

Chapter Four

Peace

Peace Is Something Positive

Peace is more positive than calm — there can be a negative calm which is merely an absence of disturbance or trouble, but peace is always something positive bringing not merely a release as calm does but a certain happiness or Ananda of itself. There is also a positive calm, something that stands firm against all things that seek to trouble, not thin and neutral like the negative calm, but strong and massive. Very often the two words are used in the same sense, but one can distinguish them in their true sense as above.

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In peace there is besides the sense of stillness a harmony that gives a feeling of liberation and full satisfaction.

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It is very good news. The peace settling in the system and with it a happy activity — that is the basis for your Yoga which I always wanted you to have — a sunny condition in which what has to come in will come in and expand like a bud into flower and what has to fall off will fall off in its time like a slough discarded.

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The quietude and silence which you feel and the sense of happiness in it are indeed the very basis of successful sadhana. When one has got that, then one may be sure that the sadhana is placing itself on a sound footing. You are also right in thinking that if this quietude is fully established all that is concealed within will come out. It is true also that the happiness of this peace is far greater than anything outer objects can bring — there can be no comparison. To become indifferent to the attraction of outer

objects is one of the first rules of Yoga, for this non-attachment liberates the inner being into peace and the true consciousness. It is only when one sees the Divine in all things that objects get a value for the Yoga, but even then not for their own sake or as objects of desire, but for the sake of the Divine within and as a means of the divine work and manifestation.

Peace Comes Little by Little

To nobody does the divine calm and peace come uninterruptedly in the early stages of the Yoga — it comes little by little — it is sometimes absent for long periods together, or there are strong attacks which cloud it over. It is by long sadhana that one gets the permanent peace.

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In the beginning the peace and calmness comes like that only for a short time. The Adhar cannot keep it, its own natural condition being different. But afterwards the power of holding increases until in some part of the being at least it is constant.

A Settled or Established Peace

It is very good indeed. The peace and silence must settle deep in, so deep that whatever comes from outside can only pass over the surface without troubling the settled calm within — it is good also that the meditation comes of itself. It means that the Yoga-Force is beginning to take up the sadhana.

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Yes, a settled peace and strength supporting the intensity and from which everything foreign falls off, is the true basis.

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The first thing to do in the sadhana is to get a settled peace and silence in the mind. Otherwise you may have experiences, but nothing will be permanent. It is in the silent mind that the true

consciousness can be built.

A quiet mind does not mean that there will be no thoughts or mental movements at all, but that these will be on the surface and you will feel your true being within separate from them, observing but not carried away, able to watch and judge them and reject all that has to be rejected and to accept and keep to all that is true consciousness and true experience.

Passivity of the mind is good, but take care to be passive only to the Truth and to the touch of the Divine Shakti. If you are passive to the suggestions and influences of the lower nature, you will not be able to progress or else you will expose yourself to adverse forces which may take you far away from the true path of Yoga.

Aspire to the Mother for this settled quietness and calm of the mind and this constant sense of the inner being in you standing back from the external nature and turned to the Light and Truth.

The forces that stand in the way of sadhana are the forces of the lower mental, vital and physical nature. Behind them are adverse powers of the mental, vital and subtle physical worlds. These can be dealt with only after the mind and heart have become one-pointed and concentrated in the single aspiration to the Divine.

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If the peace or silence is once absolutely established, no amount of movements on the surface can impair or abolish it. It can bear all the movements of the universe and yet be the same.

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When the peace is fully established everywhere in the being, these things [*reactions in the lower vital*] will not be able to shake it. They may come first as ripples on the surface, then only as suggestions which one looks at or does not care to look at, but in either case they don't get inside, affect or disturb at all.

It is difficult to explain, but it is something like a mountain at which one throws stones — if conscious all through the

mountain may feel the touch of the stones, but the thing would be so slight and superficial that it would not be in the least affected. In the end even that reaction disappears.

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The peace liberates from all dependence on outer contacts — it brings what the Gita calls the *ātmarati*. But at first there is a difficulty in keeping it intact when there is the contact with others because the consciousness has the habit of running outwards in speech or external interchange or else of coming down to the normal level. One must therefore be very careful until it is fixed; once fixed it usually defends itself, for all outer contacts become surface things to a consciousness full of the higher peace.

