Mother begins with a passage about “false visions” (Questions and Answers 1929, 21 April).

Is a vision false if the being who appears in the vision pretends to be what it is not?

I don’t think it is this that people mean when they speak of “false visions”. They say “false visions” when they have seen something which they believe does not exist; and the reply I always give them is, “Had you already thought of what you saw? Had you made an effort to see it? Was it in your imagination or your wish? If so, it must be false.” What you are now asking is something else: these spirits who pretend to be what they are not in reality, if you believe them, it does not mean that your vision is false, but that the interpretation of your vision is false, that you do not have the necessary discernment to perceive the deception. I had with me for a long time people who said they had seen me (seen me with quite absurd consequences; all sorts of disastrous things happened to them); it was certain forces trying to make them believe it was I. I gave them a very simple means of putting an end to this comedy.

There is also something else: I am called and I answer; but what people see afterwards, the result, is almost always the product of their own mental formation. They want me to do a certain thing and that is what happens. And I verify this, you see, when they come and tell me, “Tonight you came”; as a matter of fact, they had called me and I had gone there, but I compare what really happened with what they saw, and very often there is a very big difference, which comes precisely from the desire they have mixed up with their perception. Then I could say, “Your
Questions and Answers

vision is partly false; the fact that I came is true, but what you made me do, it is you who made me do it!"

“What is required of you is not a passive surrender, in which you become like a block, but to put your will at the disposal of the divine Will.”

Questions and Answers 1929 (21 April)

How can one make an offering of one’s will?... Some people, when they offer their will, stop willing! This is more convenient, but evidently this is not the right way.

How to offer one’s will to the Divine when one does not know what the divine Will is? This is a very interesting problem.

Some men think that all that comes to them from outside is the divine Will, and they accept it as such.

Yes, unfortunately. But all that they do is to accept the collective will or that of the strongest.

Should not one offer all one’s willed actions to the Divine? That is, first do the willed actions and then offer them?

Perhaps you could first silence your will and wait for the inner voice before acting! That would be wiser.

You see, we have already found many ways of offering our will to the Divine: first, not to will any longer! Second, do what everybody wants except oneself! Third, want no matter what and do no matter what, then, afterwards, offer to the Divine what one has done!

But one can also formulate to oneself one’s will and try to pass it before the screen of one’s higher ideal, and see what it looks like in front of this ideal, whether it cuts a fine figure or not. If it vacillates, you may be sure there is something there to
check up. If, on the other hand, it passes very quietly and without protest, you may risk doing what you wanted and see the result. But here too we are before a very difficult problem.... Those who wish to remain in an inner peace say that everything that happens is the will of God — this is very convenient for being quiet, it is the best way, there is no better; if there is a better way, it is much more difficult. So, if your will is contradicted, you say it is the will of God; you are quiet, you have done what you could and the result is different from what you expected, and you are in peace. (Note that this is not very easy; it is quite good already, but this is not all.) But it may also be quite possible that your will was contradicted by circumstances and yet it was right. Then the solution is much more difficult. First, how to know that it was right?... If you are quite impartial, quiet, peaceful, and as little egoistic as possible, if you look straight in the face at what has happened and see a sort of contradiction, the impression that a light has gone out and you are in the presence of a falsehood, you remain quite calm, but you see and understand that your will has been contradicted for some unknown reason, though in itself it was not false, that what you had seen was the truth but it did not manifest itself for some reason or other. So you must start on the adventure of discovering the reason why your truth did not manifest itself. This is a problem a little more difficult... but if you expand your vision sufficiently, both in height and wideness, you can immediately see the consequences your will would have had if it had been realised, and the consequences of what would have happened; and if you fling your view far enough, you will be able to see that your will, however true it was, was a partial truth — it was not a collective, general truth, and still less a universal one — and, consequently, if this truth had been realised at that moment, it would have dislocated a certain ensemble and many things which form a part of the divine Work (for everything, in fact, is a part of the divine Work, the entire creation, the entire universe): one part of the whole would have been left behind.
People always ask, “But if the Divine is all-powerful, why is it that things have not yet changed?” This is the reason why.

And mark that your idea of what ought to be is so infinitely far off from what will be, that, by this very fact, even if you try to see in the most complete way possible, you will leave behind such a large portion of the universe that it will be almost a linear realisation, and in any case so small, so narrow, that the greater part of the universe will remain unchanged. And even if you have a very vast view of the whole, even if you can conceive of something more total and you go ahead on the path which is ready — for it is with paths as it is with beings, some are ready — without having the patience to wait for others, that is, if you wish to realise something very close to the true Truth in comparison with the present state of the world, what will happen? — the dislocation of a certain unity, a rupture not only of harmony but of equilibrium, for there will be an entire part of the creation which will not be able to follow. And instead of a complete realisation of the Divine, you will have a small localised realisation, infinitesimal, and nothing will be done of what finally ought to be done.

