions continued till 8 April 1972, when the Mother fell very ill.

Throughout this period, She tried to teach me to build and keep a constant contact with my psychic being, guiding me patiently through my difficulties and failures, and helping me constantly never to lose sight of the aim of my life and assured me that Her Divine Compassion & Grace were always with me!

### **Meditations**

In the very depths of your being, deep within your breast, the Divine Presence is permanently there, luminous and peaceful, full of love and wisdom. It is there so that you may unite with it and it may transform you into a luminous and radiant consciousness.

Together you and I are going to try to silence the outer noise on the surface of your being, so that in silence and peace you may unite with this inner glory.

That day will then become the day of your new birth.

*1 August 1970*

\* \* \*

To know how to be silent is sometimes of priceless value.  
Silence opens the door to true knowledge.

*2 August 1970*

\* \* \*

I have seen your psychic being, standing upright in your being, ready to take responsibility for your life and lead you to the Light and the Truth. Its dignity is great, its determination unflinching; it will win the victory.

*3 August 1970*

\* \* \*

Your psychic being, immobile as a statue but alert and vigilant, is watching over your life to lead you to the Divine.

*5 August 1970*

\* \* \*

Your psychic being is radiant in the light and the peace.

*6 August 1970*

\* \* \*

Your heart is the home of a luminous goodness; let it govern your whole being.  
Love.

29 October 1970

\* \* \*

### The Integral Peace

This is the badge of the order of Integral Peace, proposed for your realisation. Love.

The Mother added orally: This badge is given for the subtle physical. It is a garland around your heart. In your heart there is a star with twelve rays and beneath it there is a dove. It is the badge of the order of integral peace. It means there is a possibility that you have been chosen to bring peace to the world. In the subtle physical it is a fact, but now you have to manifest it. This is where you have to fight. It comes when there are difficulties in you to be overcome.

It was very beautiful. My sketch is poor. I don't see clearly.

31 October 1970



\* \* \*

There is greater power in silence than in words, however powerful they may be. The greatest transformations have been achieved in the silence of concentration.

2 November 1970

\* \* \*

To know how to smile in all circumstances is the quickest way to divine wisdom. It is the ego that gets angry and upset, and this ego obscures your consciousness and impedes your progress.

The ego does not change because it feels sure that it is always right. Blessings.

24 November 1970

\* \* \*

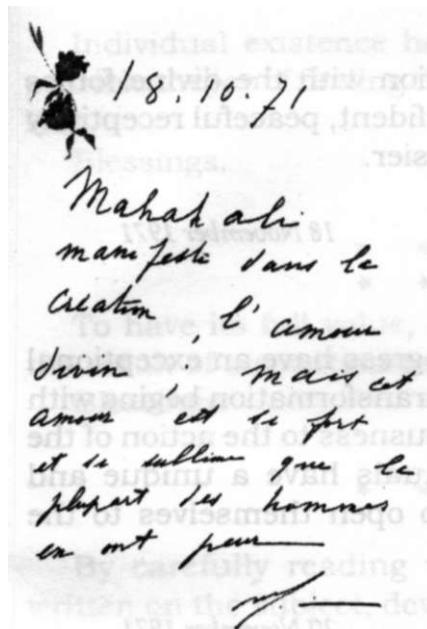
*Sweet Mother,  
Help me, give me the force to realise my prayer.*  
My help and my force are always with you. Have confidence and everything will be all right. With all my love and blessings.

5 July 1971

\* \* \*

The victory is the one that we must win over ourselves so that we belong to the Divine alone. Love.

29 September 1971



18.10.71

In the creation  
Mahakali manifests  
the divine love; but  
so powerful and  
sublime is this love  
that most men are  
afraid of it.

We are on earth in order to progress and to perfect ourselves in the course of many successive lives. What we cannot do this time, we shall do next time, and all the progress we make this time will help us then.

Kali always helps those who can call on her, and with her help the progress comes more quickly. Blessings.

*15 November 1971*

\* \* \*

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

The remedy lies in union with the divine forces that are at work and a confident, peaceful receptivity which makes the work easier.

Blessings.

*18 November 1971*

\* \* \*

Those who want to progress have an exceptional chance now, because the transformation begins with the opening of the consciousness to the action of the new forces; thus individuals have a unique and wonderful opportunity to open themselves to the divine influence.

Blessings.

*20 November 1971*

\* \* \*

The purpose of individual existence is the joy of discovering the Divine and uniting with Him. When one has understood this, one is ready to acquire the strength to overcome all difficulties.

*22 November 1971*

\* \* \*

A victory won over the lower nature gives a more deep and lasting joy than any external success. Blessings.

*24 November 1971*

\* \* \*

Sri Aurobindo has revealed to us a few of the marvels that the future will bring to the earth and has encouraged us to prepare ourselves for it.

Blessings.

*27 November 1971*

\* \* \*

Individual existence has been created to make possible the joy of finding the Divine and uniting with Him.

Blessings.

*29 November 1971*

\* \* \*

To have its full value, a step forward should be the result of a spontaneous need. Blessings.

*30 November 1971*

\* \* \*

By carefully reading what Sri Aurobindo has written on the subject, develop a clear conception of what human perfection must be.

By closely observing your own character, become aware of what needs to be transformed in order to achieve the ideal condition. Then set to work sincerely, observing your inner as well as your outer movements. And each time you discover something that contradicts the ideal you have set for yourself, make an effort to correct it.

Blessings.

*1 December 1971*

\* \* \*

Each one has his ego and all these egos are at odds with one another. It is only when one gets rid of the ego that one becomes a free being.

To be free, one must belong only to the Divine.

*3 December 1971*

\* \* \*

Sri Aurobindo came to tell us how to find You and to serve You.

Grant that in this year of his centenary we may truly understand what he has taught us and in all sincerity put it into practice.

Blessings.

*6 December 1971*

\* \* \*

Difficult hours come to the earth to compel men to overcome their small personal egoism and turn exclusively to the Divine for help and light. The wisdom of men is ignorant. Only the Divine knows.

*7 December 1971*

In the difficult hours of life, the imperative duty of each one is to overcome his ego in a total and unconditional self-giving to the Divine.  
Then the Divine will make you do what you have to do.

*4 December 1971*

\* \* \*

Supreme Lord, Infinite Wisdom,  
At this perilous hour when egoisms are at odds and asserting themselves, the only safety lies in taking refuge in You!  
Grant that nothing in us may be an obstacle to the fulfilment of Your Will.  
Grant that we may become conscious and effective collaborators in the fulfilment of Your Will.

*5 December 1971*

\* \* \*

Our human consciousness has windows that open upon the Infinite, but generally men keep these windows carefully closed. We have to open them wide and allow the Infinite to enter us freely in order to transform us.

Two conditions are necessary to open the windows:

- (1) ardent aspiration;
- (2) progressive abolition of the ego.

The divine help is assured to those who set to work sincerely. Blessings.

*8 December 1971*

\* \* \*

The ego was necessary to form the individual being. Its destruction is therefore difficult. There is a much better, though more difficult solution; it is to transform it and make it an instrument of the Divine.

Egos that are converted and consecrated entirely to the Divine become especially powerful and effective instruments.

The task is difficult and demands an absolute and steadfast sincerity, but for those who have a strong will, an ardent aspiration and an unflinching sincerity, it is well worth doing.

The method for each individual is worked out as the activity proceeds, for each ego has its own character and needs a particular method. The only qualities indispensable for all are absolute perseverance and sincerity. The least tendency to deceive oneself makes success impossible.

*9 December 1971*

\* \* \*

The details of the method are being worked out as the work proceeds.



But I can say that for you the best way to begin is to find your psychic being, concentrate on it by making it the witness of all your inner movements and the judge of all that you should or should not do, and try to submit your outer nature to its decisions. In order to be sure of not deceiving yourself, you have only to inform me about your work and its results. When you see me you will ask me questions. You must tell me what you have felt or seen and I will explain it. Blessings.

*11 December 1971*

\* \* \*

The psychic being is the individual vesture of the Divine Presence. It is found deep within oneself, beyond the thoughts.

*11 December 1971*

\* \* \*

The first thing to be awakened in oneself is the will to do it, a very steadfast good will.

*11 December 1971*

\* \* \*

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

According to one's nature and weaknesses, one should set for oneself a discipline that must always be followed; for example, never to quarrel, never to reply when someone says or does something unpleasant, never to argue when one disagrees. Obviously one must never lose one's temper when things or people are not the way one would like them to be.

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

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

In order to be able to live in peace with others, self-control is essential, and it should be practised even by those who do not aspire for transformation.

Blessings.

*12 December 1971*

\* \* \*

Communications from the psychic do not come in a mental form. They are not ideas or reasonings. They have their own character quite distinct from the mind, something like a feeling that comprehends itself and acts.

The psychic, by its very nature, is calm, quiet and luminous, understanding and generous, wide and progressive. Its constant effort is to understand and progress.

The mind describes and explains.

The psychic sees and understands.

Blessings.

*13 December 1971*

\* \* \*

The psychic is conscious of its progressive formation in the course of successive lives on earth, so it has the memory of the important moments in its previous lives.

The more the psychic has taken part in these physical lives on earth, the more numerous and precise its memories are.

*14 December 1971*

\* \* \*

Feeling alone in the midst of human beings is the sign that you are beginning to feel the need to find in your own being contact with the Divine Presence. So you must concentrate in silence and try to enter deep within to discover the Divine Presence in the depths of your consciousness, beyond all mental activity.

*16 December 1971*

\* \* \*

There comes a moment when life becomes intolerable without the Divine Presence. Give yourself, therefore, entirely to the Divine and you will rise up into the Light.

Blessings.

*17 December 1971*

\* \* \*

One moment of conscious communion with the Divine can shatter any resistance, however powerful it may be.

Blessings.

*18 December 1971*

\* \* \*

In silence lies the greatest receptivity. And in motionless silence the vastest action is done.

Let us learn to be silent so that the Lord may make use of us.  
Blessings.

*19 December 1971*

\* \* \*

We shall have taken a great leap towards realisation when we have driven all defeatism out of our consciousness.

It is by perfecting our faith in the Divine Grace that we shall be able to conquer the defeatism of the subconscious.

*20 December 1971*

\* \* \*

Total union and the perfect manifestation of the Divine are the sole means of putting an end to the suffering and misery of the physical world which are the cause of subconscious pessimism. It is only in perfect union with the Divine that the consciousness can emerge into the eternal delight. And this conscious union is the true aim of earthly existence.

*21 December 1971*

\* \* \*

To know why we live: discovery of the Divine and conscious union with Him.

The aspiration to concentrate solely on this realisation.

To know how to transform all circumstances into a means of reaching this goal.

*22 December 1971*

\* \* \*

Prayer

Lord, awaken in me the ardent desire to know You.

I aspire to consecrate my life to Your service.

*24 December 1971*

\* \* \*

**1972**

Sri Aurobindo gave his life so that we may be born into the Divine Consciousness.

*24 December 1971*

\* \* \*

The best thing we can do to express our gratitude is to overcome all egoism in ourselves and make a constant effort towards this transformation. Human egoism refuses to abdicate on the grounds that others are not transformed. But that is the stronghold of bad will, for each one's duty is to transform himself regardless of what others may do.

If men knew that this transformation, the abolition of egoism, is the only way to gain constant peace and delight, they would consent to make the necessary effort. This, then, is the conviction that must awaken in them.

Everyone should repeatedly be told: abolish your ego and peace will reign in you.

The Divine help always responds to a sincere aspiration.

*25 December 1971*

\* \* \*

Human beings could be classified under four principal categories according to the attitude they take in life:

(1) Those who live for themselves. They consider everything in relation to themselves and act accordingly. The vast majority of men are like this.

(2) Those who give their love to another human being and live for him. As for the result, everything naturally depends on the person one chooses to love.

(3) Those who consecrate their life to the service of humanity through some activity done not for personal satisfaction but truly to be useful to others without calculation and without expecting any personal gain from their work.

(4) Those who give themselves entirely to the Divine and live only for Him and through Him. This implies making the effort needed to find the Divine, to be conscious of His Will and to work exclusively to serve Him.

In the first three categories, one is naturally subject to the ordinary law of suffering, disappointment and sorrow.

It is only in the last category—if one has chosen it in all sincerity and pursued it with an unflinching patience—that one finds the certitude of total fulfilment and a constant luminous peace.

Blessings.

*26 December 1971*

\* \* \*

Do not live to be happy, live to serve the Divine, and the happiness you enjoy will exceed all expectation.

*28 December 1971*

\* \* \*

When one gives one's love to another human being, the first mistake one usually makes is to want to be loved by the other person, not in his own way and according to his character, but in one's own way and to satisfy one's desire. This is the principal cause of all human misery, disappointment and suffering.

To love means to give oneself without bargaining— otherwise it is not love. But this is rarely understood and even more rarely practised. And the consequences are painful.

When some progress needs to be made, you must set to work to make it, without excusing yourself on the grounds that others are not making it.

Each one is responsible first for himself; and if you aspire to help others, it is by giving an example of what one should be that you can help them most effectively.

And the Divine Grace is always there, marvellously effective for those who are sincere.

*28 December 1971*

\* \* \*

We are at a decisive hour in the history of the earth. It is preparing for the coming of the superman and because of this the old way of life is losing its value. We must strike out boldly on the path of the future despite its new demands. The pettinesses once tolerable, are tolerable no longer; we must widen ourselves to receive what is going to come.

Blessings.

*29 December 1971*

\* \* \*

1972  
Happy New Year

This year is consecrated to Sri Aurobindo.

To understand his teaching better and to try to put it in practice is certainly the best way of expressing our gratitude to him for all the light, knowledge and force he has so generously brought to the earth.

May his teaching enlighten and guide us, and what we cannot do today, we shall be able to do tomorrow.

Let us take the right attitude in all sincerity, and it will truly be a Happy New Year.

*31 December 1971*

\* \* \*

Without the Divine we are limited, incompetent and helpless beings; with the Divine, if we give ourselves entirely to Him, all is possible and our progress is limitless.

A special help has come upon earth for Sri Aurobindo's centenary year; let us take advantage of it to overcome the ego and emerge into the light.

Happy New Year

*1 January 1972*

\* \* \*

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

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

*2 January 1972*

\* \* \*

You must be sincere in your perseverance; then the things you cannot do today, you will some day be able to do, after faithful and persistent effort.

Give yourself to the Divine absolutely, and the Divine Help will always be with you.

*4 January 1972*

\* \* \*

When one loves the Divine truly and completely, then one also loves His creation and His creatures; and naturally, among His creatures, there may be some that one feels closer to and loves more specially. But then the love that one feels is not a selfish love of the ordinary human kind; it is no longer a love that wants to hold and possess, but a love that gives itself without asking anything in return.

To love for the joy of loving is the best condition for a peaceful and happy life; it amounts, in other words, to loving the Divine in all things.

If this culminates in wanting only what the Divine wants, then there is perfect peace.

*5 January 1972*

\* \* \*

The figure 100 has no special significance in itself for the length of human life. But simply because human life has become so complex, it has also become relatively quite short, and it is now rare to live to be a hundred.

When man lived in harmony with Nature, his life was longer.

When man lives by and for the Divine, his life will be longer, and one day the Divine will reveal to him the secret of immortality.

*6 January 1972*

\* \* \*

It is the invocation of the people who are celebrating Sri Aurobindo's centenary which makes his presence more active and effective. But for those who are always with him, this hardly makes any difference.

The same phenomenon occurs when people concentrate on him at the Samadhi: he is always there, but in response to their call his presence becomes more active.

*7 January 1972*

\* \* \*

The result of the creation is a detailed multiplication of consciousness. When the vision of the whole and the vision of all the details are united in a single active consciousness, the creation will have attained its progressive perfection.

*8 January 1972*

\* \* \*

In time and space no two human beings have the same consciousness, and the sum of all these consciousnesses is but a partial and diminished manifestation of the Divine Consciousness.

That is why I said "progressive perfection", because the manifestation of the consciousness of detail is infinite and unending.

