Chapter Two

Doctors and Medicines

Cure by Yogic Force and by Medicines

To heal [illness] by the true force is obviously the best — provided the body is amenable. It has a consciousness of its own which must be fully enlightened before it gives a full response.

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Yes, if the faith and opening are there, medicines are not indispensable.

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To separate yourself from the thing and call in the Mother’s force to cure it [is the Yogic method] — or else to use your own will force with faith in the power to heal, having the support of the Mother’s force behind you. If you cannot use either of these methods then you must rely on the action of the medicine.

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Yogic force is all right when one is in a Yogic condition and when it acts. But when it does not, medicine is handy.

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All ill-health is due to some inertia or weakness or to some resistance or wrong movement there [in the vital], only it has sometimes a more physical and sometimes a more psychological character. Medicines can counteract the physical results.

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Medicines are a pis aller that have to be used when something in the consciousness does not respond or responds superficially to the Force. Very often it is some part of the material consciousness that is unreceptive — at other times it is the subconscient
which stands in the way even when the whole waking mind, life, physical consent to the liberating influence. If the subconscient also answers, then even a slight touch of the Force can not only cure the particular illness but make that form or kind of illness practically impossible hereafter.

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As for the illness itself, we understood from what you wrote that it was only a cold and not a serious illness. In such a case one can take medicines from the Dispensary to hasten the cure or one relies on the Force and opens oneself to the Mother, rejecting the suggestions of illness, putting oneself on the side of the helping forces. You had sufficient experience of sadhana to know that and we did not think it necessary to write what we supposed to be in your knowledge.

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Try to keep yourself open to our Force in the body, that is the main thing. If the nerves (physical) are quieted, the illness itself will be less intense in its symptoms and can be more easily got over.

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As for curing you by the Force, the main obstacle is your own vital movements. All this egoistic insistence on your own ideas, claims, preferences — assertion of your own righteousness as against the wickedness of others, complaints, quarrels, disputes, rancours against those around you and the reactions they cause — have had this effect on your liver and stomach and nerves. If you give up all that and live quietly and at peace with others, thinking less of yourself and others and more of the Divine, it would make things much easier and help to restore your health. Quietness of the mind in facing your illness is also necessary — agitation stops the action of the Force.

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Certainly, one can act from within on an illness and cure it. Only it is not always easy as there is much resistance in Matter,
a resistance of inertia. An untiring persistence is necessary; at first one may fail altogether or the symptoms increase, but gradually the control of the body or of a particular illness becomes stronger. Again, to cure an occasional attack of illness by inner means is comparatively easy, to make the body immune from it in future is more difficult. A chronic malady is harder to deal with, more reluctant to disappear entirely than an occasional disturbance of the body. So long as the control of the body is imperfect, there are all these and other imperfections and difficulties in the use of the inner force.

If you can succeed by the inner action in preventing increase, even that is something; you have then by abhyāsa to strengthen the power till it becomes able to cure. Note that so long as the power is not entirely there, some aid of physical means need not be altogether rejected.

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Illness marks some imperfection or weakness or else opening to adverse touches in the physical nature and is often connected also with some obscurity or disharmony in the lower vital or the physical mind or elsewhere.

It is very good if one can get rid of illness entirely by faith and Yoga-power or the influx of the Divine Force. But very often this is not altogether possible, because the whole nature is not open or able to respond to the Force. The mind may have faith and respond, but the lower vital and the body may not follow. Or if the mind and vital are ready, the body may not respond, or may respond only partially, because it has the habit of replying to the forces which produce a particular illness and habit is a very obstinate force in the material part of the nature. In such cases the use of the physical means can be resorted to,—not as the main means, but as a help or material support to the action of the Force. Not strong and violent remedies, but those that are beneficial without disturbing the body.
The Role of Doctors

If the whole being is open to the force, then only outward means have not to be taken or used very little. But till then Doctors and their ways of treating things cannot be dispensed with altogether.

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I have got X’s report. I gather from it that there is general nervous weakness. I shall write to ask him if this is correct and what treatment he proposes to give. As for medical treatment it is sometimes a necessity. If one can cure by the Force as you have often done, it is the best — but if for some reason the body is not able to respond to the Force (e.g. owing to doubt, lassitude or discouragement or for inability to react against the disease), then the aid of medical treatment becomes necessary. It is not that the Force ceases to act and leaves all to the medicines, — it will continue to act through the consciousness but take the support of the treatment so as to act directly on the resistance in the body, which responds more readily to physical means in its ordinary consciousness.

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You refuse to speak to the Doctor and on the other hand your body is not yet able to receive the Forces in such a way as to cure it. When the body is not able to receive the Forces unaided, it is then that we send the Doctor and work through him — but here your mind comes in and refuses. So both means are stopped.

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Where the illness becomes pronounced and chronic in the body, it is necessary often to call in the aid of physical treatment and that is then used as a support of the Force. X in his treatment does not rely on medicines alone, but uses them as an instrumentation for the Mother’s force.

