Sweet Mother, I haven’t understood this well: “Will, Power, Force are the native substance of the Life-Energy, and herein lies the justification for the refusal of Life to acknowledge the supremacy of Knowledge and Love alone, — for its push towards the satisfaction of something far more unreflecting, headstrong and dangerous that can yet venture too in its own bold and ardent way towards the Divine and Absolute. Love and Wisdom are not the only aspects of the Divine, there is also its aspect of Power.”

Sri Aurobindo, The Synthesis of Yoga, SABCL, Vol. 20, pp. 163-64

What have you not understood?
Sri Aurobindo says that the vital part, the vital being is the greatest obstacle because it is unregenerate, and that there would be a possibility of transforming it if it surrendered entirely to Love and Knowledge; but as its predominant quality is force, energy, power, it does not like to submit to other parts of the being, and this justifies its refusal to submit itself, for those virtues in their essence are as high as the others. That is why it has neither the same power nor the same capacities, for it is not developed, it has not surrendered, and this is what causes the dilemma: it does not submit because it has this power, and this power cannot be utilised because it is not surrendered. So, how to get out of that? The vital, if it were surrendered, would be a very powerful help, extremely useful, it would make the whole process go much more rapidly. But because it feels its own power, it refuses to submit to the others; and because it does not submit, its power cannot be utilised. So, what is to be done? Sri Aurobindo states the problem — he is going to solve it afterwards; if we continue reading, after a while he will tell us
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how to solve this problem — but he states it first so that we may fully understand the situation.

If the vital were a mediocre being without definite qualities, there would be no difficulty in its surrendering, but it would be altogether useless. But, on the contrary, the vital is a sort of stronghold of energy and power — of all powers. Yet generally this power is diverted; it is no longer at the service of the Divine, it is at the service of the vital itself for its own satisfaction. So, as long as it is like that, it cannot be used.

It should come to understand that this energy and power which it feels within itself cannot become useful unless it enters into perfect harmony with the divine plan of realisation on earth. If it understands that, it becomes quiet and allows itself to be enlisted, so to say, in the totality of the being, and then it takes on its full strength and full importance. But otherwise, it cannot be used. And usually, all its activities are activities which always complicate things and take away their simplicity, their purity, often their beauty, and their effectiveness, for its action is blind, ignorant and very egoistic.

_Sweet Mother, is the divine plane the plane of the psychic being?_

It is a higher plane than that of the psychic being. The psychic being is, so to say, the vehicle of the Divine, it contains the Divine, is the habitation of the Divine, but the Divine is higher than it. For the psychic being is only an aspect of the divine manifestation.

_Is not the Supermind also the psychic being?_

The Supermind is far higher than the psychic being also.

What Sri Aurobindo calls the Supermind is the element or the divine Principle which is now going to come into play in the universe. He calls it the Supermind because it comes after
the mind, that is to say, it is a new manifestation of the supreme divine Principle. And it is related to the psychic as the Divine was related to the psychic, that is to say, the psychic is the home, the temple, the vehicle, everything that must outwardly manifest the Divine. But it is divine only in its essence not in its integrality. It is a mode of outer manifestation of the Divine, outer compared with the Divine, that is, terrestrial.

Is that all? Nothing else?

How should we come out of the physical consciousness which keeps us preoccupied all the time and exclusively with physical circumstances?

There is a considerable number of ways.

There are intellectual ways, ways which may be called sentimental, artistic ways and spiritual ways. And generally, it is preferable for each one to take the way that is easiest for him, for if one wants to begin straight away with the most difficult, one comes to nothing at all. And here we always come back to the same thing, to what Sri Aurobindo describes in *The Synthesis of Yoga*: it is the way of knowledge or the way of devotion or the way of works. But the way of works is precisely the one which keeps you in physical life and makes you find your liberation in it; and perhaps this is the most effective way of all but also the most difficult.