*9 January 1972*

\* \* \*

The first condition is not to have one's own personal interest as a goal. The first qualities needed are boldness, courage and perseverance. And then to be conscious that one knows nothing compared to what one ought to know, that one can do nothing compared to what one ought to do, that one is nothing compared to what one ought to be.

One must have an invariable will to acquire what is lacking in one's nature, to know what one does not yet know, to be able to do what one is not yet able to do.

One must constantly progress in the light and peace that come from the absence of personal desires. One could take as a programme: "Always better. Forward!"

And to have only one goal: to know the Divine in order to be able to manifest Him.

Persevere, and what you cannot do today you will be able to do tomorrow. Blessings.

*11 January 1972*

\* \* \*

Mother, is it possible to develop in oneself the capacity to heal? In principle everything is possible by uniting consciously with the Divine Force. But a method has to be found, and this depends on the case and the individual. The first condition is to have a physical nature that gives energy rather than draws energy from others.

The second indispensable condition is to know how to draw energy from above, from the inexhaustible impersonal source.

In this way the more one spends the more one receives, and one becomes an inexhaustible channel rather than a vessel that empties itself by giving.

It is through steadfast aspiration that one learns.

*12-13 January 1972*

\* \* \*

Sincerity, humility, perseverance and an insatiable thirst for progress are essential for a happy and fruitful life. Above all, one must be convinced that the possibility of progress is unlimited. Progress is youth; one can be young even at hundred.

*14 January 1972*

\* \* \*

When the body has learned the art of constantly progressing towards an increasing perfection, we shall be well on the way to overcoming the inevitability of death.

*16 January 1972*

\* \* \*

If the growth of consciousness were considered as the principal goal of life, many difficulties would find their solution.

The best way to avoid growing old is to make progress the goal of our life.

*18 January 1972*

\* \* \*

To learn constantly, not just intellectually but psychologically, to progress in regard to character, to cultivate our qualities and correct our defects, so that everything may be an opportunity to cure ourselves of ignorance and incapacity—then life becomes tremendously interesting and worth living.

*27 January 1972*

\* \* \*

Sri Aurobindo came upon earth to announce the manifestation of the supramental world. And not only did he announce this manifestation but he also embodied in part the supramental force and gave us the example of what we must do to prepare ourselves to manifest it. The best thing we can do is to study all he has told us, try to follow his example and prepare ourselves for the new manifestation.

This gives life its true meaning and will help us to overcome all obstacles.



Let us live for the new creation and we shall grow stronger and stronger while remaining young and progressive.

*30 January 1972*

\* \* \*

Forward towards the supramental future !

*30 January 1972*

\* \* \*

The first thing the physical consciousness must understand is that all the difficulties we do not rely exclusively on the Divine to find the help we need.

The Divine alone can liberate us from the mechanism of universal Nature. And this liberation is indispensable for the birth and development of the new race.

It is only by giving ourselves entirely to the Divine in perfect trust and gratitude that the difficulties will be overcome.

*1 February 1972*

\* \* \*

To want what the Divine wants, in all sincerity, is the essential condition for peace and joy in life. Almost all human miseries come from the fact that men are nearly always convinced that they know better than the Divine what they need and what life ought to give them. Most human beings want other human beings to conform to their expectations and circumstances to conform to their desires—therefore they suffer and are unhappy.

It is only when one gives oneself in all sincerity to the Divine Will that one has the peace and calm joy which come from the abolition of desires.

The psychic being knows this with certainty; thus, by uniting with one's psychic one can know it. But the first condition is not to be subject to one's desires and mistake them for the truth of one's being.

*4 February 1972*

\* \* \*

The first necessity for each one is his own transformation, and the best way to help the world is to realise the Divine oneself.

*5 February 1972*

\* \* \*

In the depths of our being, in the silence of contemplation, a luminous force floods our consciousness with a vast and luminous peace that prevails over all petty reactions and prepares us for union with the Divine, the very purpose of individual existence. Thus, the purpose and goal of life is not suffering and struggle but an all-powerful and happy realisation.

All the rest is painful illusion.

6-7 February 1972

\* \* \*

The complete unification of the whole being around the psychic centre is the essential condition for realising a perfect sincerity.

7 February 1972

\* \* \*

When humanity was first created, the ego was the unifying element. It was around the ego that the different states of being were grouped; but now that the birth of superhumanity is being prepared, the ego has to disappear and give way to the psychic being, which has slowly been formed by divine intervention in order to manifest the Divine in the human being.

It is under the psychic influence that the Divine manifests in man and thus prepares the coming of superhumanity.

The psychic is immortal and it is through the psychic that immortality can be manifested on earth.

So the important thing now is to find one's psychic, unite with it and allow it to replace the ego, which will be compelled either to get converted or disappear.

8 February 1972

\* \* \*

The first thing one learns on the way is that the joy of giving is far greater than the joy of taking.

Then gradually one learns that to forget oneself is the source of immutable peace.

Later, in this self-forgetfulness, one finds the Divine, and that is the source of an increasing bliss.

Sri Aurobindo told me one day that if men knew this and were convinced of it, they would all want to do yoga.

9 February 1972

\* \* \*

Human consciousness is so corrupted that men prefer the miseries of the ego and its ignorance to the luminous joy that comes from sincere surrender to the Divine. Their blindness is so great that they refuse even to try the experiment and would rather be subject to the miseries of their ego than make the effort needed to get rid of them.

So completely blind are they that they would not hesitate to make the Divine a slave of their ego, if such a thing were possible, in order to avoid giving themselves to the Divine.

10 February 1972

Supreme Lord,  
Teach us to be silent, so that in silence we may receive Your force and understand Your will.  
Protect us from the ignorant goodwill that thinks it is serving us but only debases us.  
Purify our consciousness of all ignorance, so that we may serve You in the Truth.

*11-12 February 1972*

\* \* \*

Ignorant good will: when someone asks something on your behalf just when you do not want to ask it.

*13 February 1972*

\* \* \*

We want to be true servitors of the Divine.  
"Supreme Lord, Perfect Consciousness, You alone know truly what we are, what we can do, what progress we must make to be capable and worthy of serving You as we would. Make us conscious of our possibilities, but also of our difficulties so that we may overcome them in order to serve You faithfully."  
The supreme happiness is to be true servitors of the Divine.

*14 February 1972*

\* \* \*

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

- (1) To widen the field of one's consciousness.
- (2) To understand ever better and more completely what one knows.
- (3) To find the Divine and surrender more and more to his Will.

In other words, this means:

- (1) To constantly enrich the possibilities of the instrument.
- (2) To ceaselessly perfect the functioning of this instrument.
- (3) To make this instrument increasingly receptive and obedient to the Divine.

To learn to understand and do more and more things.  
To purify oneself of all that prevents one from being totally surrendered to the Divine.

To make one's consciousness more and more receptive to the Divine Influence.

One could say: to widen oneself more and more, to deepen oneself more and more, to surrender oneself more and more completely.

*15 February 1972*

\* \* \*

What is commonly called faithfulness is scrupulous compliance with the promises one has made. But the only true and binding faithfulness is faithfulness to the Divine—and that is the faithfulness we all must acquire through sincere and sustained effort.

When the whole being, in all its parts and all its activities, can say to the Divine in all sincerity: "What You want, what You want", then one is well on the way to true faithfulness.

*17 February 1972*



The Mother, 21-2-1972

Life on earth is essentially a field for progress. But how brief life is for all the progress to be made! To waste one's time seeking the satisfaction of one's petty desires is sheer folly. True happiness is possible only when one has found the Divine.

*19 February 1972*

\* \* \*

All day long on the 21st I had a strong feeling that it was everyone's birthday and I felt the urge to say "Happy birthday" to everyone. There was a very strong impression that something was in the world and that all those who were ready and receptive would be able to embody it. In a few days we will probably know what it was.

*22 February 1972*

\* \* \*

Supreme Lord, Perfection that we must become, Perfection that we must manifest. This body lives by Thee alone and goes on repeating to Thee:

"What You want, what You want"

Until the day when it shall automatically know what You want because its consciousness will be totally united with Yours.

*23 February 1972*

9. 3. 72  
pour Tara  
Prayer au Divin  
° Permetts que je devienne

9 March 1972  
For Tara  
Prayer to the Divine  
Grant that I may  
become conscious  
of Thy Presence.

\* \* \*

I have asked the Supreme Lord to help you to find Him, and I am ready to give you a moment every day to help you to make this discovery.

All I ask is that you try to remain silent during the time we are concentrating together.

If you can relax and feel at ease, it will be very good; if you can enter into the silence, that will be perfect. Every day we shall begin with the prayer: "Grant that I may become conscious of Your Presence", and together we shall aspire for a *moment in the silence and ardour of our aspiration.*

10 March 1972

\* \* \*

*Yes, Sweet Mother, I am infinitely grateful to You.*

11 March 1972

\* \* \*

Lord, we implore You, grant that nothing in us may refuse Your Presence and that we may become what You want us to be; grant that all in us may conform to Your Will.

12 March 1972

\* \* \*

Lord, give us the silence of Your contemplation, the silence rich with Your effective Presence.

Grant that our silence may be filled with Your Presence and that we may be fully conscious of it.

Grant that we may know that You are our life, our consciousness, our being, and that without You everything is merely illusion.

Grant that we may identify ourselves with Your Eternal Consciousness so that we may know truly what Immortality is.

*13-16 March 1972*

\* \* \*

To prepare for immortality, the consciousness of the body must first identify itself with the Eternal Consciousness.

*17 March 1972*

\* \* \*

A fifteen-year-old girl asked: "What is Truth?" I answered: "The Will of the Supreme Lord". It is a subject for contemplative meditation.

*18 March 1972*

\* \* \*

This truth that man has vainly sought to know will be the birthright of the new race, the race of tomorrow, the superman.

To live according to Truth will be his birthright.

Let us do our best to prepare the coming of the New Being.

The mind must fall silent and be replaced by the Truth-Consciousness—the consciousness of details harmonised with the consciousness of the whole.

*19 March 1972*

\* \* \*

The Divine whom we seek is not far off and inaccessible. He is at the very heart of His creation, and what He wants us to do is to find Him and, through personal transformation, to become capable of knowing Him, uniting with Him and finally of manifesting Him consciously.

We must consecrate ourselves to this; it is the true reason for our existence.

And our first step towards this sublime realisation is the manifestation of the supramental consciousness.

*20 March 1972*

\* \* \*

To take this step towards the new creation, one must learn to silence the mind and rise above into the Consciousness.

*2 April 1972*

\* \* \*

In silence, the consciousness grows. It aspires to know You more and more perfectly.

*3 April 1972*

\* \* \*

In silence lies the greatest aspiration. We pray that the greatest receptivity may also be there.

*4 April 1972*

\* \* \*

Thank You, Lord, You respond miraculously to every sincere aspiration.

*5 April 1972*

\* \* \*

In silence lies the greatest devotion.

*6 April 1972*

\* \* \*

When the consciousness is fully awakened to Your Presence, a moment comes when in silence also lies the most powerful action.

*7 April 1972*

\* \* \*

To want what You want always and in every circumstance is the only way to enjoy inviolable peace.

*8 April 1972*


\* \* \*



### Topics for Meditation

*On my birthday in 1957, when I went to the Mother in the morning for Pranam, She gave me a special topic for the evening meditation at the Playground. During the next few weeks, She continued to give topics for meditation. I do not remember how long this went on, but I have with me, in the Mother's own handwriting, four of the topics She gave. Below are all these topics for meditation.*

*5 juillet  
la nouvelle naissance, —  
la naissance à une nouvelle  
conscience,  
la conscience psychique*



The new birth—the birth to a new consciousness, the psychic consciousness.

5 July 1957



\* \* \*  
Comment éveiller  
dans le corps  
l'aspiration vers  
le Divin.  
Thank You, Lord, You respond  
every sincere aspiration \* \* \*

How to awaken in the body the aspiration towards the Divine.

26 July 1957

Meditations 137

Tourner son regard vers l'intérieur  
Regarder au  
Seigneur de soi

Turning one's gaze within. Looking within oneself.  
2 August 1957  
\* \* \*

The damaging effects of unrestrained speech.

Les méfaits de  
l'incontinence de  
langage

9 August 1957  
\* \* \*

## Chapter 4

### FLOWERS

#### Introduction

The Mother instilled in us a keen interest in the spiritual significance of flowers. She Herself had a deep contact with flowers all Her life; they were Her friends and She understood them. She could know all about a flower by identifying Her consciousness with it and what quality it expressed. In this way She named many flowers according to their inner significance. We, in the Ashram, grew up knowing many of the names the Mother gave to the flowers. We knew that jasmine signified purity, that zinnias meant endurance and so on. Let me relate how the Mother fostered in me a loving interest in flowers.

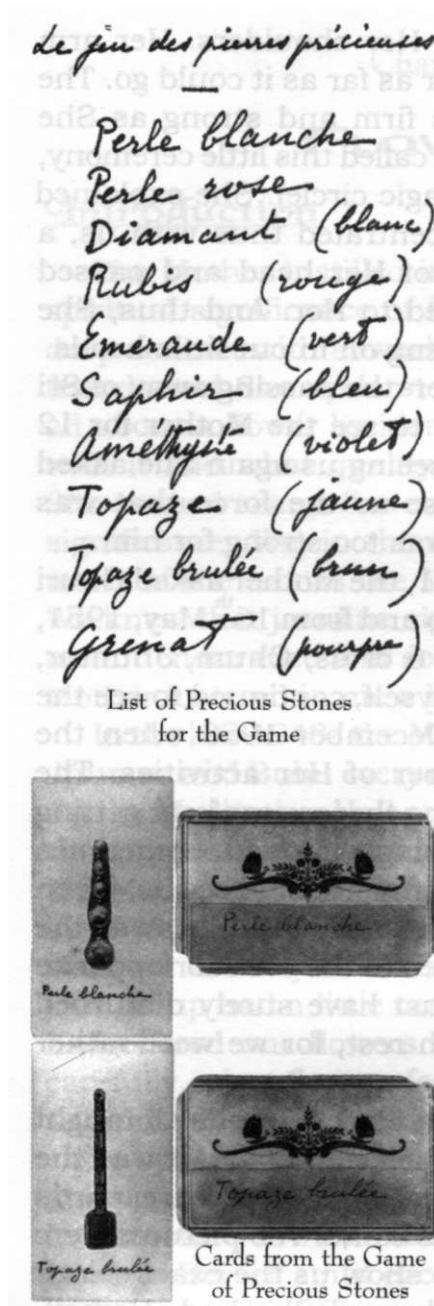
In the late 1940s the Mother started seeing Chum, Jhumur and Bubu every day at noon. They would go up the Meditation Hall staircase and wait for Her in the tiny room at the top of the stairs called "couloir's". The Mother called them "my three friends". Sometime in 1949, my little brother Promesse, who was only two and a half years old, and I, joined this group. Our group had a little ceremony every day. After we had offered our flowers to the Mother, She would carefully select flowers for each of us, and then give us each a big red tomato. We would then form a little circle by placing our arms on one another's shoulders and place our heads together. Promesse would stand in the centre of the circle. The Mother would pull us close to Herself until each head came into contact with Hers. Then She would concentrate for some time in this fashion before bidding us *Au revoir* (see you again). I was placed at the Mother's left, with my right arm over Her shoulders. I always took care to place my hand gently on Her shoulders. Her arm extended over my shoulder as far as it could go. The pressure of Her arm was firm and strong as She pulled us towards Her. She called this little ceremony, "Le circle magique" (the magic circle). She explained to us that while She concentrated thus with us, a golden thread came out of Her head and passed through ours and returned to Her. And thus, She knew exactly what was going on in our little heads.

In December 1950, after the passing away of Sri Aurobindo, we did not go to see the Mother for 12 days. When She started seeing us again She asked me not to bring Promesse as the force that was working at that moment was too strong for him.

In the beginning of 1951, the Mother asked Gauri to come and join our group and from 16 May, 1951, Parul also joined us. The 6 of us, Chum, Jhumur, Bubu, Gauri, Parul and myself, continued to see the Mother every day until December 1958 when the Mother stopped a number of Her activities. The Mother's programme during these years kept getting delayed due to Her increasing workload. Sometimes we had to wait an hour before She could see us. Often we would amuse ourselves noisily to while away the time. By now we had shifted to the corridor opposite Pavitra-di's room. We must have surely disturbed him during his post-lunch rest, for we were rather boisterous and noisy.