Consequently, you should not be impatient, should not be disappointed, depressed, discouraged if the truth you have seen is not immediately realised. Naturally, it is not a question of being down-hearted or grieved or in despair if you have made a mistake, for every mistake can be corrected; from the moment you have found it is a mistake, there is an opportunity to work within you, to make progress and be very happy! But the situation is much more serious and more difficult to overcome when you have seen something true, absolutely, essentially true, and the state of the universe is such that this truth is not yet ripe for realisation. I do not say this happens to many people, but perhaps it may happen to you, and it is then you have to have a great patience, a great understanding, and say to yourself, “It was true, but it was not completely true”, that is, it was not a truth in harmony with all the other truths and, above all, not
in keeping with the present possibilities; so we tried to realise it too quickly, and because we tried to be too quick it was belied. But do not say it was false because it was belied; say it was premature, that is all you can say — what you saw was true, but it was premature, and you must, with much patience and perseverance, keep your little truth intact for the moment when it will be possible to realise it.

The final victory is for the most patient.

“You say, ‘I give my will to the Divine.... Let the divine Will work it out for me.’ Your will must continue to act steadily, not in the way of choosing a particular action or demanding a particular object, but as an ardent aspiration concentrated upon the end to be achieved.”

Questions and Answers 1929 (21 April)

And it is there we have the solution of the problem. You can at every minute make the gift of your will in an aspiration — and an aspiration which formulates itself very simply, not just “Lord, Thy will be done”, but “Grant that I may do as well as I can the best thing to do.”

You may not know at every moment what is the best thing to do or how to do it, but you can place your will at the disposal of the Divine to do the best possible, the best thing possible. You will see it will have marvellous results. Do this with consciousness, sincerity and perseverance, and you will find yourself getting along with gigantic strides. It is like that, isn’t it? One must do things with all the ardour of one’s soul, with all the strength of one’s will; do at every moment the best possible, the best thing possible. What others do is not your concern — this is something I shall never be able to repeat to you often enough.

Never say, “So-and-so does not do this”, “So-and-so does something else”, “That one does what he should not do” — all this is not your concern. You have been put upon earth, in a physical body, with a definite aim, which is to make this
body as conscious as possible, make it the most perfect and most conscious instrument of the Divine. He has given you a certain amount of substance and of matter in all the domains — mental, vital and physical — in proportion to what He expects from you, and all the circumstances around you are also in proportion to what He expects of you, and those who tell you, “My life is terrible, I lead the most miserable life in the world”, are donkeys! Everyone has a life appropriate to his total development, everyone has experiences which help him in his total development, and everyone has difficulties which help him in his total realisation.

If you look at yourself carefully, you will see that one always carries in oneself the opposite of the virtue one has to realise (I use “virtue” in its widest and highest sense). You have a special aim, a special mission, a special realisation which is your very own, each one individually, and you carry in yourself all the obstacles necessary to make your realisation perfect. Always you will see that within you the shadow and the light are equal: you have an ability, you have also the negation of this ability. But if you discover a very black hole, a thick shadow, be sure there is somewhere in you a great light. It is up to you to know how to use the one to realise the other.

This is a fact very little spoken about, but one of capital importance. And if you observe carefully you will see that it is always thus with everyone. This leads us to statements which are paradoxical but absolutely true; for instance, that the greatest thief can be the most honest man (this is not to encourage you to steal, of course!) and the greatest liar can be the most truthful person. So, do not despair if you find in yourself the greatest weakness, for perhaps it is the sign of the greatest divine strength. Do not say, “I am like that, I can’t be otherwise.” It is not true. You are “like that” because, precisely, you ought to be the opposite. And all your difficulties are there just so that you may learn to transform them into the truth they are hiding.

Once you have understood this, many worries come to an
end and you are very happy, very happy. If one finds one has very black holes, one says, “This shows I can rise very high”, if the abyss is very deep, “I can climb very high.” It is the same from the universal point of view; to use the Hindu terminology so familiar to you, it is the greatest Asuras who are the greatest beings of Light. And the day these Asuras are converted, they will be the supreme beings of the creation. This is not to encourage you to be asuric, you know, but it is like that — this will widen your minds a little and help you to free yourself from those ideas of opposing good and evil, for if you abide in that category, there is no hope.

If the world was not essentially the opposite of what it has become, there would be no hope. For the hole is so black and so deep, and the inconscience so complete, that if this were not the sign of the total consciousness, well, there would be nothing more to do but pack up one’s kit and go away. Men like Shankara, who did not see much further than the end of their nose, said that the world was not worth the trouble of living in, for it was impossible, that it was better to treat it as an illusion and go away, there was nothing to be done with it. I tell you, on the contrary, that it is because the world is very bad, very dark, very ugly, very unconscious, full of misery and suffering, that it can become the supreme Beauty, the supreme Light, the supreme Consciousness and supreme Felicity.

“If you are vigilant, if your attention is alert, you will certainly receive... an inspiration of what is to be done and that you must forthwith proceed to do.”

Questions and Answers 1929 (21 April)

When I told you just a while ago that you must aspire with a great ardour to do the best possible, at every moment the best thing possible, you could have asked me, “That is all very well. But how to know?” Well, it is not necessary to know! If you take this attitude with sincerity, you will know at each moment what
Questions and Answers

you have to do, and it is this which is so wonderful! According to your sincerity, the inspiration is more and more precise, more and more exact.

