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“The practice of this Yoga demands a constant inward remembrance of the one central liberating knowledge.... In all is the one Self, the one Divine is all; all are in the Divine, all are the Divine and there is nothing else in the universe, — this thought or this faith is the whole background until it becomes the whole substance of the consciousness of the worker. A memory, a self-dynamising meditation of this kind, must and does in its end turn into profound and uninterrupted vision and a vivid and all-embracing consciousness of that which we so powerfully remember or on which we so constantly meditate.”


Sweet Mother, what does Sri Aurobindo mean by “a self-dynamising meditation”?

It is a meditation that has the power of transforming your being. It is a meditation which makes you progress, as opposed to static meditation which is immobile and relatively inert, and which changes nothing in your consciousness or in your way of being. A dynamic meditation is a meditation of transformation.

Generally, people don’t have a dynamic meditation. When they enter into meditation — or at least what they call meditation — they enter into a kind of immobility where nothing stirs, and they come out of it exactly as they went in, without any change either in their being or in their consciousness. And the more motionless it is, the happier they are. They could meditate in this way for eternities, it would never change anything either in the universe or in themselves. That is why Sri Aurobindo speaks of a dynamic meditation which is exactly the very opposite. It is a transforming meditation.
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*How is it done? Is it done in a different way?*

I think it is the aspiration that should be different, the attitude should be different. “Different way” — what do you mean by “way” — (laughing) the way of sitting?... Not that? The inner way?

Yes.

But for each one it is different.

I think the most important thing is to know why one meditates; this is what gives the quality of the meditation and makes it of one order or another.

You may meditate to open yourself to the divine Force, you may meditate to reject the ordinary consciousness, you may meditate to enter the depths of your being, you may meditate to learn how to give yourself integrally; you may meditate for all kinds of things. You may meditate to enter into peace and calm and silence — this is what people generally do, but without much success. But you may also meditate to receive the Force of transformation, to discover the points to be transformed, to trace out the line of progress. And then you may also meditate for very practical reasons: when you have a difficulty to clear up, a solution to find, when you want help in some action or other. You may meditate for that too.

I think everyone has his own mode of meditation. But if one wants the meditation to be dynamic, one must have an aspiration for progress and the meditation must be done to help and fulfil this aspiration for progress. Then it becomes dynamic.

*Sweet Mother, here Sri Aurobindo writes: “No matter what the gift and to whom it is presented by us...” and then “there must be a consciousness in the act that we are presenting it to the one divine Being.”*

*Ibid., p. 103*
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*These two phrases are contradictory, aren’t they?*

No, my child. That’s because you don’t understand the turn of the sentence. This means: the nature of the gift we make and to whom we give it is of little importance, provided that it is made as an act of consecration to the Divine.

That is what I always tell people in other words: whatever work you do — whether you go to an office, keep accounts, drive a car, anything — whatever the work you do, and naturally whomever you do it for, it must be an offering to the Divine. While doing it, you should keep the remembrance of the Divine and do it as an expression of your consecration to the Divine. This is what Sri Aurobindo says, nothing else.

_Sweet Mother, I have a question to ask you but it is not my own it is someone else’s._

Ah! let us see.

Why? That person isn’t here?... He is afraid to speak! All right, ask your question.

*It is often said, or predicted, that the numbers 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, (23 April 56) will have a special significance for the Ashram. Is this true?*

I can reply with a joke, if you like. There’s talk now about changing the calendar; if it is changed, the numbers will be changed, and then the whole of History will have gone, flown away!

It is a convention, you see.

Obviously, if the convention is generalised, as is the case with the calendar, it can become a very powerful formation. But it must be very widely adopted to become a powerful formation. What I call “formations” are images which can be animated by a force and taken as symbols. Some people create images
for themselves and use them as their own symbols; and for them they may be very useful and valid, as, for instance, the symbols of dreams. But these are valid only for them, they are purely subjective. While, if you take the calendar which has been adopted by almost all human beings, your symbol can act on a much wider field; but the origin is the same, it is a convention. Naturally, these are things we are used to, for they were like that when we were small children; but it depends on the country of one’s birth and the community in which one is born.