To keep us occupied, the Mother one day, brought us a game which She Herself had made. It was the game of 'Precious Stones'. It had picture cards

representing each precious stone. The pictures were colored by the Mother to show us the exact colour of the stones. Below each card She had, Herself, written the name of the stone. These cards would be distributed to the players and another set of cards



with only the names of the stones would be placed in the centre. Each player, in turn, would pick up a card from the centre and if he had the corresponding card in his hand, he would put both the cards aside. If not, he would replace the little card in the stack at the bottom. The player who finished all the cards first would be the winner.

It was very important for us to win because at the end the Mother always asked who had won the maximum number of games and the winner was always rewarded with a chocolate or a little gift. The Mother loved games of skill. One day She told me that we should introduce to the children games which demanded a certain

amount of skill. To demonstrate the importance of developing this faculty She asked each of us (one after the other) to lift the cover of a crystal bowl and put it back without making any sound. We all tried but it was only the Mother who replaced the cover without making the least sound.

Whenever somebody brought Her a game of skill, She would give it to us. We soon had a small little corner for ourselves in the Mother's corridor where we would keep the games that She gave us. Almost all the games demanded skill. We played the Fiddle Sticks and Flying Hats etc. but most of all we played the game of 'Jonchets' - a Japanese game, which was the Mother's favourite. The game of \* 'Jonchets' was played with pretty little sticks, resembling matchsticks. We would hold them all together in our hand and then let go or, to make the game more difficult, we would arrange them on top of each other in a crisscross manner. Each player, in turn, would then pick up as many sticks as he could, without moving any other stick. If any stick, other than the one, which was being picked up, moved, the player lost his turn. Whoever managed to get the maximum number of sticks would be the winner.

Later, the Mother specially got made transparent 'Jonchets' sticks out of plastic for us. In this set we had two kinds of sticks. One was the ordinary kind and the other had a rounded head on one side. The sticks with the rounded heads awarded five points and the ordinary ones awarded one point only. There was also in this game a stick, which had a hooked end with which we could, if we wanted, lift the other sticks.

The Mother liked this game so much that She would come and join us whenever She had a little time. She would sit down on the carpet, on the floor and play with us. Later we brought Her a little table and when the Mother would come to play, there was a little cane stool for Her to sit on.

### **The Game of Flowers**

Finally, She brought us the game of Flowers, in which She took great interest. The game was played exactly in the same way as the "precious stones" game with two sets of cards. One set was the picture of the flower and its spiritual significance. It also had the botanical and common name written underneath but had no importance for the game. The second set of cards was smaller in size and carried only the spiritual name of the flowers. The small cards were placed in one heap in the centre with the face down.

The picture cards were distributed equally among the players. Each player in turn would pick a card from the centre heap and whoever had the corresponding picture card, would take it out from his collection and put it down in the centre. The one who finished all the cards first, would be the winner. This game was meant to teach us the spiritual significance that She gave to the flowers. To start with, the Mother gave us about 20 cards in which the pictures of the flowers had been pasted or painted. Below, in Her own hand, was written the significance. A few days later She added more cards. All the artists of the Ashram were asked to paint new flowers, which kept adding to our collection. These paintings had to be done according to the dimensions of our cards. At the end of a few months we had almost 500 cards. When these were distributed to the players, each of us had



more than 80 cards in hand. Playing with them regularly, we learnt to tell the significance of each flower easily. Through this game the Mother taught us to love flowers and understand them.

Later on, the significance written on these cards served as the basis of the book, *The Role of Flowers*, edited by Lizelle Raymond. Through this game of flowers, I became familiar with flowers and developed a true interest in them. It is this interest instilled in me by the Mother that led me to ask Her in 1970 to work with me on an expanded version of Lizelle's flower book. The result was a new book titled by the Mother *Flowers and their Messages*.

Since 1969, some of us had been discussing about the possibility of bringing out a book on flowers with colour plates. Many ideas were put forward by those who were working on this project, regarding the write-up to be given under the name of each flower. One person wanted the quotations to be from Savitri, another favoured quotations from any work of the Mother and Sri Aurobindo and the third felt that we should print the book with colour plates of flowers with just their spiritual, botanical and common names, without any quotation at all.

I then put this matter before the Mother and asked Her to find a solution.

She said that since the quotations were not written specifically for the significance of the flowers they would, therefore, not be suitable.

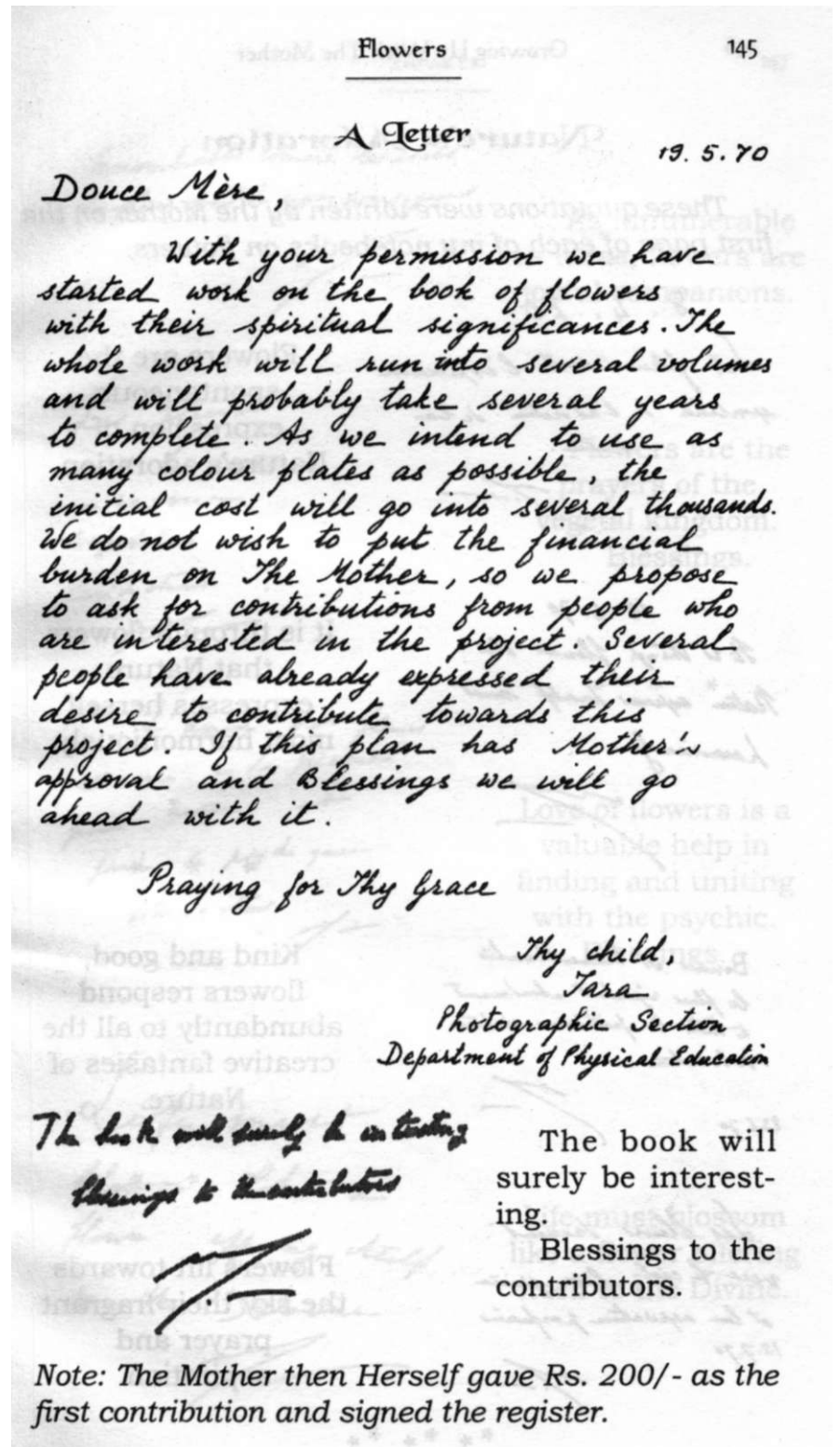
The work on the book therefore got shelved for a while. At that time, I was working with the Mother on questions and answers on Thoughts and Aphorisms. When we came towards the end of the book in 1970, the Mother asked me what I would like to take up next. I promptly put forward the proposal for the book of flowers and She took it up enthusiastically. But She made the condition that She would require to actually see the real flowers before writing the caption explaining the significance.

Each day, I would spend all my mornings in the gardens collecting flowers to take to the Mother. The Ashram gardeners were a great support and started

growing rare flowers so that the Mother could write about them. In their enthusiasm they even produced many new flowers for which they got seeds from all over the world. Some of these flowers were grown in the refrigerator, as they required special temperatures.

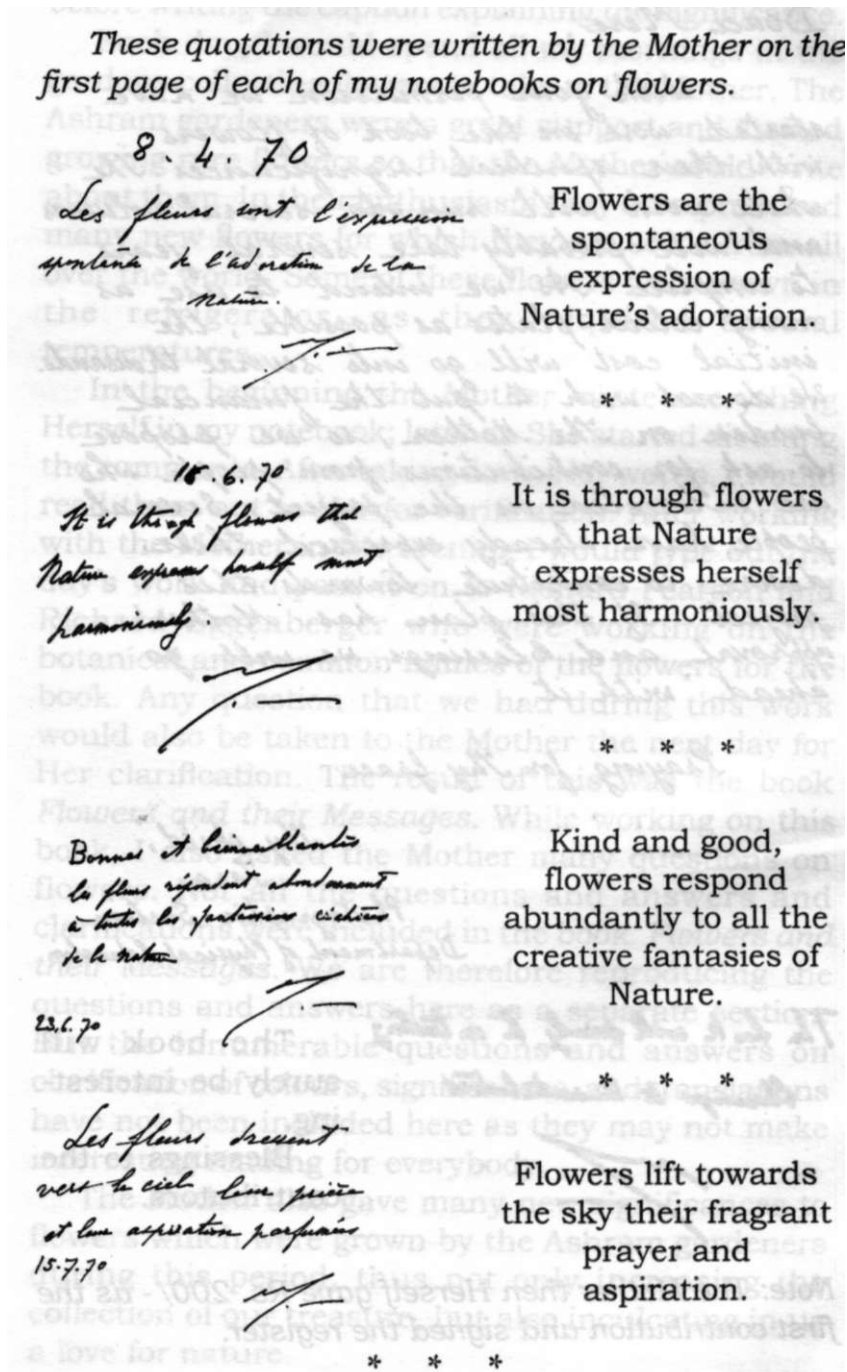
In the beginning the Mother wrote everything Herself in my notebook; later on She started dictating the comments. After taking down Her words, I would read them out to Her for verification. After working with the Mother in the evening I would type out the day's work and pass it on to Richard Pearson and Richard Eggenberger who were working on the botanical and common names of the flowers for the book. Any question that we had during this work would also be taken to the Mother the next day for Her clarification. The result of this was the book *Flowers and their Messages*. While working on this book, I also asked the Mother many questions on flowers. Not all the questions and answers and clarifications were included in the book *Flowers and their Messages*. We are therefore reproducing the questions and answers here as a separate section. But the innumerable questions and answers on clarification of colours, significances, and translations have not been included here as they may not make interesting reading for everybody.

The Mother also gave many new significances to flowers which were grown by the Ashram gardeners during this period, thus not only increasing the collection of our treasure, but also inculcating in us a love for nature.



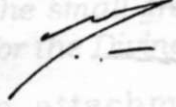
## Nature's Adoration

These Quotations were written by the Mother on the first page of each of my notebooks on flower.



Innumérables comme les idées,  
les fleurs sont les joyeux compagnons

5.8.70



As innumerable  
as ideas, flowers are  
joyful companions.

\* \* \*

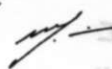
Les fleurs  
sont la prière  
du royaume  
végétal  
béni le Seigneur



Flowers are the  
prayers of the  
vegetal kingdom.  
Blessings.

\* \* \*

L'amour des fleurs  
est une aide précieuse  
pour l'homme et  
grande le psychisme  
béni le Seigneur



Love of flowers is a  
valuable help in  
finding and uniting  
with the psychic.  
Blessings.

\* \* \*

Life must  
blossom like a  
flower offering itself  
to the Divine



Life must blossom  
like a flower offering  
itself to the Divine.

\* \* \*



En communiant avec  
 les fleurs nous  
 pouvons voir que  
 déjà le règne végétal  
 a sa manière d'aspirer  
 vers le Divin  
 béni/ctions

By  
 communing  
 with flowers  
 we can see  
 that the  
 vegetal  
 kingdom  
 already has  
 its own way  
 of aspiring  
 for the  
 Divine.  
 Blessings.

\* \* \*

Les fleurs nous  
 parlent quand nous  
 savons les écouter  
 C'est un langage  
 subtil et parfumé  
 béni/ctions

Flowers  
 speak to us  
 when we  
 know how to  
 listen to  
 them; it is a  
 subtle and  
 fragrant  
 language.  
 Blessings.

\* \* \*

### Questions and answers on flowers

(Regarding the small green rose named, "Timidity in attachment for the Divine")

Timidity in attachment: I mean that the attachment is not complete and unreserved; there are parts of the being that question and hold back because they do not have total trust; it is a conditional attachment, one might say, such as, "If the Divine does what I want, I will remain attached to him."

22 June 1970

\* \* \*

*Sweet Mother,*

*Why do you usually give roses to everyone these days ?*

It is because I always have roses at hand.

26 June 1970

\* \* \*

*Sweet Mother,*

*Why do you usually give red roses to men, light-coloured roses to women, and roses of different colours to little boys and girls?*

It is because red roses give an impression of strength and light-coloured roses give an impression of charm and sweetness.\*

29 June 1970

\* *This reply was given later, in a separate note. The Mother's initial verbal answer to the question was: "There are too many reasons for me to be able to speak about them. And to tell the there, there are many exceptions, depending on the character of people."*

*She also mentioned :* It depends on persons. When I give a pink rose to someone, I give it with a certain intention and when I give a red rose to someone, I give it with a certain intention. For each one it is different. I cannot explain all that.