“Only you must remember that to surrender is to accept whatever is the result of your action, though the result may be quite different from what you expect. On the other hand, if your surrender is passive, you will do nothing and try nothing; you will simply go to sleep and wait for a miracle.

“Now to know whether your will or desire is in agreement with the divine Will or not, you must look and see whether you have an answer or have no answer, whether you feel supported or contradicted, not by the mind or the vital or the body, but by that something which is always there deep in the inner being, in your heart.”

Questions and Answers 1929 (21 April)

It is always the same thing, this is our screen before which we must pass everything to know whether one may accept it or whether one is told not to.

“The number of hours spent in meditation is no proof of spiritual progress. It is a proof of your progress when you no longer have to make an effort to meditate.”

Ibid.

That is, instead of being in a state of tension, instead of making a tremendous effort to silence the inner machine and be able to concentrate your thought upon what you want, when you do it quite simply, naturally, without effort, automatically, and you decide to meditate for some reason or other, what you want to see, learn or know remains in your consciousness and all the rest disappears as by a miracle; everything falls quiet in
you, all your being becomes silent, your nerves are altogether soothed, your consciousness is wholly concentrated — naturally, spontaneously — and you enter with an intense delight into a yet more intense contemplation.

This is the sign that you have succeeded; otherwise it is not the thing.

"Then you have rather to make an effort to stop meditating: it becomes difficult to stop meditation, difficult to stop thinking of the Divine, difficult to come down to the ordinary consciousness."

Ibid.

How I wish this would become true for everybody!

You may be engaged in the most active action, for example, in playing basketball, which needs a great deal of movement, and yet not lose the attitude of inner meditation and concentration upon the Divine. And when you get that, you will see that all you do changes its quality; not only will you do it better, but you will do it with an altogether unexpected strength, and at the same time keep your consciousness so high and so pure that nothing will be able to touch you any longer. And note that this can go so far that even if an accident occurs, it will not hurt you. Naturally, this is a peak, but it is a peak to which one can aspire.

Do not fall into the very common error of believing that you must sit in an absolutely quiet corner where nobody passes by, where you are in a classical position and altogether immobile, in order to be able to meditate — it is not true. What is needed is to succeed in meditating under all circumstances, and I call “meditating” not emptying your head but concentrating yourself in a contemplation of the Divine; and if you keep this contemplation within you, all that you do will change its quality — not its appearance, for apparently it will be the same thing, but its quality. And life will change its quality, and you, you will feel a little different from what you were, with a peace, a
certitude, an inner calm, an unchanging force, something which never gives way.

In that state it will be difficult to do you harm — the forces always try, this world is so full of adverse forces which seek to upset everything... but they succeed in a very small measure, only in the measure necessary to force you to make a new progress.

Each time you receive a blow from life, tell yourself immediately, “Ah, I have to make a progress”; then the blow becomes a blessing. Instead of tucking your head between your shoulders, you lift it up with joy and you say, “What is it I have to learn? I want to know. What is it I have to change? I want to know.” This is what you should do.

The concentration we have here and the meditation we used to have in the past, are they the same?¹

No, I told you this the other day, the concentration we have now is the opposite of meditation. In the common meditation we used to have, I tried to unify the consciousness of all who were present and to lift it in an aspiration towards higher regions; it was a movement of ascent, of aspiration — whereas what we do here, in concentration, is a movement of descent. Instead of an aspiration which rises up, what is required is a receptivity which opens so that the Force may enter into you. There are many ways of doing this; each one according to his particular nature should find out the best method. What is asked here is a receptive offering, not of the body or the mind or the vital, of a piece of your being, but of your entire being. No other thing is asked of you, only to open yourself; the rest of the work I undertake.

In the meditation there¹ I wanted each one to kindle in himself a flame of aspiration and to rise up as high as possible.

¹ The period of “meditation” in the Ashram was followed by a period of “concentration” at the Playground.
Naturally, both are necessary; but the morning meditation, all who had a goodwill could join it at any stage of their development, while here the rule is that only those who really want the perfection of their physical body can come, not those who want to escape from life, escape from themselves, escape from their body to enter into the heights. That is why in the beginning the selection was very strict — it is widening little by little, with profit, I hope. We wanted only those who had truly taken it into their head that they wished to perfect their physical body, who understood that their body had its own value and who sought to perfect it, who wanted to try to make it a receptacle of a higher truth, not an old rag one throws aside saying, “Do not bother me!” On the contrary, to take it up and make of it the best possible instrument, to make it grow, to perfect it as much as it will lend itself to the process.

Isn’t the aspiration, the contemplation of which you speak, inconsistent with outer activity?

No, if there is a contradiction, it is that the concentration is not done in the right way. Indeed the world is in this state of falsehood in which one cannot concentrate within oneself on the divine Presence without losing contact with the external being. I do not say that it is very easy, I have given you this as a somewhat far ideal, but it is quite possible and it has been done, I may assure you, and it takes away nothing from the capacity of not breaking one’s neck while running!