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You are very much behind the times. Do you not know that even
many doctors now admit and write it publicly that medicines are an element but only one and that the psychological element counts as much and even more? I have heard that from doctors often and read it over reputable medical signatures. And among the psychological elements, they say, one of the most important is the doctor’s optimism and self-confidence, (his faith, what? it is only another word for the same thing) and the confidence, hope, helpful mental atmosphere he can inspire in or around his patient. I have seen it stated categorically that a doctor who can do that is far more successful than one who knows Medicine better but cannot.

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Miracles can be done, but there is no reason why they should be all instantaneous, whether from Gods or doctors.

Medical Systems

Of course injections are all the fashion; for everything it is “inject, inject and again inject”. Medicine has gone through three stages in modern times — first (at the beginning in Molière’s days) it was “bleed and douche”, then “drug and diet”, now it is “serum and injection”. Praise the Lord! not for the illnesses, but for the doctors. However each of these formulas has a part truth behind it — with its advantages and disadvantages. As all religions and philosophies point to the Supreme but each in a different direction, so all medical fashions are ways to health — though they don’t always reach it.

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Medicine is not exactly science. It is theory + experimental fumbling + luck.

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The theory [of allopathic medicine] is imposing, but when it comes to application, there is too much fumbling and guesswork for it to rank as an exact science. There are many scientists (and
Others (who grunt when they hear medicine called a science. Anatomy and physiology, of course, are sciences.

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There are plenty of allopathic doctors who consider homeopathy, Nature-Cure, Ayurveda and everything else that is not orthodox “medical science” to be quackery. Why should not homeopaths etc. return the compliment?

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I have put down a few comments to throw cold water on all this blazing hot allopathism. But all these furious disputes seem to me now of little use. I have seen the working of both systems [allopathy and homeopathy] and of others and I cannot believe in the sole truth of any. The ones damnable in the orthodox view, entirely contradicting it, have their own truth and succeed — also both the orthodox and heterodox fail. A theory is only a constructed idea-script which represents an imperfect human observation of a line of processes that Nature follows or can follow; another theory is a different idea-script of other processes that also she follows or can follow. Allopathy, homeopathy, naturopathy, osteopathy, Kaviraji, hakimi have all caught hold of Nature and subjected her to certain processes; each has its successes and failures. Let each do its own work in its own way. I do not see any need for fights and recriminations. For me all are only outward means and what really works are unseen forces behind; as they act, the outer means succeed or fail — if one can make the process a right channel for the right force, then the process gets its full utility — that is all.

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Tumour, syphilis etc. are specialities, but what I have found in my psycho-physical experience is that most disorders of the body are connected, though they go by families, — but there is also connection between the families. If one can strike at their psycho-physical root, one can cure even without knowing the pathological whole of the matter and working through the
symptoms is a possibility. Some medicines invented by demi-
mystics have the power. What I am now considering is whether
homeopathy has any psycho-physical basis. Was the founder a
demi-mystic? I don’t understand otherwise certain peculiarities
of the way X’s medicines act.

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Of course [X consults his homeopathy books in choosing
medicines]. He learned homeopathic medicine in America and
his ideas of homeopathy are the American ideas. But how does
his knowledge prevent intuition? Even an allopathic doctor has
often to intuit what medicine he should give or what mixture —
and it is those who intuit best that succeed best. All is not done
by sole rule of book or sole rule of thumb even in orthodox
Science.

The Right Use of Medicines

X wrote two or three days ago that you were not regular in
taking his medicine and in that case he could not be responsible
(if the treatment was not strictly followed to the end) if the cure
was imperfect or if afterwards there was a relapse which might
be irremediable. Dr. Y told the Mother that he was amazed at the
improvement in your case. He had not believed such a thing was
possible, but he had seen with his own eyes and now knew that
it was. It would be a pity if such a result were not carried out to
full success because of carelessness in following the treatment. I
would recommend you to give it a full chance.

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I did not mean that it [cure through the Force] cannot be
done without medicines. But if it is to be done with the aid
of medicines, then the right medicine is helpful, the wrong one
obviously brings in a danger.

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It is not enough for a medicine to be a specific [for it to be
helpful]. Certain drugs have other effects or possible effects which can be ignored by the physician who only wants to cure his case, but cannot be in a whole-view of the system and its reactions. The unfavourable reactions of quinine are admitted by medical opinion itself and doctors in Europe have been long searching for a substitute for quinine.

* There are some remedies which cure the disease temporarily but are bad for the system like quinine — others which suit some people but harm others, others which have a good effect one way, but a bad one in another way. That is why Mother does not like them to be used indiscriminately. Some she disapproves of altogether, e.g. quinine. She also disapproves of the excessive use of purgatives.

* It is hardly possible to give a list of drugs [not to be prescribed for persons practising Yoga], but the general rule is that very strong or violent medicines should be avoided as much as possible — for Yoga increases the sensitivity of the vital and physical reactions and drugs tend to produce stronger or other effects than with ordinary persons.

* The morphia stuns locally or otherwise the consciousness and its reaction to the subconscient pressure and so suspends the pain or deadens it. Even that it does not always do — X took five morphine injections in succession without even diminishing his liver inflammation pains. What became of the power of the drug over the subconscient in that case? The resistance was too strong just as the resistance of Y’s subconscient to the Force.

* Injection should be taken only if indispensable. Medical treatment can be resorted to if the illness is or has become of a chronic kind.