\* \* \*

*Mother,*

*Yesterday you told me that you give roses to people with a certain intention. May I ask with what intention you give me a red rose and a light-coloured one?*

The human being transforms all his passions into love for the Divine and the Divine responds with his ineffable love.

Roses as a whole, according to their form and colour, may be considered as "Love for the Divine."

There is one rose which is love from the Divine".

30 June 1970

\* \* \*

*Mother,*

*Yesterday you explained to me the difference between "Love from the Divine" and "Divine Love". Could you write it down for me ?*

When I say "Love from the Divine", I mean a vibration of love that the Supreme directs upon a particular point (a person or a thing).

/ July 1970

Sweet Mother,

*There is a red Carina with a yellow border named Physical centre touched by the Light and a yellow Canna with a red centre named Mental intuitive centre manifested in the physical.*

*How can one know when the colour yellow indicates the mind and when it indicates the light?*

*Yellow going towards green is the mind.*

*Yellow going towards orange symbolises the light.*

3 July 1970

\* \* \*

Sweet Mother,

*In the Flower book we have water lilies with the significance "Wealth".*

*But some people say that it should be "Wealth of Mahalakshmi."*

*Integral wealth of Mahalakshmi (white). The other colours remain as they are.*

3 July 1970

\* \* \*

Sweet Mother,

*In the flower-names capital letters are presently used for:*

*(1) The Divine*

*(2) Nature (universal)*

*(3) The Presence (when it refers to the Divine Presence).*

*We would like to ask whether capital letters could also be used to show the importance or greatness of a significance.*

*For example :*

*Certitude of Victory*

*Supramental Invocation*

*Divine Will acting in the subconscious*

*Yes.*

13 July 1970

\* \* \*

Sweet Mother,

*For Consciousness turned towards the Light, will the large flowers and the small flowers have the same significance?*

*Yes, there are large people and small people.*

14 July 1970

*Sweet Mother,*

*What is the best way of opening ourselves to the profound influence of flowers?  
To love them. If you can enter into psychic contact with them, that is perfect.*

Blessings.

*28 October 1971*

\* \* \*

*Sweet Mother,*

*How can one enter into psychic contact with flowers?*

When one is in conscious contact with one's own psychic, one becomes aware of an impersonal psychic behind the whole creation, and then through it one can enter into contact with flowers and know the psychic prayer they represent.

Blessings.

*29 October 1971*

\* \* \*

*Sweet Mother,*

*Yesterday, you spoke of an "impersonal psychic" behind the whole creation.*

*What is this impersonal psychic?*

By impersonal psychic I mean the psychic region that does not belong to any individual in particular, the psychic region that is in the creation as air is in the earth's atmosphere.

Blessings.

*30 October 1971*

\* \* \*

*Sweet Mother,*

*What is this psychic prayer that flowers represent?*

When it manifests in a plant, in the form of a flower, the psychic takes the form of a kind of wordless prayer; it is the elan of the plant towards the Divine.

Blessings.

*30 October 1971*

\* \* \*

*Sweet Mother,*

*We have flowers with significances such as "Greed for money", "Passion", "Vanity", "Gossip", etc. How do these flowers represent a psychic prayer?*

These flowers offer their bad vibration to be transformed. Blessings.

*31 October 1971*

\* \* \*

*Sweet Mother,*

*How can flowers help us in our life, in our yoga?*

Flowers teach us the charm of silence and thus the self-giving that demands nothing in return. Blessings.

*31 October 1971*

\* \* \*

*Sweet Mother,*

*Do flowers with a strong fragrance represent a more ardent psychic prayer than flowers without any fragrance?*

Their nature gives itself more generously and more integrally.

Blessings

*1 November 1971*

\* \* \*

*Sweet Mother,*

*.... and is there the same difference between plants and trees?\**

Each one manifests itself according to its nature and these natures are innumerable. Blessings.

*2 November 1971*

\* \* \*

The Mother also mentioned: "No, it is like the difference between animals — there are big ones, there are small ones. But everywhere it is like that — in minerals, animals, men."

\* \* \*

*Sweet Mother,*

*Is there a relation between the fragrance of a flower and its significance?*

Certainly, there must be one; but so far I have not studied it. Blessings.

*3 November 1971*

\* \* \*

*Sweet Mother,*

*Do flowers have a power in the occult world?*

Yes, they have an occult power; they can even transmit messages if one knows how to charge them with the messages.

Blessings.

*3 November 1971*

Sweet Mother,

*Yesterday you said that there was definitely a relation between a flower's fragrance and its significance. How can one begin to study this relation? What is the first step?*

Study and experiment. You take a flower with a strong and definite fragrance. You breathe in this fragrance, trying to find what thought or image it evokes. If you find something, you compare it with the significance given to the flower.

4 November 1971

\* \* \*

Sweet Mother,

*Is it possible to classify fragrances as we classify colours?*

In order to attempt it, one would have to have a very refined and precise sense of smell.

It is a long and meticulous work. After several hundred experiments, one can reach a conclusion.

Blessings.

4 November 1971

*The Mother added orally: "Only for each person it may be different. They must be people who have a refined sense of smell."*

\* \* \*

Sweet Mother,

*Can a flower transmit other messages apart from the significance you have given it?*

It is not impossible, but the person who sends the message must have a great power of formation. Blessings.

4 November 1971

\* \* \*

Sweet Mother,

*Concerning what you wrote yesterday, is the power of formation purely occult or can a mental or vital power of formation also transmit messages?*

The mental power of formation can certainly transmit messages. But for these messages to be received and understood, the person to whom they are sent must himself be mentally very receptive and particularly attentive.

Blessings.

5. November 1971

\* \* \*

Sweet Mother,

*In the study of fragrances of which you spoke, one observes that certain fragrances seem to be made up of several fragrances. Must one then study each "sub-fragrance" separately?*

Yes, of course. If one wants to make this study, it is extremely complicated, for not only are there differences between flowers but even similar flowers must differ among themselves, which means that the study can never come to an end and one cannot arrive at anything final and complete.

The Mother then added verbally: There is, you see, the influence of the climate, the influence of the time of day or night, the influence of the time of year, the influence of the seasons ...

Blessings.

5 November 1971

\* \* \*

Sweet Mother,

*Scientists explain that flowers have fragrances in order to attract insects. What do you think about this? Certain plants have flowers with an unpleasant odour; others have leaves with an unpleasant smell, but their flowers are sweetly scented.*

It is men who look for a reason for everything, and find it—but I doubt whether the Supreme has any such preoccupation.

Blessings.

6 November 1971

\* \* \*

Sweet Mother,

*What do the flowers and gardens in our dreams signify? Sometimes in dreams one sees flowers which do not exist.*

This probably takes place in the subtle physical. But it may also be that these flowers exist physically on earth in a place you do not know.

Blessings.

6 November 1971

\* \* \*

Sweet Mother,

*Mother, this is not what I wanted to know. What I wanted to know is what these flowers symbolise.*

These symbols are most often individual and different people have different significances for them.

It may be that certain people have written books and those who read them adopt their symbolism. But then it is purely a mental question.

The Mother then aided verbally: You give a meaning to a flower, for instance, to a rose—we have a certain meaning for the rose. As we have given this meaning, you see the same symbolism in your dreams, if you tell me one of your dreams, I

can explain it to you. You see, a flower must spontaneously tell you something, then it would be symbolic for you—but it may be what we have already decided.

6 November 1971

\* \* \*

*Sweet Mother,*

*About the flowers on the Samadhi : does Sri Aurobindo transmit a special message through them, apart from their significance?*

If people put the flowers with a definite intention or prayer, it is possible that Sri Aurobindo receives the message and answers it, and that one receives his answer if one is sensitive enough.

Two oral questions and answers:

*But Mother, what if I see a particular flower on the Samadhi that I need ...*

But it is not Sri Aurobindo who chooses the flowers on the Samadhi. It can be anybody.

*Mother, should special flowers be put on the Samadhi?*

No. Why?

8 November 1971

\* \* \*

*Sweet Mother,*

*When you give us a particular flower, do you give us the opportunity to acquire that quality or virtue?*

When I give flowers, it is always with the capacity they represent. Each one receives according to his receptivity.

Blessings.

8 November 1971

\* \* \*

*Sweet Mother,*

*Sometimes we see that the common name or use of a flower corresponds to the significance you have given to it. In that case, does the flower have that quality inherent in it, which men with a certain sensitivity perceive, or does the flower respond to the mental formation of man who has used it for years for a certain purpose?*

It is rather a more or less widespread collective suggestion. This is how a universal language could be created.

But it would necessarily be limited to a few very simple ideas. Blessings.

9 November 1971

\* \* \*

*Sweet Mother,*

*On our birthdays you give us a bouquet of flowers. Do those particular flowers have a special importance for us?*



No, not necessarily, because I am not the one who prepares the bouquets.  
It is only while giving them that I sometimes put a special message in them.  
*Mother, why do you say "sometimes"?*

*Verbally:* Oh, no! There are any number of people for whom it is absolutely useless—they have no inner perception. And then, I see hundreds of people every day. Perhaps thirty of them are receptive and that is a generous estimate. People live on the outermost surface.

9 November 1971

\* \* \*

*Sweet Mother,*

*When we offer flowers to you, with what attitude should we offer them? Does it matter if we don't know their significance?*

It depends completely on the person who gives the flowers and his state of consciousness.

The answer is the same to both questions. What people do, has a deep significance, or has none, depending upon their degree of consciousness.

9 November 1971

\* \* \*

*Sweet Mother,*

*Formerly, special flowers were counted and placed in Sri Aurobindo's room? Why was this done?*

It was a sort of pact with Nature so that she might put all her wealth under Sri Aurobindo's influence. Blessings.

10 November 1971

\* \* \*

*Sweet Mother,*

How do you give a significance to a flower?

By entering into contact with it and giving a more or less precise meaning to what I feel. Blessings.

10 November 1971

\* \* \*

*Sweet Mother,*

*What will be the role of flowers in the new world?*

*Verbally:* We shall see!

10 November 1971

\* \* \*

Sweet Mother,

*Why have you chosen the Hibiscus as the flower of Auroville?*

Verbally: There was a definite reason, but I don't remember it any more; there was a very definite and concrete reason. Perhaps it was the first flower I received after Auroville started. But I don't remember anymore now—it is too long ago.

10 November 1971

\* \* \*

Mother,

*We would like to have a name for the new flower book. Here are two possibilities:*

*FLOWERS AND THEIR SIGNIFICANCES*

*FLOWERS AND THEIR MESSAGES\**

11 November 1971

\*The Mother underlined the second title as Her choice.

\* \* \*

Sweet Mother,

*Can music and prayer have an effect on the development of a plant?*

There are people who have made experiments and they say yes.

*The Mother answered:* I don't know now who it was—there are several people, I believe—but I know there is someone who is truly convinced. Do you remember that man who was experimenting at Riziere? He put my photo on one side and on the other side was the window, and the flowers always turned towards the photo instead of turning towards the light. You see, they were in pots. The stem, instead of going towards the window, as usual, the stem with its flowers grew towards my photo. I didn't see it; he wrote to me about it.

Blessings.

11 November 1971

\* \* \*

Sweet Mother,

*Are there subtle beings who are in intimate relationship with plants?*

It is possible, even probable. There are children who have experienced this and spoken about it.

11 November 1971

\* \* \*

*Mother, is it possible to become conscious of these beings and work in harmony with them?*

Yes. It is a question of nature and capacity. Blessings.

11 November 1971

\* \* \*

*Sweet Mother,*

*You said that to become conscious of those subtle beings, was a question of nature and capacity. Is it possible to develop this capacity and how can one do it?*

Certainly one can develop the capacity if one takes enough interest to put in the necessary time and effort. Naturally, it will be more or less difficult depending on one's nature.

To become conscious of one's dreams helps to do this. A silent and motionless concentration also helps.

Blessings.

*12 November 1971*

\* \* \*

*Sweet Mother,*

*Are there forces directly hostile to vegetal nature? Are insects a manifestation of these forces?*

There do not seem to be forces that are consciously and deliberately hostile to the vegetal kingdom. Insects do harm because they feed on plants, but in this way they also serve them; both things are there, good and bad, without any conscious will.

*The Mother commented verbally:* "They are good, they are bad, without knowing it."

*12 November 1971*

\* \* \*

*Sweet Mother,*

*Why do plants fall ill and what can one do to help them?*

When man does not interfere, the illness of plants seems to be accidental. But man's activity has upset the life of plants, just as it has upset the life of animals, of course.

The Mother then added: It has upset the vegetal life. Isn't it both ways: it has given exceptional conditions and it has used it in a most selfish manner ...

*12 November 1971*

\* \* \*

*Mother, you did not say what one can do to help sick plants.*

*She answered:* But for that one must know what condition is essential to the plant and provide it

After fifteen minutes of meditation She said: I was just reflecting. Men have upset the life of plants and animals, and supermen have upset the life of men.

*12 November 1971*

*Sweet Mother,*

*What effect will the light of the new creation have upon flowers and plants?*

The whole creation will become more conscious; the vegetal kingdom will participate in this progress according to its own nature.

13 November 1971

\* \* \*

*Sweet Mother,*

*How can we develop our consciousness in order to work in a better way with plants and flowers?*

First you must learn to be silent, then notice carefully what happens in your consciousness.

13 November 1971

\* \* \*

*Sweet Mother,*

*Many of the plants we are trying to grow here suffer because of our climate. How can we help them to grow and blossom here?*

The increase of consciousness in the atmosphere will surely have an effect which is difficult to describe beforehand.

Naturally, the plants that like cold climates could grow in greenhouses.

Also, by planting forests one could have a regulating action on the climate.

13 November 1971

\* \* \*

*Sweet Mother,*

*If our offering of flowers depends on our state of consciousness, does that help us to learn the significance of flowers, even if it is purely mental to begin with?*

Yes, certainly.

13 November 1971

\* \* \*

*Mother,*

*Can you write an introductory sentence to put at the beginning of the book Flowers and for those who are interested in what flowers tell us.*

14 November 1971

\* \* \*

*Sweet Mother,*

*Are some flowers more open to Your force than others?\**

I haven't noticed.

*What are the best times for cutting flowers?*

That depends on the country, the flowers, the climate.

*Here, Mother?*

Here, it should probably be early in the morning. That should be the best time, shouldn't it? — when they begin to open to the light.

*And nocturnal flowers?*

Nocturnal flowers, in the evening when they begin to open, if one really wants this knowledge, one has to study each flower, each type of flower.

*Mother,*

*Is there a reason why some flowers bloom only a night?*

No, you see, their nature is like that.

14 November 1971 \*

\*All the questions and replies of this date are spoken.

\* \* \*

The red lotus is Sri Aurobindo's flower, but specially for his centenary we will choose the blue lotus, which is the colour of his physical aura, to signify the centenary of the manifestation of the Supreme upon earth.

21 December 1971

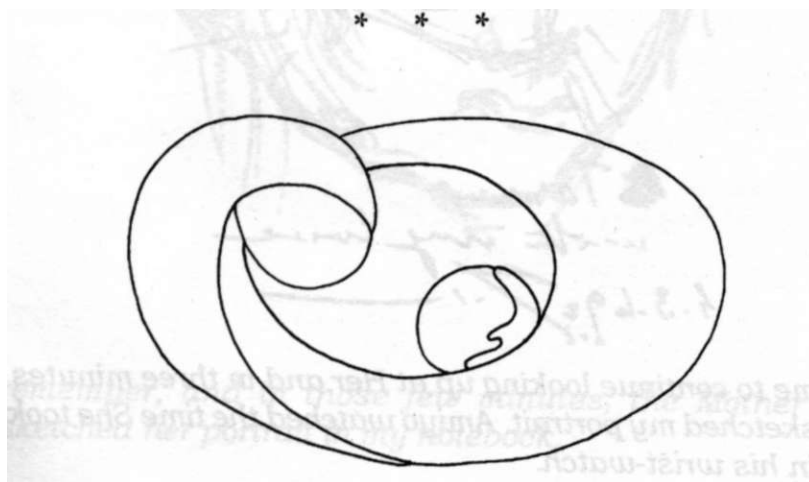
\* \* \*

*Sweet Mother,*

*In one of my notebooks on flowers you have written: "Love of flowers is a precious help in finding and uniting with the psychic." Can you elaborate on this point?*

Since flowers are the manifestation of the psychic in the vegetal kingdom, a love of flowers would mean that one is attracted by the psychic vibration in them and consequently by the psychic in one's own being.

