Sweet Mother, on Friday the subject you gave for meditation was “How to awaken in the body an aspiration for the Divine.”

Yes.

How to do it, Sweet Mother?

Naturally, there are many ways of doing it and, in fact, each one should find his own. But the starting-point may be very different, apparently almost the very opposite.

In former times, when yoga was a flight from life, it was a common practice for people, apart from a few predestined ones, not to think about yoga until they were old, when they had experienced much, known all the vicissitudes of life, its pleasures, its sorrows, its joys and miseries, its responsibilities, disillusionments, indeed all that life usually brings to human beings; and naturally, all this had disabused them a little of their illusions about the joys of existence, so they were ready to think of something else, and their body, if not full of youthful enthusiasm (!), was at least not a hindrance, for as it had been satiated, it no longer asked for much.... To start from this end is all very well when one wants to leave life behind with a spiritual attitude and does not expect any collaboration from it in the transformation. This is obviously the easiest method. But it is also obvious that if one wants this material existence to participate in the divine life, to be the field of action and realisation, it is preferable not to wait until with wear and tear the body becomes sufficiently... quiet so as not to obstruct the yoga. It is much better, on the contrary, to take it quite young when it is full of all its energies and can put enough ardour and
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intensity into its aspiration. In this case, instead of relying on a weariness which no longer demands anything, one should rely on a kind of inner enthusiasm for the unknown, the new — for perfection. And if you have the good fortune to be in conditions where you can receive help and guidance from childhood, try while still very young to discern between the fugitive joys and superficial pleasures life can give and the marvellous thing that life, action, growth would be in a world of perfection and truth, where all the ordinary limitations, all the ordinary incapacities would be done away with.

When one is very young and as I say “well-born”, that is, born with a conscious psychic being within, there is always, in the dreams of the child, a kind of aspiration, which for its child’s consciousness is a sort of ambition, for something which would be beauty without ugliness, justice without injustice, goodness without limits, and a conscious, constant success, a perpetual miracle. One dreams of miracles when one is young, one wants all wickedness to disappear, everything to be always luminous, beautiful, happy, one likes stories which end happily. This is what one should rely on. When the body feels its miseries, its limitations, one must establish this dream in it — of a strength which would have no limit, a beauty which would have no ugliness, and of marvellous capacities: one dreams of being able to rise into the air, of being wherever it is necessary to be, of setting things right when they go wrong, of healing the sick; indeed, one has all sorts of dreams when one is very young.... Usually parents or teachers pass their time throwing cold water on it, telling you, “Oh! it’s a dream, it is not a reality.” They should do the very opposite! Children should be taught, “Yes, this is what you must try to realise and not only is it possible but it is certain if you come in contact with the part in you which is capable of doing this thing. This is what should guide your life, organise it, make you develop in the direction of the true reality which the ordinary world calls illusion.”

This is what it should be, instead of making children
ordinary, with that dull, vulgar common sense which becomes an inveterate habit and, when something is going well, immediately brings up in the being the idea: “Oh, that won’t last!”, when somebody is kind, the impression, “Oh, he will change!”, when one is capable of doing something, “Oh, tomorrow I won’t be able to do it so well.” This is like an acid, a destructive acid in the being, which takes away hope, certitude, confidence in future possibilities.

When a child is full of enthusiasm, never throw cold water on it, never tell him, “You know, life is not like that!” You should always encourage him, tell him, “Yes, at present things are not always like that, they seem ugly, but behind this there is a beauty that is trying to realise itself. This is what you should love and draw towards you, this is what you should make the object of your dreams, of your ambitions.”

And if you do this when you are very small, you have much less difficulty than if later on you have to undo, undo all the bad effects of a bad education, undo that kind of dull and vulgar common sense which means that you expect nothing good from life, which makes it insipid, boring, and contradicts all the hopes, all the so-called illusions of beauty. On the contrary, you must tell a child — or yourself if you are no longer quite a baby — “Everything in me that seems unreal, impossible, illusory, that is what is true, that is what I must cultivate.” When you have these aspirations: “Oh, not to be always limited by some incapacity, all the time held back by some bad will!”, you must cultivate within you this certitude that that is what is essentially true and that is what must be realised.

Then faith awakens in the cells of the body. And you will see that you find a response in your body itself. The body itself will feel that if its inner will helps, fortifies, directs, leads, well, all its limitations will gradually disappear.

And so, when the first experience comes, which sometimes begins when one is very young, the first contact with the inner joy, the inner beauty, the inner light, the first contact with that,
which suddenly makes you feel, “Oh! that is what I want,” you must cultivate it, never forget it, hold it constantly before you, tell yourself, “I have felt it once, so I can feel it again. This has been real for me, even for the space of a second, and that is what I am going to revive in myself”.... And encourage the body to seek it — to seek it, *with the confidence* that it carries that possibility within itself and that if it calls for it, it will come back, it will be realised again.

This is what should be done when one is young. This is what should be done every time one has the opportunity to recollect oneself, commune with oneself, seek oneself.

And then you will see. When one is normal, that is to say, unspoilt by bad teaching and bad example, when one is born and lives in a healthy and relatively balanced and normal environment, the body, spontaneously, without any need for one to intervene mentally or even vitally, has the certitude that even if something goes wrong it will be cured. The body carries within itself the certitude of cure, the certitude that the illness or disorder is sure to disappear. It is only through the false education from the environment that gradually the body is taught that there are incurable diseases, irreparable accidents, and that it can grow old, and all these stories which destroy its faith and trust. But normally, the body of a normal child — the body, I am not speaking of the thought — the body itself feels when something goes wrong that it will certainly be all right again. And if it is not like that, this means that it has already been perverted. It seems *normal* for it to be in good health, it seems quite abnormal to it if something goes wrong and it falls ill; and in its instinct, its spontaneous instinct, it is sure that everything will be all right. It is only the perversion of thought which destroys this; as one grows up the thought becomes more and more distorted, there is the whole collective suggestion, and so, little by little, the body loses its trust in itself, and naturally, losing its self-confidence, it also loses the spontaneous capacity of restoring its equilibrium when this has been disturbed.
But if when very young, from your earliest childhood, you have been taught all sorts of disappointing, depressing things — things that cause decomposition, I could say, disintegration — then this poor body does its best but it has been perverted, put out of order, and no longer has the sense of its inner strength, its inner force, its power to react.

If one takes care not to pervert it, the body carries within itself the certitude of victory. It is only the wrong use we make of thought and its influence on the body which robs it of this certitude of victory. So, the first thing to do is to cultivate this certitude instead of destroying it; and when it is there, no effort is needed to aspire, but simply a flowering, an unfolding of that inner certitude of victory.

The body carries within itself the sense of its divinity. There. This is what you must try to find again in yourself if you have lost it.

When a child tells you a beautiful dream in which he had many powers and all things were very beautiful, be very careful never to tell him, “Oh! life is not like that”, for you are doing something wrong. You must on the contrary tell him, “Life ought to be like that, and it will be like that!”