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Even when there is the peace and the wideness, these things [*imagination about old enjoyments*] can float on the surface and try to come in — only then they do not occupy the consciousness but touch it merely. It is what was regarded by the old Yogis as a mechanical remnant of Prakriti, a continuation of its blind habit which remained after the essential liberation of the self. It was treated lightly as of no importance — but that view is not tenable in our sadhana which aims not only at a liberation of the Purusha but at a *complete* transformation of the Prakriti also.

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That is of course how it should be. It should go so far indeed that you will feel this peace and vastness as your very self, the abiding stuff of your consciousness — unchangeably there.

Peace in the Mind, Vital and Physical

Yes, certainly, there is a mental peace, a vital peace, a peace of the physical Nature. It is the peace of a higher consciousness that descends from above.

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The silence and peace are there waiting to manifest. Let the mind and vital give all themselves and they will pour in and reveal themselves.

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There can be peace in the mind even when the vital is not quite at rest or peace in the inner being even if the surface is disturbed. Consciousness cannot feel at rest and free, if there is no peace.

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If you get peace, then to clean the vital becomes easy. If you simply clean and clean and do nothing else, you go very slowly — for the vital gets dirty again and has to be cleaned a hundred times. The peace is something that is clean in itself — so to get it is a positive way of securing your object. To look for dirt only and clean is the negative way.

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When the light and peace are full in the vital and physical consciousness, it is this that remains always as a basis for the right movement of the whole nature.

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It is the same peace [*in the physical as in the vital*] — but is felt materially in the material substance, concretely in the physical mind and nervous being, as well as psychologically in the mind and vital or subtly in the subtle body.

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I presume that [*feeling peace concretely between the lobes of the brain*] would mean that the peace had become or was becoming very material and solid and physically tangible — “peace in the cells”. Everything is a “substance” — even peace, consciousness, ananda, — only there are different orders of substance.

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Certainly, peace, purity and silence can be felt in all material

things — for the Divine Self is there in all.

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Nature by itself is always full of peace — a peace which is fundamental and even the perturbations of mind and life cannot break.

Peace in the Inner Being

It is quite usual to feel an established peace in the inner being even if there is disturbance on the surface. In fact that is the usual condition of the Yogi before he has attained the absolute samata in all the being.

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When the peace is deep or wide, it is usually in the inner being. The outer parts do not ordinarily go beyond a certain measure of quietude — they get deep peace only when they are flooded with it from the inner being.

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The peace starts in the inner being — it is spiritual and psychic but it overflows the outer being — when it is there in the activity, it means either that the ordinary restless mind, vital, physical has been submerged by the flood of the inner peace or, at a more advanced stage, that they have been partially or wholly changed into thoughts, forces, emotions, sensations which have in their very stuff an essence of inner silence and peace.

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If peace becomes permanent in the inner being, then the sub-nature becomes an external and superficial thing — one part of the consciousness is then free; unmoved by anything that happens, it regards the surface turmoil as something not belonging to itself. If the peace extends in the same way into the external parts also, then the whole being becomes free and the inferior nature is felt only as something moving about in the atmosphere, trying to enter but unable to do so. But this of course happens

only when the descents of Peace have turned into a massive stability of Peace.

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Yes, the inward move is the right one. To live within in the peace and silence is the first necessity. I spoke of the wideness because in the wideness of silence and peace (which the Yogins recognise as the realisation of self at once individual and universal) is the basis for harmonising the inward and the outward. It will come.

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Peace is never easy to get in the life of the world and never constant, unless one lives deep within and bears the external activities as only a surface front of our being.

Passive Peace

Passive peace is not supposed to do anything. It is by the complete solid presence of peace alone that all disturbance is pushed out to the surface or outside the consciousness.

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It is not the innate character of passive peace that it can only concentrate in inaction. It can be there and concentrate in or behind action also.