When one is receptive to the psychic vibration, it puts one more intimately in contact with the psychic in one's own being .



Perhaps even the beauty of flowers is a means used by Nature to awaken in human beings an attraction to the psychic.

13 January 1972

*Sweet Mother,*

*It seems that the significance of the apple is "Divine Wisdom". Is this correct?*

The Mother answered orally: Ok, that is the old story. You know the old story of Adam? This significance comes from that story. But the true significance is quite different. You see, the snake is the symbol of progressive evolution and the apple is the symbol of wisdom. So, of course, it is a story, but it takes on a completely different meaning. You see, under the influence of evolution, the apple awakened in man the desire to know instead of living in ignorance. He came out of the garden of Eden in order to learn about life. Eden is the symbol of a state of satisfied ignorance that does not try to know and progress, a state that remains always the same, living the same life. It is a harmonious creation, but it is not progressive.

*13 January 1972*

## Chapter 5

### SKETCHES & PHOTOGRAPHY

I have already narrated how I came to sit at the Mother's feet while She supervised the gymnastic training of the Captains' Group.



One day, as the training finished, I looked up at the Mother from where I sat. She suddenly asked Amiyo for a pen and paper. Amiyo pulled out a small chit pad from his pocket and gave it to Her. She asked me to continue looking up at Her and in three minutes sketched my portrait. Amiyo watched the time She took in his wrist-watch.

For recitation classes on Tuesdays, the A Group children would be seated in a big semi-circle around the Mother. One child at a time would come to the centre, sit in front of Her, and recite a selected passage. Later when the number increased, She would ask two children to come at a time.

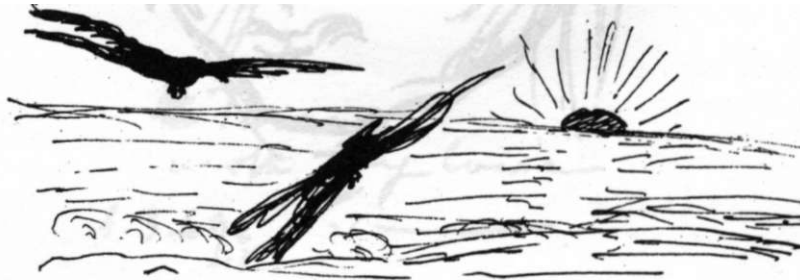
On one occasion Tarini sat in front of the Mother and forgot her lines. She kept sitting while trying to remember, and in those few minutes, the Mother sketched her portrait in my notebook.



A sketch by the Mother to illustrate how Her signature is like a soaring bird.

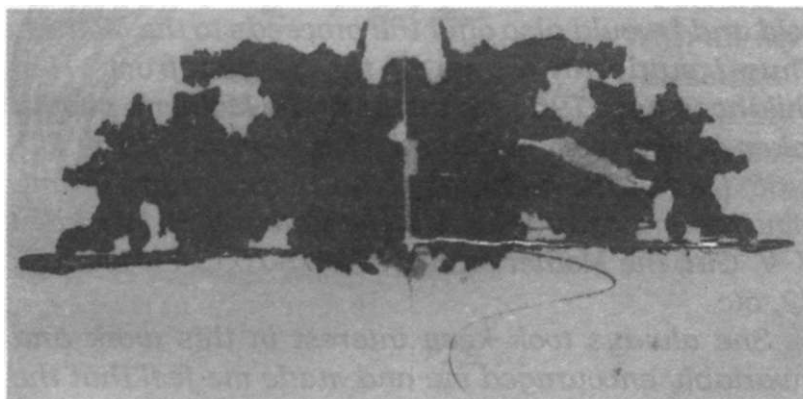


One day, the Mother's fountain pen was not working. She took a piece of paper and squeezed two drops of ink out to let the flow run smooth. She then sketched two birds out of the two drops of ink, drew the sun and water and gave the sketch to me.

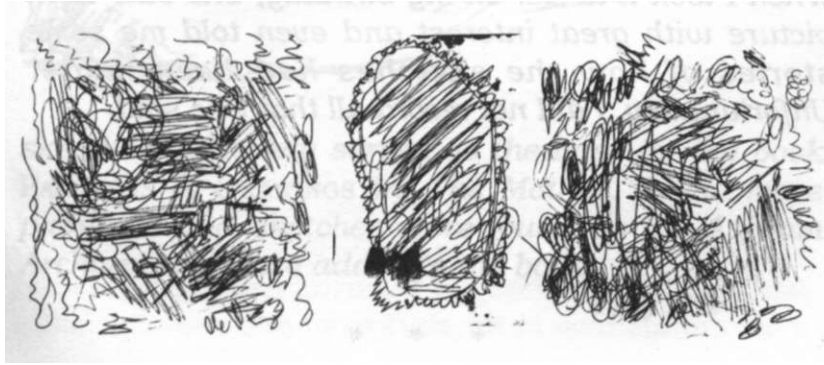


Another day the Mother wanted to write something for me, but the ink in Her fountain pen did not flow. So She took a piece of rough paper and released one drop of ink on it to let the pen run smoothly. Then She said to me, "I will show you something interesting". She took the paper with the drop of ink on it and folded it exactly into half and pressed it. It made an interesting design. I took the paper and brought it home and included it in my collection.

Ball pens had just come into the market. The ink did not always flow smoothly. There were always little pieces of paper around where She worked, on which She would run the pen to ease the flow, before writing. At every opportunity, I collected these and preserved them.







Since childhood we were always taught to make something with our own hands for offering to the Mother on our birthdays. Most of the girls would paint or embroider beautiful things for the Mother. As I was neither good at painting nor embroidery, I would make cards with the Mother's photographs which She always liked to have for distributing to people.

Later when I started taking a keener interest in photography I made albums of the Mother's photos as my offerings on my birthdays.

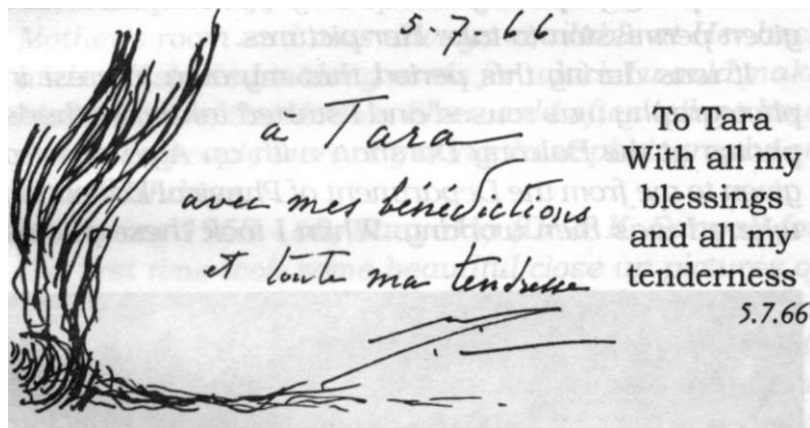
Many of these albums were then duplicated and sold and I would also offer the proceeds to the Mother. Thus I made an album of the Mother from Her childhood until 1964, an album of the Mother's photos taken in Her room in January-February 1960, on 21-2-68 (Her 80th birthday), the Mother with Prime Minister Smt. Indira Gandhi, the Mother with President V. V. Giri, the Mother on 5-7-69, 5-7-70, 5-7-71, 21-2-72, etc.

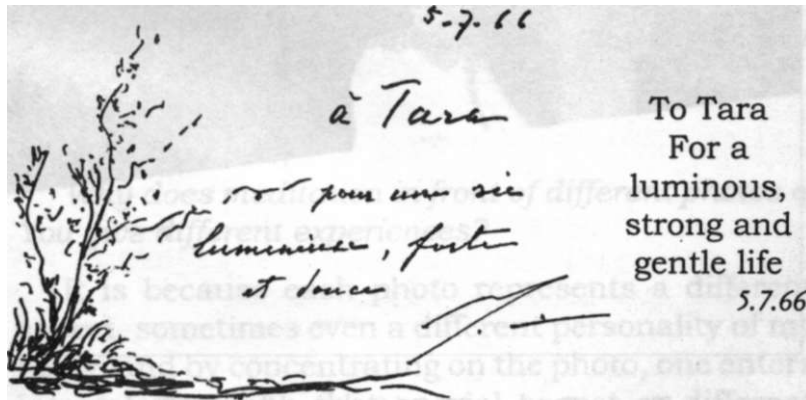
She always took keen interest in this work and invariably encouraged me and made me feel that the work was very important for Her by rewarding me with Her tender embrace and kiss, transporting me to a world of heavenly bliss.

Among the first albums that I made for offering to the Mother on my birthday was a collection of photographs of the Mother's paintings and sketches. When I took it to Her on my birthday, She saw each picture with great interest and even told me some stories of how the sketches had been made. Unfortunately, I did not record all that She said.

I also made an extra set of photos of the Mother's paintings and sketches for my own collection. These were in two small albums and when I took them to the Mother for Her blessings and autograph, She made sketches on both of them with Her felt pens. One was a sketch of fire and the other of a flowering bush.

This collection of photographs of paintings and





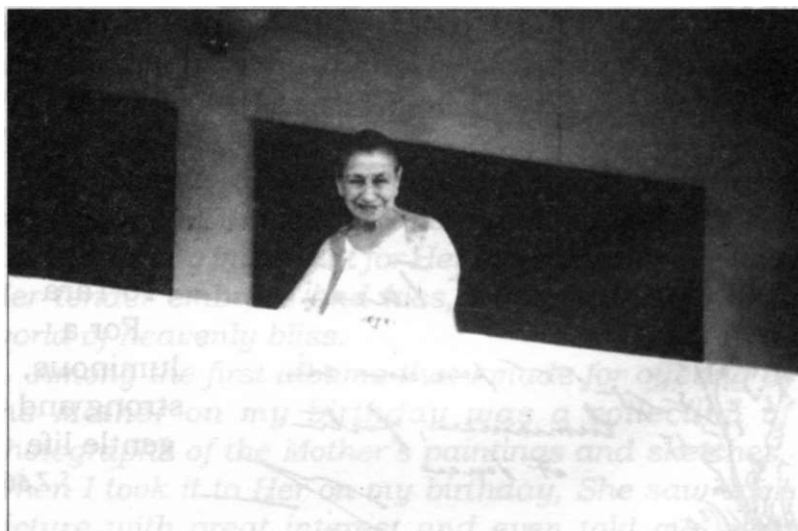
Sketches ultimately served as the base for book *PAINTINGS & DRAWINGS by The Mother*. A few more paintings and sketches were found by the Ashram Archives and were added to the book

8 July 1972

\* \* \*

After December 1958 when the Mother stopped coming down for Her usual activities, She started giving Terrace Darshan four times a year. People started seeking permission to take the Mother's pictures during Terrace Darshan from the Dispensary Terrace. The number of photographers grew from strength to strength. People started getting powerful lenses to get better photographs of Her. Many visitors were also given permission to take Her pictures.

It was during this period that my own interest in photography was roused and I started taking Mother's photos at the Balcony Darshan with an Alpa camera given to me from the Department of Physical Education where I was then working. When I took these photos to the Mother, She showed keen interest in them and rewarded me by asking for some of the nicer pictures for Her personally distributing to people.



Terrace Darshan 21-2-66 photo taken by Tara

I felt so happy and elated that thereafter I started working with even more enthusiasm in the darkroom and over the years prepared numerous photographs of the Mother taken by myself and other photographers in different sizes for the Mother to distribute.

It was also during this period that the Mother stopped seeing too many people and started sending beautiful birthday cards with Her personal message and blessings to all those who asked for it.

Champaklalji, who spent hours sitting outside the Mother's room and was always available at Her beck and call, started making cards for which I would make nice photos of the Mother. She would often tell me how delighted people were at getting these photographs on their birthdays.

During 1958 - 60, Sanyalda (Dr. P.K. Sanyal) for the first time took some beautiful close up pictures of the Mother in Her room. This was followed by a series of photos taken by Pranab in January - February 1960 in colour slides which were often projected at the Playground. I would make black & white prints of many of these photos for distribution by the Mother.

I also asked the Mother several questions about these photos.

Sweet Mother,

Why does meditation in front of different photos of You give different experiences?

It is because each photo represents a different aspect, sometimes even a different personality of my being; and by concentrating on the photo, one enters into relation with that special aspect or different personality which the photo has captured and whose image it conveys.

The photo is a real and concrete presence, but fragmentary and limited.

4 November 1959

\* \* \*

*Sweet Mother,*

*Why is the photo a fragmentary and limited presence?*

Because the photo catches only the image of a moment, an instant of a person's appearance and of what that appearance can reveal of a passing psychological condition and fragmentary soul-state. Even if the photograph is taken under the best possible conditions at an exceptional and particularly expressive moment, it cannot in any way reproduce the whole personality.

5 November 1959

\* \* \*

*Sweet Mother,*

*I would like to know how You have chosen the photos Pranab has taken, because many that You have not approved are beautiful and pleasing to our eyes.*

From the outer point of view, it is merely a matter of taste and has only a very relative importance.

But for myself, I have chosen the photos that most clearly express the inner being, the pictures through which one can more easily perceive the state of the soul

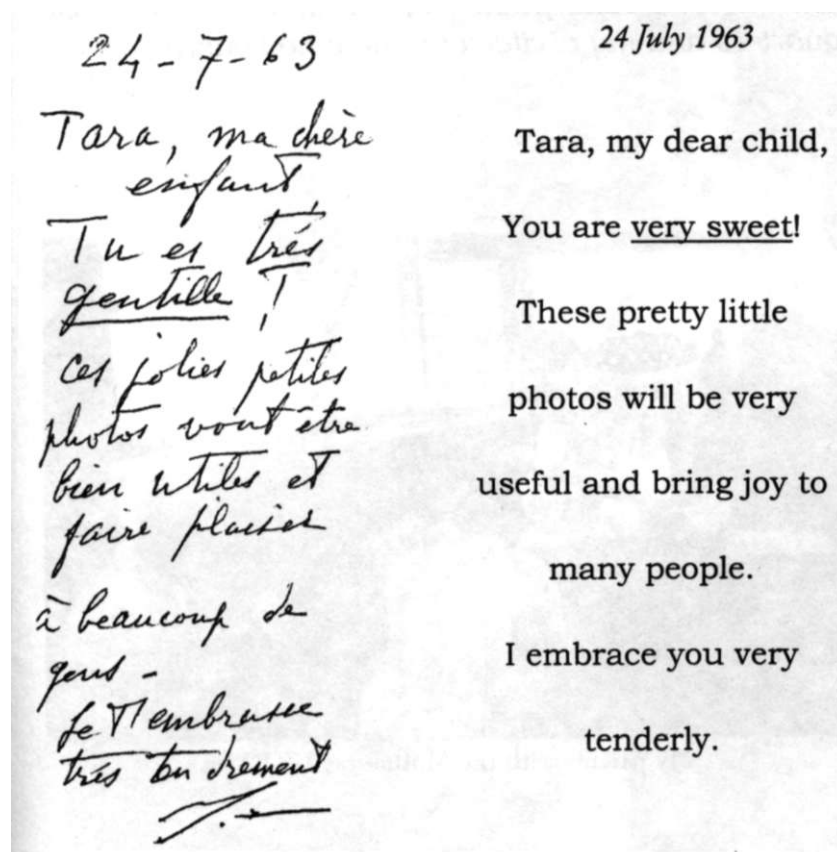
and consciousness. To tell the truth, there are none that "I did not approve", but I sorted them into three categories:

- (1) those that I would like to give to people who ask me for a photo;
- (2) those that can be sold to people who want to buy them;
- (3) those that can be shown on the screen at the playground and I haven't left any of them out (as far as I remember), because all together they make an interesting record.