There are communities which count differently. And so, for them, other numbers at other times have a symbolic significance. Only, if our formation — the one in which you are born, which you have adopted — if this formation is adopted by the vast majority of men, you will be able to act on this majority by acting through this formation. You can act through a formation only to the extent to which it is adopted by a certain number of people. It is purely conventional. We began counting from a certain date — which, besides, was chosen quite arbitrarily — and so the numbers came to be what they are today. But, for instance, one has only to visit a Muslim community, where they started counting from — I don’t know whether it is the birth or the death of Mohammed — and their numbers are quite different. So, if you go and tell them: “2, 3, 4, 5, 6”, they will say, “What does your number mean, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6? Nothing at all.”

These things can be taken usefully as symbols and as a means of bringing a more subtle world in contact with a more material world. They may be used in this way, that’s all.

But if, instead of the millions of people who use the present calendar, there were only three or four, it would be pointless to say that these numbers are symbolic. They would be symbolic only for these three or four people. Therefore, it is not the thing in itself which counts, it is the extent of its usage. That’s what’s important.

People make the same mistake with the stars and horoscopes. It is quite simply a language and a convention, and if this
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convention is adopted, it may be utilised to do a certain work. But it has only a relative value in proportion to the number of people who have adopted it.

In this relative world, everything is necessarily relative. So things should not be taken literally, for that makes your mind small and narrow.

The more primitive people are, the more simple-minded they are, and these things take on a more superstitious turn. Superstitions are simply a wrong generalisation of a particular fact.

I always give the example of a person passing under a ladder. At the top of the ladder a man is working and, by an unlucky coincidence, he drops his tool on the head of the passer-by and breaks his head — that can happen, it is a fact, and the man’s head is shattered. But someone, who sees this accident, later makes a general rule and says, “To walk under a ladder is a bad omen” — that is a superstition. And that’s how it happens with everything.

Moreover, many facts of knowledge have exactly the same origin. For instance, if a certain medicine, through a concurrence of favourable circumstances, has cured a number of people, immediately it is proclaimed that this medicine is all-powerful against this disease. But it is not true. And the proof is that if the same medicine is administered in the same way to a hundred people, there won’t be two similar results, and sometimes the effects will be diametrically opposite. Therefore, it is not the property of the medicine itself which cures; to believe in this medicine is a superstition.

And in fact, there is a very slight difference between science and superstition. Perhaps it lies only in the care taken in expressing things. If one is careful as scientists are, to say, “It seems this may be like that... one would think that... everything combines to make us think...” then there’s no longer any superstition! But otherwise when one says, “It is like that”, this is necessarily a superstition. Voilà.
So, to the person who asked you the question you will reply like this: “If with 3, 4, 5, 6, or with 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, something exceptional happens to you and you have an inner or outer revelation, you may proclaim that it is an exceptional date. But if nothing happens to you, it will not be an exceptional date for you at all; it will be a date like all the others!”

(Silence)

There was a very old tradition, very, very old, even older than the Vedic tradition here, which said, “If twelve men of goodwill unite and call the Divine, the Divine is obliged to come.” Well, perhaps this is a truth, perhaps a superstition. Perhaps it depends on the twelve men of goodwill and what they are. Perhaps it depends on other things also. If you ask me, I think that it probably happened like this, that in the beginning twelve men gathered together — there happened to be twelve, perhaps they didn’t even know why — and they were so united in their aspiration, an aspiration so intense and powerful, that they received the response. But to say, “If twelve men of goodwill unite in an aspiration, they are sure to make the Divine descend” is a superstition.

In fact, things must have happened like that, and the person who noted it put it down carefully: “If twelve men of goodwill unite their aspiration, the Divine is obliged to come.” And since then, I can tell you that a considerable number of groups of twelve men have united in a common aspiration... and they did not bring down the Divine! But all the same the tradition has been left intact.

There we are.

We are many more than twelve this evening. (Laughter) Shall we try it once and see if we succeed!

(Meditation)