Peace and Inertia

The Peace is not of the nature of inertia, but the inertia (tamas) is a degradation of peace or rest as rajas is a degradation of divine Force. So when the physical is invited to peace and cannot receive it, it brings up inertia instead.

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Rest of the being from effort, disturbance etc.¹ The Spirit is

¹ *The correspondent wrote to Sri Aurobindo, "You have said, 'The inertia (tamas) is a degradation of peace or rest.' What sort of rest do you mean?" — Ed.*

eternally at rest even in the midst of action — peace gives this spiritual rest. Tamas is a degradation of it and leads to inaction.

Peace and Force

The peace is the condition of the right play of the Force. Force and Peace are two different powers of the Divine.

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Peace is the first condition, but peace of itself does not bring Force — it is a receptacle of Force, not a bringer of Force.

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A peaceful state is the basis of the Yogic consciousness. It is only when that is complete and fully established that the true intensity and energy can come.

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The greater the quietude, the greater the energy that can be received.

Peace, Love and Joy

It is the Vaishnava feeling that the Vedantic peace is not enough, the love and joy of the Divine is more precious. But unless the two things go together, the love and joy felt is perhaps intense, but impermanent, and it is also true that it gets easily mixed, misdirected or turns to something that is not the true thing at all. Peace and purity must be got as the foundation of the consciousness, otherwise there is no firm standing ground for the divine play.

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Active experience of the joy, peace, love, etc. when the direct contact is there; but even when it is not there, a quiet mind, heart and vital waiting and aspiring for the contact and the Presence — this should always be the condition.

No disturbance or confusion due to mere vital-physical impressions and experiences. To throw these away always, not to want them or get interested when they come — this is what is very much needed in you.

Always either the contact and the true experience *or* the quiet peace and aspiration.

Peace, Happiness, Joy, Delight, Ananda

To be full of peace, the heart quiet, not troubled by grief, not excited by joy is a very good condition. As for Ananda, it can come not only with its fullest intensity but with a more enduring persistence when the mind is at peace and the heart delivered from ordinary joy and sorrow. If the mind and heart are restless, changeful, unquiet, Ananda of a kind may come, but it is mixed with vital excitement and cannot abide. One must get peace and calm fixed in the consciousness first, then there is a solid basis on which the Ananda can spread itself and in its turn become an enduring part of the consciousness and the nature.

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The peace need not be grave or joyless — there should be nothing grey in it — but the gladness or joy or sense of lightness that comes in the peace must be necessarily something internal, self-existent or due to a deepening of experience — it cannot, like the laughter of which you speak, be conveyed by an external cause or dependent upon it, e.g. something amusing, exhilarating etc.

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It is when one is full of peace that one laughs most gladly. It is an inner condition, not something external like being silent or not laughing. It is a condition of serenity and stillness within in which there is no disturbance even if things go wrong or people are unpleasant or the body feels unwell — the state of serene inner gladness remains the same. It is self-existent.

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Happiness is a condition of gladness, sense of inner ease and welfare, contentment, a sunlit life — it is more quiet in its nature than joy and delight.

Joy (*harṣa*) is more intense. It is a strong movement of great gladness with an exultation, a leaping up of the vital to take some happiness, good fortune or other thing pleasant to the being.

Delight is an intense joy or an intense pleasure in something or an intensely joyful condition. At its most intense it becomes what is called rapture or ecstasy when one is “carried away” or “lifted out of” oneself by the intensity of the delight.

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Joy is a vital movement, exciting, restless and transient.

In Ananda there is no excitement, it is a calm and happy and intense spiritual state or spiritual movement.

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The joy also should be deep within, then it will not conflict with the deeps of peace and inner consciousness.

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Shanti is peace or calm — it is not Ananda. There can of course be a calm Ananda.

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Peace is a sign of mukti — Ananda moves towards siddhi.

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There are two conditions, one of Ananda, another of great calm and equality in which there is no joy or grief. If one attains the latter, afterwards a greater more permanent Ananda becomes possible.

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The active Ananda can culminate in the shanta Ananda. Also when the shanta Ananda is established, it is the base from which active Ananda arises without disturbing its calmness.