13 February 1960

\* \* \*

While working in the photography lab, I would save every bit of photography paper and make little photos of the Mother and give these to Her for distributing to people as Blessings. Once when I sent Her these tiny little photos, She sent me a sweet little card saying:



\* \* \*

Thus, over the years there were several occasions when I had the opportunity of taking the Mother's photographs. On December 17, 1965 when my father came from Delhi, he had an appointment with the Mother. My mother usually accompanied him. I asked the Mother for permission to come along with them and take some photographs. She gave permission but made it clear that I could take pictures of my parents with Her, but not of Her alone. This was the first time that I was able to take photos of the Mother from close quarters and my excitement knew no bounds.



My parents with the Mother on 17-12-65

(1) the  
ask me for a photo;  
(2) those that can be sold to people who want  
to buy them;  
(3) those that can be shown on the screen a

The following year on December 4, 1966, I again requested the Mother if I could come along with my brother Anil and take some photos. She graciously permitted again on the same condition.



My brother Anil with the Mother on 4-12-66

In 1967 I asked my brother Anil for an expensive Rolleiflex camera. When I got the camera I wrote to the Mother on April 9, 1967:

*Sweet Mother,*

*Anil bought me a new camera which Theodora has brought from Germany.*

*I would like to show it to You for Your blessings before starting to use it. May I come one morning for ten minutes, and, if You allow me, I would like to start with photos of You.*

The Mother wrote back on my letter:

Come with Lata tomorrow afternoon around 3.30 Blessings.

*9 April 1967*

It was Lata's birthday on 10th April when we went together to see the Mother in the afternoon. An interesting incident took place during this photography adventure of mine. There were twelve shots in the roll. While I took my sister Lata's photos with the Mother, She did not say anything. I took ten pictures.

Then I wanted to take a close up of the Mother alone and asked Her permission. She said, "only one", and I took that. Since the roll had only one shot left, I tried to take a second one and She said "Ca sufit" [that's enough], but I still clicked the shutter. When the film was developed, the Lata with the Mother twelfth shot was completely blank!



Till today I have not been able to solve the mystery of how it could have happened as my Rolleiflex camera had a built-in mechanism not to wind forward unless it had clicked.



To the good photographer. With my tenderness.  
The Mother

My first close up photograph of the Mother autographed by Her

As my interest in photography continued to grow, I wrote to the Mother:  
*Sweet Mother,*

*The last three albums we made were enthusiastically received by people. Now we have a new idea which we would like to execute for Your next birthday.*

*We wish to make an album with photographs of all the objects used by Sri Aurobindo. A rough idea of the scheme is to start with a picture of Sri Aurobindo's room taken from outside, then several general shots of the interior of the room, and finally photographs of the things He used, arranging them as far as possible as they were when He used them. For example the table He worked on would be arranged with all His writing material and placed where He normally worked. Similarly we have other ideas, the details of which will have to be worked out as the work proceeds.*

*We shall also require a lot of help from different people, specially from Champaklal.*

*Mother, if You approve of this idea we will go ahead with Your blessings.*

*I would like to place before You the sample copy for Your approval on my birthday if I am able to finish it.*

Praying for Your  
blessings.

Your child,

Tara

All right  
Go ahead  
With love and blessings

3 June 1967

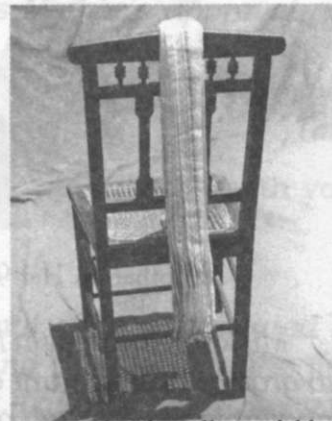
I worked with Champaklalji for more than a month arranging and rearranging Sri Aurobindo's room as it was during Sri Aurobindo's time. It was only one year later that I was able to offer the album "Sri Aurobindo - the houses where He lived and the objects that He used". Subsequently I made 50 of these albums for sale and the proceeds were offered to the Mother. A few photographs from the album are reproduced here.



A general view of Sri Aurobindo's room  
after renovation in November 1946



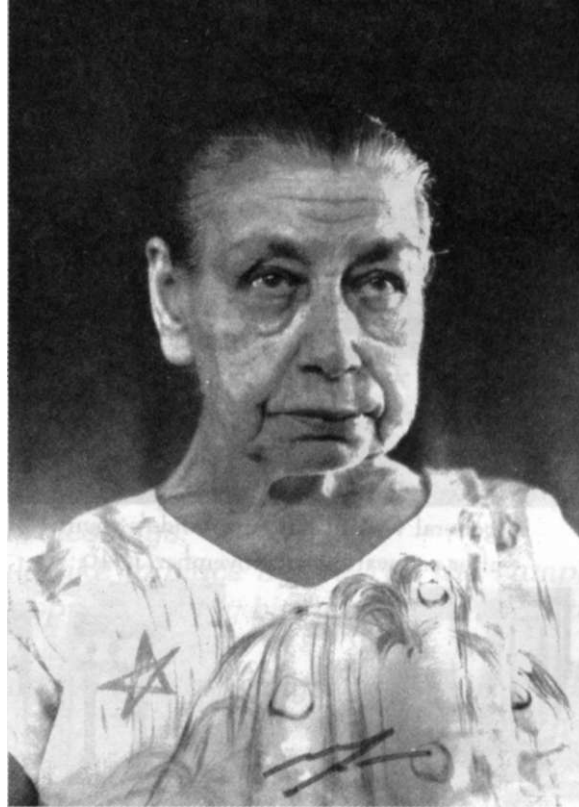
One of the chairs used by  
Sri Aurobindo while writing  
*Savitri*



Sri Aurobindo's dhoti, folded  
by the Mother, was kept on a  
chair in the bathroom.



From then on I took photos of the Mother on several special occasions, sometimes alone and sometimes along with Pranab. On each occasion we would load our cameras with colour transparencies, colour prints and black & white negative films, thus clicking a large variety of photos on one day. One such occasion was the Mother's 90th birthday on 21.2.68.



Mother on Her 90th birthday on 21.2.1968

My keen interest in Mother's photographs continued to grow, and I dreamt of collecting and indexing every available photograph of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother. When I found such an opportunity, I wrote to the Mother.

*Douce Mere,*

*I have been trying for the past two years or more to get all the original negatives and transparencies of the Mother from every possible source and make a complete collection for the Ashram.*

*Some photographers have already given their negatives and transparencies, and some others have agreed to give.*

*The collection of these negatives and transparencies will have a two-fold purpose.*

*1. They will be automatically preserved in our air-conditioned and moisture - controlled dark room - facilities which no other photographer excepting Chiman has.*

*2. These negatives and transparencies will be filed and indexed, so that whenever a particular picture is needed it can be easily traced.*

*These negatives and transparencies will be kept in our photographic department and will become the property of the Ashram.*

*Now Vidyavrata and Robi are organising a meeting of Ashram Photographers to discuss ways and means to make photography more active in the Ashram.*

*I propose to put forward this proposal as one of the important items in the agenda.*

*I pray to know if this has Mother's approval and Blessings.*

*Thy child,*

*Tara*

I approve and my blessings are always with you and what you do. With love

The idea, however, was not quite appreciated by some of the photographers and this became the first and last photographers' meet. I did, however, keep up my effort of indexing and cataloguing the negatives, and by 1973 had indexed more than 10,000 photos of the Mother.

30 May 1969



5-7-69

One of the objectives of taking these photos of the Mother was to have a new Photograph of the Mother of the Mother for the following year's calendar. During the years 1968, 1970 and 1971, Pranab and I took photo of the Mother each year on my birthday in colour transparencies, colour negatives and black & white negatives. On all these occasions Pranab concentrated on the colour photos while I took the black & white photos. The three photographs reproduced on this page were amongst the black & white ones that She liked the most and asked for several copies in different sizes for giving to people.



5-7-70



5-7-71

On September 14, 1969, Shri V.V. Giri, President of India, visited the Ashram, This was followed by the visit of Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi on October 5, 1969. On both these occasions, I accompanied Pranab for taking Mother's photos. Two of my photos are reproduced here.



Shri V.V. Giri with the Mother on 14.9.1969



Mrs. Indira Gandhi and Smt. Nandini Satpathy with the Mother on 6.10.69

During the Sri Aurobindo Birth Centenary Year a devotee offered a crown of gold to the Mother. Dyumanbhai was very keen that the Mother's photographs should be taken with the golden crown. The Mother agreed. Since the Mother wore a crown only with a saree, She again wore a saree after a gap of several years, and Pranab and I took Her photos.



Mother on Her birthday on 21.2.72 (Sri Aurobindo's Centenary Year)

Two other occasions on which I took the photos of the Mother were with my nephews Pranjal (29.2.69) and Viresh (5.3.71) and have been recorded in the "Personal" chapter of this book.

On my birthday in 1970, the Mother allowed me to take Her pictures even while She was at lunch.



The Mother at lunch. Also in the picture are: Vasudha, Champarlal, Pranab, Dyumanbhai, and Dr. Sanyal

I enjoyed taking the Mother's pictures and working with them became a passion with me. I would literally spend hours working in the darkroom printing the Mother's photos for sale, on order, and of course for Her personal distribution.

Over the years I organised the negatives laboriously, made index cards and recorded over 10,000 photos of the Mother, classifying them and cataloguing the descriptions and details of each.

In subsequent years I made several hundred albums of these pictures for sale and offered the proceeds to the Mother. Each of these albums would personally be signed by Her with the name of the person who bought the album.

It was through constant appreciation and encouragement in my photographic interest that She made me develop in myself a sense of art and beauty which was till then very much lacking in my character. During this period She would daily put aside for me the Ipomea flowers of different colours that She called "Artistic Taste", "Artistic Sensibility", "Joy of Beauty", "Pure Sense of Beauty", etc. thus trying to make me more conscious of the need to develop these qualities in myself.

I do not know how much She succeeded, but I certainly enjoyed doing photography and most of all I enjoyed working passionately with Her photos and offering the work at Her feet.

The negatives of the photographs that I took of the Mother are among my most sacred treasures and I have done my best and am doing my best to preserve them for posterity.



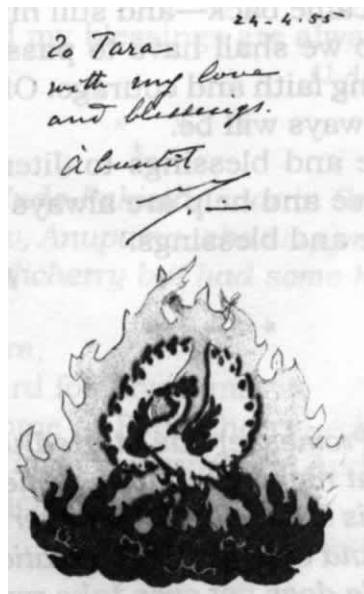
Tara photographing the Mother on 6.10.69

## Chapter 6

### PERSONAL

#### Correspondence Concerning Family

In April 1955, my brother Jitendra met with a serious accident during wrestling, and had to stay for a whole month in the Madras General Hospital where my elder brother Narendra and I stayed with him throughout and nursed him. I did however, return every Wednesday for the Mother's class. Since I could not leave Jitendra and return to the Ashram for the Darshan on 24th April, the Mother sent me a card.



The following letter was written to the Mother from Madras.

*Mother,*

*I shall try my best to make the best out of circumstances, so that when I come back you will find me a better child. Mother, I want to become a worthy instrument for your work. I always remember that you told us so many times that if one knows how to make the best out of things, one can progress in all circumstances. Mother, I am trying my best to remember you constantly. It is more difficult because I constantly have to concentrate on Jitendra and I don't have much time to think. But I try always to remember that it is your work I am doing. It is difficult, but I think I am progressing. I can definitely feel your help and Grace and Jitendra can also feel it.*

This is important. I have answered on your letter itself.

My dear child, I wish you could be here... for several reasons. But I know that Jitendra would feel very bad if you came back—and still his condition is very

serious. So we shall have to pass through the difficulty, keeping faith and courage. Of course, I am with you and always will be.

Give my love and blessings to Jitendra and tell him that my force and help are always with him.

With my love and blessings.

May 1955

\* \* \*

*Sweet Mother,*

*My brother (Promesse) has started working in the Sports Ground at night along with some other boys. I do not know if this is all right for him after all the studies during the day and the physical education activities in the afternoon. He does not even take rest after lunch. He says he does not feel tired. Last night he returned from the Sports Ground at midnight, but he says that in future he will return earlier.*

*Mother, if you think it is all right, then I can let him continue.*

If he does it with pleasure, it does not matter much at his age, provided it does not last for too many days. In any case, as soon as he feels tired, he must take rest.

Blessings.

24 May 1963

\* \* \*

Tara, my dear child.

Here is a card for your father on his birthday.

I have not been able to ask him to come on the 13th as it will be absolutely impossible for me to see him and to give him the time that he expects from me.

The work continues to increase but the hours remain the same.

My love and my blessings are always with you.

11 August 1965

\* \* \*

*During the Indo-Pakistan war in September 1965, my sister-in-law, Anupama who was pregnant, wanted to come to Pondicherry but had some hesitation.*

My dear Tara,

Here is a card for Anupama.

They can come to Pondicherry — but those who are afraid, are afraid everywhere. And one who has faith is safe wherever he may be.

9 September 1965

\* \* \*

A generous heart always forgets the past offences and is ready to re-establish harmony.

future.

With love and blessings.

2 April 1967

My brother Jitendra's first son was born on 29.11.67 at 11:29 a.m. I took a list of names to the Mother and She selected "Pranjal".

ऋतम् (RITAM)

Law of truth at work

\* प्राञ्जल (PRANJAL)

straightforward, candid, honest, sincere

विराज (VIRAJ)

universal, beautiful, splendour

इंदीवर (INDIVAR)

white lotus



Pranjal being placed on the Mother's lap on 29-2-68 at around 11.29 a.m. (when he was exactly three months old)



Sweet Mother,  
 Jitendra's second  
 son was born yesterday,  
 November 17th, at four  
 o'clock in the morning. I  
 would like you to choose  
 a name for him. I brought  
 some suggestions.

18 November 1969

UDIT	}	RISEN, ASCENDED,
उदित		HIGH, TALL, LOFTY
UJJWAL	}	BRIGHT, SHINING, CLEAR,
उज्वल		WHITE, LOVELY, BEAUTIFUL
RIJU	}	UPRIGHT, HONEST, AN ARROW,
ऋजु		THE STRAIGHT RED BOW OF INDERA
ARPIT	}	OFFERED
अर्पित		
SUNEET	}	WELL-BEHAVED
सुनीत		POLITE

From the names above, Mother chose the name "Riju"

\* \* \*



Narendra with the Mother, 25.10.54

\* \* \*

Sweet Mother,  
 Today it is exactly  
 nine years since  
 Narendra left his  
 body. Where is he  
 now? Has he been  
 reborn?

Narendra's  
 psychic being has  
 entered into rest  
 and is still there.

Blessings.

19 March 1970

Sweet Mother,

When the psychic being has left the body and entered into rest, is it possible to have any contact with it? I often dream of Narendra and usually these dreams are very vivid. Is it because there is a contact with him, or does it come from my subconscious?

Most probably these are subconscious activities which have risen to the surface during your sleep.

The psychic rest is inactive, by definition.

But if you remember any of your dreams very exactly, you can tell me and I will see.

Blessings.

20 March 1970

\* \* \*

*Sweet Mother,*

*In my recent dreams of Narendra, I always see him in a very familiar setting, such as in our house, or at the Playground, or in the Ashram. And when I see him, I always have the impression that he has come back after a long time, from very far away. I never see him for very long, it is always just for a few moments, and even then he never speaks. Twice I asked him where he had been, but he just smiled without answering.*

*When I wake up in the morning, I remember him very clearly, although I have no recollection of the rest of the night's dreams.*

In this case, your dreams seem to indicate that he has recently taken a new body without my being informed of it, which is quite possible.

It cannot be among the children I have seen, because I would have recognised him, but there are so many others.

Blessings.

21 March 1970

\* \* \*

*Sweet Mother*

*Isn't there any way to find out definitely whether a particular psychic being has taken a new body or not?*

There is a way.

