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Mother reads from *The Synthesis of Yoga*, “The Four Aids”.

Mother, I don't understand “Our sense of personal effort and aspiration comes from the attempt of the egoistic mind to identify itself in a wrong and imperfect way with the workings of the divine Force.”

What is it that you do not understand? The sentence or the idea?

The idea, Mother.

It can be put in very familiar terms.

The individual being, and particularly the mind in it, have an instinctive repulsion to admitting that it's another force than their own small personal one which does things. There is a kind of instinct which makes you feel absolutely convinced that the effort of aspiration, the will to progress are things belonging to you by your own right and, therefore, that you have all the merit.

From the man of art or of literature or of science, who produces something, studies something, and is absolutely convinced that it is he himself who is doing it, to the aspirant yogi who is convinced that it is the ardour of his own aspiration, his personal need for realisation which push him — if someone tells these people (I have had this experience), if someone tells them a little too soon, “Why, no, it is the Divine who aspires in you, it is the divine Force which produces in you...”, they no longer do anything, they fall flat, it doesn't interest them at all any longer; they say, “Good, I have nothing to do then, let the Divine do it.”

And this is what Sri Aurobindo means — that the mind is something so egoistic and so proud that if you take away from

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it the satisfaction it seeks, it no longer collaborates; nor the vital either. And as the physical is very obedient to the vital and the mind, it too collaborates no longer. Then one is before an inert mass which says, “Good, if it isn’t I, well, let the Divine do what He likes, I am not going to do anything at all any more.”

I knew people who had truly made a lot of progress, who were very close to the moment when one emerges into the truth of things, and who were held back simply by this. Because this need to be the source of the action, to have the merit of the effort, this need is so deeply rooted that they cannot take the last step. Sometimes it takes years. If they are told, “No, it isn’t you, this energy which is in you, this will which is in you, this knowledge which is in you, all this is the Divine; it is not what you call yourself”, this makes them so miserable that they can’t do anything any more. That’s what Sri Aurobindo wants to say in this sentence.

There are people who have such a need to keep the sense of their separate personality that if they are forced to admit that all that springs upwards is inspired by the Divine or even done by Him, they keep for their little person the whole side of defects, faults, errors, and they cherish their defects, so that at least something remains theirs, which is indeed their own, their personal property: “Yes, all that is beautiful, luminous, is the Divine; all horrible things — that’s myself.” But a self... a big self; one must not touch it!

Mother, at times one spontaneously feels an aspiration: and at other moments when one wants to aspire it is no longer spontaneous. Then what is the difference, does the Divine aspire?...

Sri Aurobindo answers this. He describes it extremely well.

For all this darkness, all this inconscience, all this ignorance is not at all something personal. It is the condition of the world,

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the state of matter, the state of physical life. And it enters you, makes you act; it's like something pulling the strings of the puppet. All these desires, all these impulses, all these currents of force are things which pass through you, which you obey without even being aware of it, and which you take for yourself. And there is no yourself in this affair. It comes from everywhere and goes everywhere. You are a public square: things enter, go out, make you move.

Mother, why does one have a particular defect and not other defects?

This is the work of Nature.

Why are there some plants of one kind and others of another, some animals of one sort and others of another? There are no two exactly alike combinations in the universe. All the combinations are different. There are no two movements exactly similar in the universe. There is nothing which is reproduced exactly. There are analogies, there are similarities, there are families — there are families of movements which may be called families of vibrations — but there are no two identical things; neither in time nor in space. Nothing is repeated. Otherwise there would be no manifestation, there would be only one single thing.

Manifestation is simply diversity. It is the One deploying Himself in the innumerable, indefinitely.

Nothing? Nowhere?

Sweet Mother, when does the ego become an instrument?

When it is ready to become it.

How does that happen?

How does it happen?... In each one, I believe, it happens in a different way. It may happen suddenly, in the space of a moment,

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by a kind of inner reversal; it may take years; it may take centuries; it may take several lives. For each one there is a moment when it happens: when he is ready.

And I think he is ready when he is completely formed. The purpose of existence of the ego is the formation of the individual. When the individual is ready the ego can disappear. But before that it does not disappear because it has still some work to do.

When the world is ready to receive the new creation, the adverse forces will disappear. But so long as the world needs to be tempted, kneaded, churned in order to be prepared, the adverse forces will be there to be the temptation and that which strikes you, pushes you, prevents you from sleeping, compels you to be absolutely sincere.

A being that is absolutely sincere becomes the master of the adverse forces. But so long as there is egoism in a being or pride or ill-will, it will always be the object of temptation, of attack; and it will always be fully subject to this constant conflict with what, under the appearance of hostile beings, toils in spite of itself at the divine Work.

The time is not absolutely determined. I have already explained this to you several times. There are many fields of consciousness, zones of consciousness superimposed upon one another; and in each one of these fields of consciousness or action there is a determinism which seems absolute. But the intervention in one field of even the next higher field, like the intervention of the vital in the physical, introduces the determinism of the vital in that of the physical, and necessarily transforms the determinism of the physical. And if through aspiration, the inner will, self-giving and true surrender one can enter into contact with the higher regions or even the supreme region, from up there the supreme determinism will come down and transform all the intermediate determinisms and it will be able to bring about in a so-to-say almost inexistent span of time what would have otherwise taken either years or lives to be accomplished. But this is the only way.

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If at the time of some event or circumstance — take for instance, to simplify things, of a danger — if at that time instead of trying to struggle in the domain where one is, one can traverse in a great soaring all the domains which are rungs in the consciousness, and go to the supreme region, what Sri Aurobindo calls the Transcendent, if one can enter into contact with this Transcendent, in a state of perfect surrender, it is He who will act and change everything, in all circumstances — to the extent that this will be what people call miracles, because they do not understand how it can happen.

The sole secret is to know how to climb up right to the top.

That's all?

You wanted a meditation...