You must go consciously into the psychic world and see whether you find the psychic being in question. If you see it, the matter is settled. If you don't see it, you must concentrate on it in order to make contact, and ask it to show you which human body it is in. This can be a long and delicate task.

Would you like to try to do it?

Blessings.

23 March 1970

\* \* \*

*Sweet Mother,*

*I would very much like to try this experiment if You guide me.*

*I am ready to help you.*

The first step is to consciously unite with your psychic being. Have you tried? If so, tell me what happened to you.

Blessings.

24 March 1970

\* \* \*

*Sweet Mother,*

*My mind is in such a turmoil these days that I don't feel any contact with my psychic being. I don't think that I have a psychic being any more.*

Don't be sad, my dear child; your psychic being is still there, for if it had gone away, your body would not be able to live.

You may no longer be very conscious of its presence because your mind has become rather noisy, so you are no longer quiet enough to feel the psychic presence. But this can be cured. And since you told me that you would like to try, yesterday I chose this quotation from Sri Aurobindo to send to you:

"Aspiration, constant and sincere, and the will to turn to the Divine alone are the best means to bring forward the psychic."

Fix a time every day when you can be free and undisturbed; sit comfortably and think of your psychic being with an aspiration to enter into contact with it. If you don't succeed immediately, don't be discouraged; you are sure to succeed one day. I only ask that you let me know what time you have chosen so that I can help you more consciously.

With all my love and blessings.

25 March 1970

\* \* \*

*Sweet Mother,*

*I will try to do it every day from 12.45 to 1.00 p.m. I will write to you if I succeed in doing anything. Help me, sweet Mother.*

Good; it is a convenient time for me and you can be sure that I will help you.  
Blessings.

26 March 1970

\* \* \*

*Sweet Mother,*

*I am curious to know what you are going to do when you say that you will help me during my concentration every afternoon.*

I am going to concentrate on you and if something of your consciousness responds, I will lead it to the psychic world to take up the search.

But I must tell you that during the night of the 25th to the 26th, between three and four in the morning, I saw a little boy who seemed to be about two years old; I took him with me and put him on your lap, saying, "Here, he is (Narendra)." The child was very sweet and very conscious, but I know

nothing about his parents nor, of course, about his present name.

But all the same, I hope that this will make the meeting more likely and if I see him physically, I will recognise him. Blessings.

27 March 1970

\* \* \*

*Sweet Mother,*

*Are you sure that Narendra will come back to the Ashram in his next birth?*

No, it is not at all certain.

*Do beings who have been in contact with You in one life always come back to You in their new lives?*

The number of beings who consciously return to a place of their choice is very small.

Those who have returned are mainly the beings who, before leaving their body, asked to return in a new one.

But everything is possible.

Blessings.

28 March 1970

\* \* \*

*Sweet Mother,*

*Parul told me that for several months Narendra knew that he was going to die and often he told her that he would definitely come back here when he was reborn.*

Then this child whom I saw and put on your lap is sure to come here, and we will recognise him. Blessings.

31 March 1970

*After writing the sentence above, the Mother went into a long trance, then asked me if there was any little child in the Ashram to whom I felt very close. I told Her that I did not have any contact with very*

*small children in my work, so I did not feel close to any child. She told me that if there is any child to whom I feel close, maybe we can find out who it is. I then told Her that while in Delhi the previous year, when I had gone for*

*Photograph of Pranjal shown to the Mother my sister Pufnim CL wedding, I did feel very close to Jitendra's elder son, Pranjal. The Mother asked me to bring his photograph.*

*The next day, I showed Pranjali's photograph to the Mother. She immediately recognised him as the child She had put on my lap and identified him as Narendra's soul.*

*Sweet Mother,*

*How is it possible to remember one's past lives?*

*It is through contact with the psychic that one gets fragmentary memories of past lives—the memory of events in which the psychic took part.*

*This happens spontaneously when these same elements of the psychic become active again.*

*Any deliberate mental effort is liable to produce misleading imaginations.*

*Blessings.*

*3 April 1970*



*Viresh is my sister Purnima's elder son. The following three questions are about him.*

*Sweet Mother,*

*Many people who see little Viresh say that there is something very special about him, I would like to know your impression.*

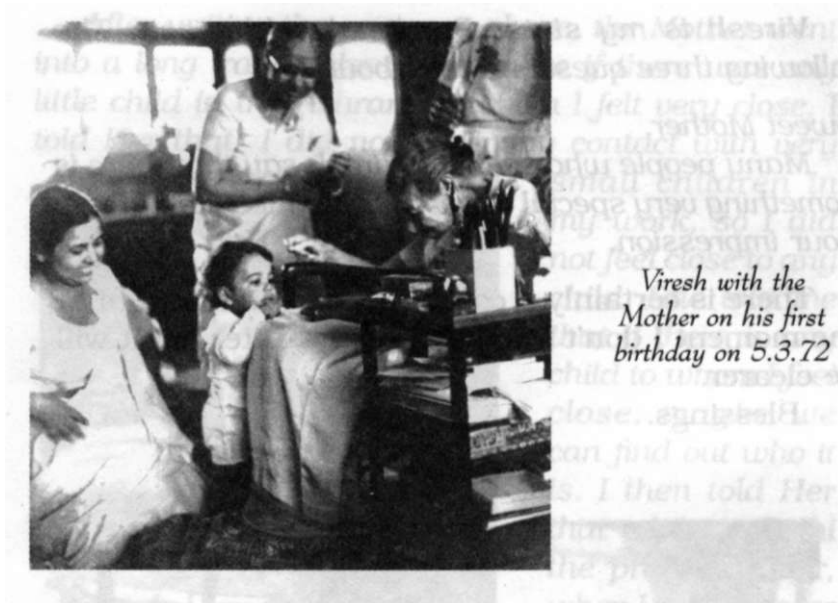
*There is certainly a conscious soul in him, but at the moment I don't know who he is. Later on, it will be clearer.*

*Blessings.*

*5 September 1971*



*Viresh with the Mother on his first birthday on 5.3.72*



*Sweet Mother,*

*This morning you said that the 16th was a special date for Viresh. Is it only the 16th of September or every 16th? Could you tell me what is special about this date?  
It is the 16th of every month. We will know why when we know who he is.*

*5 September 1971*

*\* \* \**

*Sweet Mother,*

*I would like to know why you gave the significance "Bold" for Viresh's name.  
I gave the name "Bold" because that is the impression his character gave me.  
Blessings.*

*9 September 1971*

*\* \* \**

## Personal letters



The Mother laughing at a joke, 21-2-68

My dear child,

I know that it is impossible to change one's nature overnight, but what you can understand and accept immediately is that losing your temper and getting upset is a sign of great weakness. And, as I told you, my force is with you from the moment you decide to overcome this weakness which is unworthy of you. So I ask you, from now on, to use this force I am giving you to control your reactions and to remain quiet until your anger has passed. This is the first indispensable step. Afterwards, I shall gradually help you to understand that your anger is unjustified and has no basis.

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

My love and blessings are with you.

*August 1969*

\* \* \*

In human life the cause of all difficulties, discords and moral sufferings, is the presence in each one of the ego with its desires, preferences and aversions. Even in a disinterested work which consists in helping others, until one has learned to overcome the ego and its demands, until one can force it to remain calm and quiet in a corner, the ego reacts to everything that displeases it and starts an inner storm that rises to the surface and spoils the work.

This work of overcoming the ego is long, slow and difficult, it demands constant attention and sustained effort. This effort is easier for some, more difficult for others.

We are here in the Ashram to do this work together with the help of Sri Aurobindo's knowledge and force, in an attempt to create a community that is more harmonious, more united and consequently much more effective in life.

As long as I was physically present among you, my presence was helping you to achieve this mastery over the ego, so it was not necessary for me to speak to you about it individually very often.

But now this effort must become the basis of each one's existence, more especially those of you who have a responsible position and must take care of others. The leaders must always set the example, the leaders must always practise the virtues they demand from those in their care; they must be understanding, patient, enduring, full of sympathy and warm and friendly goodwill, not out of egoism to win friends for themselves, but out of generosity to be able to understand and help others.

To forget oneself, one's likings and preferences, is indispensable in order to be a true leader.

That is what I am asking of you now, so that you can face your responsibilities as you should. And then you will find that where you used to feel disorder and disunity, they have vanished, and harmony, peace and joy have taken their place.

You know that I love you and that I am always with you to support you, to help you and to show you the way.

Blessings.

26 August 1969

\* \* \*

*Sweet Mother,*

*Help me to become your true child.*

This is a good resolution. You can be sure of my help and of the presence of my consciousness which is with you to enlighten and guide you whenever you call on it. It is in silent aspiration that you can become conscious of this presence and receive its help.

With love and blessings.

10 November 1969

\* \* \*

To Tara

I want you to become conscious of Sri Aurobindo's help because it is always with you.

With my love and my blessings

26 July 1970

\* \* \*

My dear little Tara,

I have just read your letter. My love is with you and will never leave you. It is only when you will have found your psychic being that you will have peace and joy.

This is what I want for you. My arms are always open to you if you want to take refuge in them.

With all my love and blessings.

8 February 1971



Conflicts are created by the desires and preferences of our egos. When the egos are converted, it will be possible for harmony to reign.

We are at one of these "Hours of God", when the old bases get shaken and there is a great confusion; but it is a wonderful opportunity for those who want to leap forward, the possibility of progress is exceptional.

Will you not be of those who take advantage of it?

April 1971

\* \* \*

Sweet Mother,

*Pacify this tempest in me and establish peace. Calm this violence and make love reign. At this moment I aspire with all my heart to become Your true child. Help me to become worthy of You.*

My dear child,

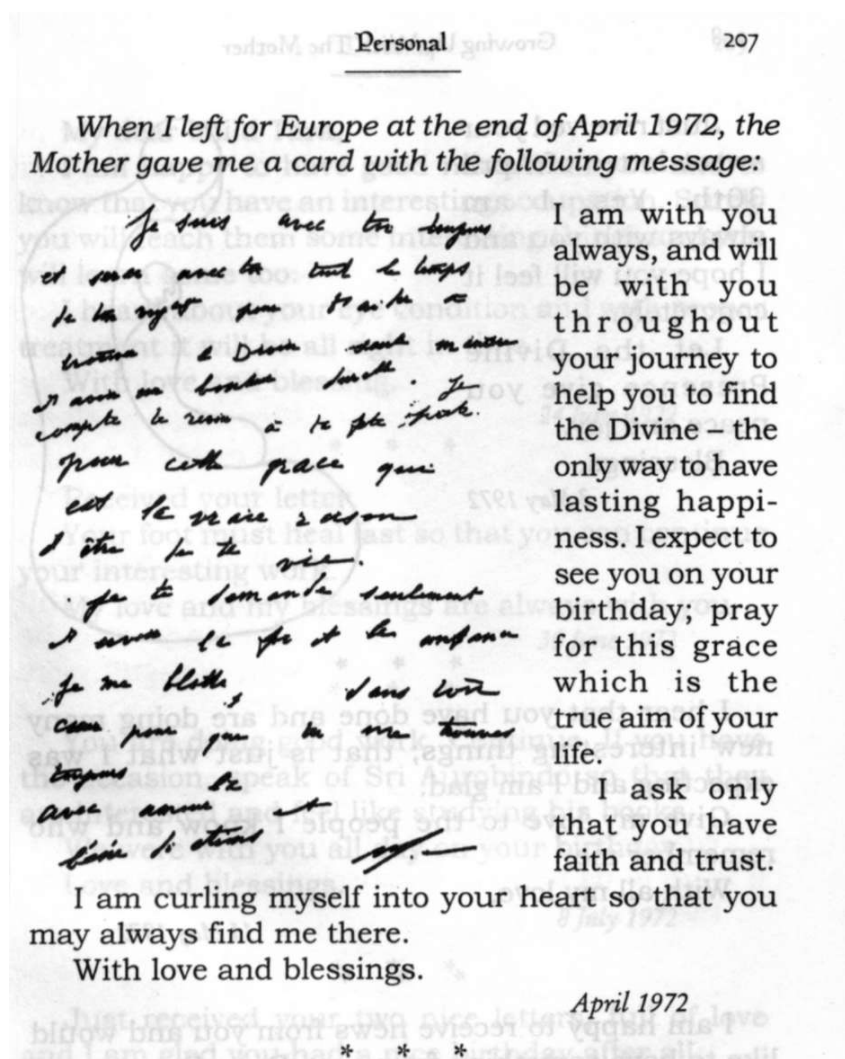
I was very happy to read what you have written.

The day of your birth will truly be your birth into a new consciousness, the true consciousness that will lead you to the divine realisation.

But just now I want to tell you that my love and help are always with you to help you on the way.

Blessings.

2 July 1971

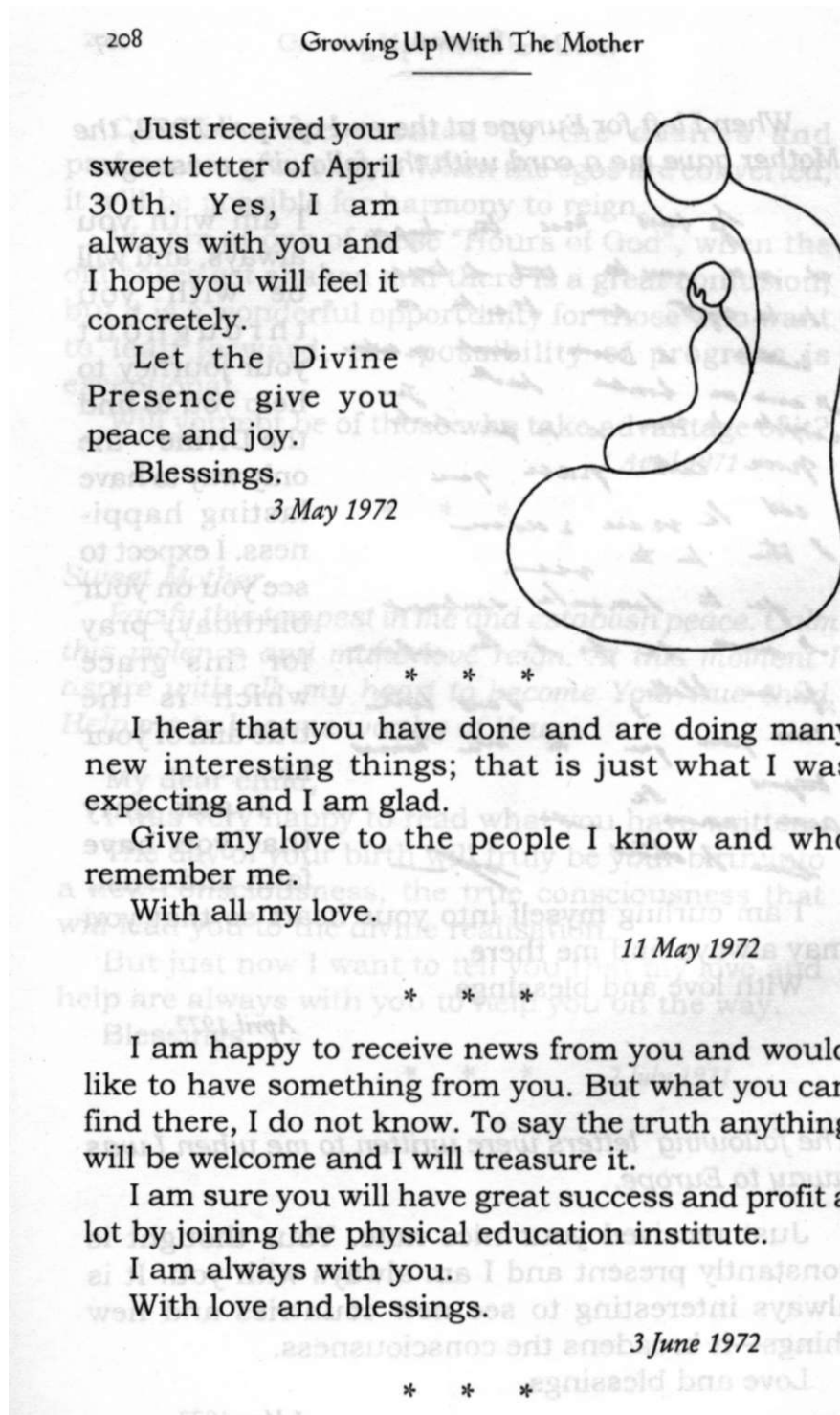


The following letters were written to me when I was away to Europe.

Just received your nice note. Your thought is constantly present and I am always with you. It is always interesting to see new countries and new things—it broadens the consciousness.

Love and blessings.

1 May 1972



My dear child Tara,  
I am happy to have good news from you and to know that you have an interesting occupation. Surely you will teach them some interesting things and you will learn some too.

I heard about your eye condition and with proper treatment it will be all right in time.

With love and blessing.

24 June 1972

\* \* \*

Received your letter.  
Your foot must heal fast so that you can continue your interesting work.  
My love and my blessings are always with you.

30 June 1972

\* \* \*

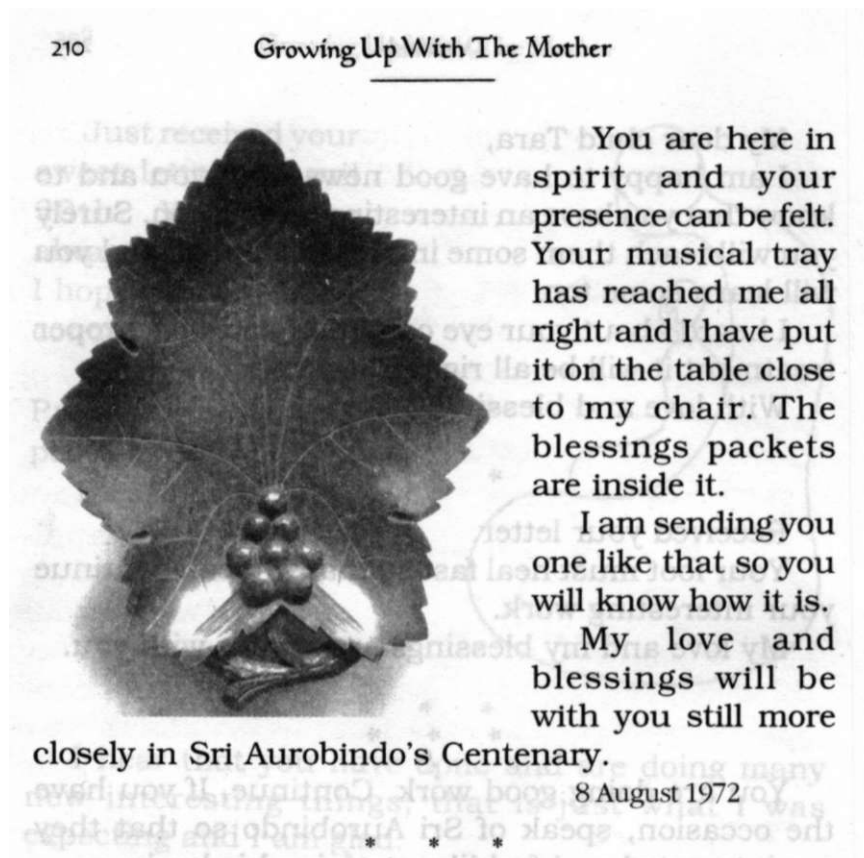
You are doing good work. Continue. If you have the occasion, speak of Sri Aurobindo so that they are interested and feel like studying his books.

We were with you all day on your birthday.

Love and blessings.

8 July 1972

\* \* \*



Just received your two nice letters, full of love and I am glad you had a nice birthday after all.

We felt your presence very closely here—and for a few hours the world had become small.

Switzerland is a very nice place. I am sure you will enjoy your stay there.

Love and blessings.

*12 July 1972*

\* \* \*

We are never alone: the Divine is always with us It is up to us to become conscious of His Presence. Blessings.

*1 January 1973*

\* \* \*

To Tara

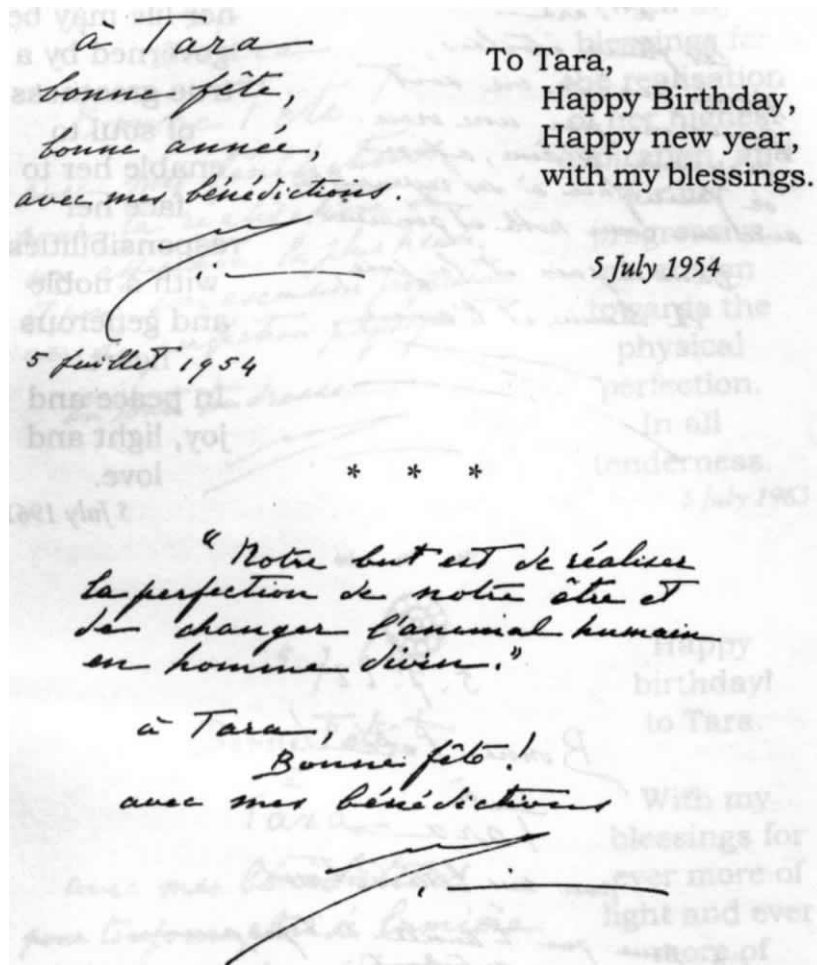
Received your letter.

Take the treatment as advised by the doctor. With love and blessings.

*30 January 1973*

\* \* \*

## Birthday Messages



Our aim is to realise the perfection of our being and to change the human animal into the divine man. To Tara  
Happy Birthday!  
With my blessings.

5 July 1960

\*\*\*



à Tara  
 ces fleurs étoilées,  
 pour que sa vie soit  
 gouvernée par une vraie  
 grandeur d'âme, afin  
 de faire face à ses responsabilités  
 avec un cœur noble et généreux.  
 Dans la paix et la joie,  
 la lumière et l'amour

To Tara  
 These star-like  
 flowers, so that  
 her life may be  
 governed by a  
 true greatness  
 of soul to  
 enable her to  
 face her  
 responsibilities  
 with a noble  
 and generous  
 heart.

In peace and  
 joy, light and  
 love.

5 July 1961

\* \* \*



5.7.62

Bonne Fête!  
 à  
 Tara

avec mes bénédictions

pour que l'année soit progressive  
 spirituellement

et productive sans le travail

Happy birthday to Tara,  
 With my blessings so that the year should be  
 spiritually progressive and productive in work.

5 July 1962

\* \* \*



5-7-63

à Tara

Bonne Fête!

avec mes bénédictions  
pour la réalisation de  
son aspiration la plus haute,  
et pour son ascension progressive  
vers la perfection physique.

En toute tendresse

\* \* \*

To Tara,  
Happy birthday!

With my  
blessings for  
the realisation  
of her highest  
aspiration, and  
for her  
progressive  
ascension  
towards the  
physical  
perfection.

In all  
tenderness.

5 July 1963

5.7.64

Bonne Fête!

à  
Tara

avec mes bénédictions  
pour toujours plus de lumière  
et toujours plus d'harmonie  
sans une beauté et une paix  
constantes

Happy  
birthday!  
to Tara.

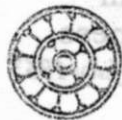
With my  
blessings for  
ever more of  
light and ever  
more of  
harmony in  
constant  
beauty and  
peace.

5 July 1964

\* \* \*

5.7.65  
 Bonne Fête  
 à Tara  
 avec mes bénédictions  
 pour une année  
 au service de la Beauté  
 et de la Vérité.  
 Et ma tendresse

\* \* \*



5-7-66  
 Bonne Fête !  
 à Tara  
 avec mes bénédictions  
 pour une année de  
 lumière, de paix et  
 de progrès dans la  
 joie d'une réalisation  
 de plus en plus  
 claire et consciente.  
 Et avec toute ma  
 tendresse

Happy birthday!  
 to Tara.

With my  
 blessings for a  
 year in the  
 service of  
 Beauty and  
 Truth.  
 And my  
 tenderness

5 July 1965

Happy birthday!  
 to Tara

With my blessings  
 for a year of light,  
 peace and progress  
 in the joy of a  
 realisation more and  
 more clear and  
 conscious.

And with all my  
 tenderness.

5 July 1966

\* \* \*





5.7.67

Bonne Fête!

à Tara  
avec toute ma tendresse  
et mes bénédictions  
pour une année riche  
en progrès et en réussite

Happy birthday to

Tara

With all my  
tenderness and my  
blessings for a year  
rich in progress and  
in light.

5 July 1967

\* \* \*

Happy birthday to  
Tara

With my blessings for  
a year more and  
more conscious and  
productive, and my  
tenderness.

5 July 1968

5-7-68

Bonne Fête

à Tara  
avec mes bénédictions  
pour une année  
de plus en plus  
consciente et productive,  
et ma tendresse

\* \* \*



5.7.69

Bonne Fête

à Tara  
avec toute ma tendresse  
et mes  
bénédictions  
pour une année  
de lumière, de Réalisation  
et de joie

Happy birthday to

Tara

With all my tenderness  
and my blessings for a  
year of Light, Realisation  
and Joy.

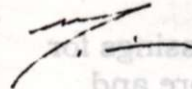
5 July 1969

\* \* \*

5. 7. 70

Bonne Fête  
à Tara

avec ma tendresse  
et mes bénédictions  
pour l'éveil et la croissance  
de la conscience véritable  
au-dessus de tous les conflits et de toutes  
les contradictions, dans la lumière et la joie  
immuables



Happy birthday to Tara  
With my tenderness and my blessing for an  
awakening and a growth of the veritable  
consciousness above all conflicts and all  
contradictions, in the unchanging light and joy.

5 July 1970

\* \* \*

Happy birthday  
Happy New Year  
Happy life  
Happy realisation  
to Tara  
in peace, light and joy.

5 July 1970

\* \* \*

5-7-70

Bonne Fête  
Bonne Année  
Bonne vie  
Bonne réalisation  
à Tara  
dans la paix, la lumière  
et la joie



5.7.71

Bonne Fete  
a Tara  
avec toute ma tendresse  
pour celebrer la victoire de  
la Vraie Conscience et  
mes felicitations pour le chemin  
vers la Realisation

Happy birthday  
to Tara  
With all my  
tenderness to  
celebrate the victory  
of the True  
Consciousness and  
my blessings to lead  
you towards the  
Realisation.

5 July 1971

\* \* \*

To  
Tara  
With my tenderness and my blessings to give her  
the constant joy and the peace of a perfect faith.

5 July 1971

\* \* \*

\* \* \*

Happy birthday  
to my dear  
child Tara  
With all my  
tenderness and  
my blessings.

5 July 1972

\* \* \*



5.7.72

Bonne Fete  
a ma chere  
enfant Tara  
avec toute ma  
tendresse et mes  
benedictions

[Signature]

## Sutras

1. Have no ambition, above all never lay claim to anything, but be at each moment the utmost that you can be.

*25 February 1957*

\* \* \*

2. As for your place in the universal manifestation, the Supreme alone will show it to you.

*2 May 1957*

\* \* \*

3. The Supreme Lord has ineluctably decreed the place you occupy in the world concert, but whatever that place may be, you have the same equal right as everyone else to scale the supreme heights as far as the supramental realisation.

*17 May 1957*

\* \* \*

4. What you are in the truth of your being is ineluctably decreed and nothing and no one can prevent you from being it; but the path you will take to attain it is left to your own free choice.

*19 May 1957*

\* \* \*

5. On the path of ascending evolution, each one is free to choose the direction he will take: the swift and steep ascent towards the summits of Truth, the supreme realisation, or, turning his back to the peaks, the easy descent towards the interminable meanderings of endless rebirths.

*23 May 1957*

6. In the course of the ages and even in the course of your present life you can make your choice once and for all, irrevocably, and then you have only to confirm it at each new occasion; or else, if you have not taken the final decision at the outset, at each moment you will have to make a new choice between falsehood and truth.

*23 May 1957*

7. But even supposing that you have not taken the irrevocable decision at the outset, if you have the good fortune to be alive at one of those extraordinary moments in universal history when the Grace is present, incarnate on earth, It will give you once again, at certain exceptional moments, the possibility of making a final choice that will lead you straight to the goal.

*23 May 1957*

\* \* \*

Sincerity

All division in the being is insincerity.

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

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

Allow nothing anywhere to deny the truth of your being - this is sincerity.


*7 July 1957*

\* \* \*

## Other Messages

*Be faithful*  
—  
*Pas de querelles*  
—  
*Amour*  
\* \* \*

*31-12-52 —*  
*1-1-53*



*Elance-toi toujours  
plus haut, toujours  
plus loin, sans crainte  
et sans hésitation:  
les espoirs s'accomplissent  
tout les réalisations  
de demain.*  
—

Be Faithful  
No quarrels  
Love

Soar ever higher,  
ever farther, without  
fear or hesitation!  
The hopes of today  
are the realisations  
of tomorrow.

31 December 1952 -  
1 January 1953

\* \* \*

Use the past like a trampoline to leap into the  
future.

25 December 1953

\* \* \*

In the Olympic Games what is important is not to  
win but to participate in them.  
In life what is important is not to be victorious  
but to fight well.  
In the service of Truth and Beauty tirelessly.

24 July 1963

\* \* \*

Somebody asked me,—

In the work of Transformation, who is the slowest to do his part, man or God ?

I replied,—

“Man finds that God is too slow to answer his prayers.

God finds that man is too slow to receive His influence.

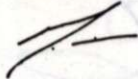
But for the Truth-Consciousness all is going on as it ought to go.”

July 1967

\* \* \*

26.5.70

*Je souhaite que  
tu deviennes consciente  
de l'aide de  
Sri Aurobindo,  
car elle est toujours  
avec toi  
avec ma tendresse  
et mes bénédictions*



26.5.70

I wish that you  
become conscious of  
Sri Aurobindo's help  
because it is always  
with you.  
With my love and my  
blessings.

\* \* \*

To do well what you do is to open the door to progress.

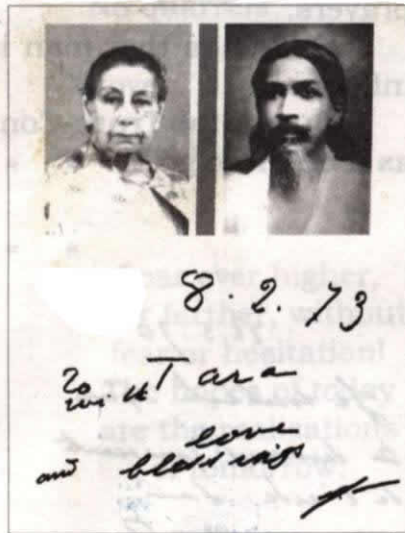
27 July 1970

\* \* \*

Growing Up With The Mother

Mother's Last Messa

2.2.73.  
to Tara  
with love  
blessings  
—



30.3.73.  
to Tara  
with love and  
blessings  
—