For most aspirants the way of meditation, concentration, withdrawal from physical life, rejection of physical activities is certainly easier than the way of action. But they leave the physical consciousness just as it is, without ever changing it, and unless one becomes like a sadhu or an ascetic who leaves behind all active life and remains in constant concentration or meditation, one achieves nothing at all. That is to say, an entire part of the being is never transformed. And for them the solution is not at all to transform it, it is simply to reject it, to get out of their body as quickly as possible. That is how yoga was
conceived of formerly, for, obviously, it is much easier. But this is not what we want.

What we want is the transformation of the physical consciousness, not its rejection.

And so, in this case, what Sri Aurobindo has recommended as the most direct and most total way is surrender to the Divine — a surrender made more and more integral, progressively, comprising the physical consciousness and physical activities. And if one succeeds in this, then the physical, instead of being an obstacle, becomes a help.

What does this sentence mean: “Look life in the face from the soul’s inner strength and become master of circumstances”?

That is precisely the opposite of the method which consists in rejecting the whole of the physical consciousness and all physical events. “Look life in the face”, this means: don’t turn your back on it! It means: face life as it is instead of running away from it and call to your aid the inner psychic force — this is what Sri Aurobindo says: “the soul’s inner strength”, the inner psychic force — and with the help of this psychic consciousness rise above circumstances and master them. That is to say, instead of submitting to all that comes and suffering all its consequences, one rises above circumstances and lets them pass like things that do not touch you and do not impair your consciousness. That is what it means.

It is said that to become conscious of divine Love all other love has to be abandoned. What is the best way of rejecting the other love which clings so obstinately (laughter) and does not easily leave us?

To go through it. Ah!

To go through, to see what is behind it, not to stop at the
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appearance, not to be satisfied with the outer form, to look for the principle which is behind this love, and not be content until one has found the origin of the feeling in oneself. Then the outer form will crumble of itself and you will be in contact with the divine Love which is behind all things.

That is the best way.

To want to get rid of the one in order to find the other is very difficult. It is almost impossible. For human nature is so limited, so full of contradictions and so exclusive in its movements that if one wants to reject love in its lower form, that is to say, human love as human beings experience it, if one makes an inner effort to reject it, one usually rejects the entire capacity of feeling love and becomes like a stone. And then sometimes one has to wait for years or centuries before there is a reawakening in oneself of the capacity to receive and manifest love.

Therefore, the best way when love comes, in whatever form it may be, is to try and pierce through its outer appearance and find the divine principle which is behind and which gives it existence. Naturally, it is full of snares and difficulties, but it is more effective. That is to say, instead of ceasing to love because one loves wrongly, one must cease to love wrongly and want to love well.

For instance, love between human beings, in all its forms, the love of parents for children, of children for parents, of brothers and sisters, of friends and lovers, is all tainted with ignorance, selfishness and all the other defects which are man’s ordinary drawbacks; so instead of completely ceasing to love — which, besides, is very difficult as Sri Aurobindo says, which would simply dry up the heart and serve no end — one must learn how to love better: to love with devotion, with self-giving, self-abnegation, and to struggle, not against love itself, but against its distorted forms: against all forms of monopolising, of attachment, possessiveness, jealousy, and all the feelings which accompany these main movements. Not to want to possess, to dominate; and not to want to impose one’s will, one’s whims,
one’s desires; not to want to take, to receive, but to give; not to insist on the other’s response, but be content with one’s own love; not to seek one’s personal interest and joy and the fulfilment of one’s personal desire, but to be satisfied with the giving of one’s love and affection; and not to ask for any response. Simply to be happy to love, nothing more.

If you do that, you have taken a great stride forward and can, through this attitude, gradually advance farther in the feeling itself, and realise one day that love is not something personal, that love is a universal divine feeling which manifests through you more or less finely, but which in its essence is something divine.

The first step is to stop being selfish. For everyone it is the same thing, not only for those who want to do yoga but also in ordinary life: if one wants to know how to love, one must not love oneself first and above all selfishly; one must give oneself to the object of love without exacting anything in return. This discipline is elementary in order to surmount oneself and lead a life which is not altogether gross.

As for yoga we may add something else: it is as I said in the beginning, the will to pierce through this limited and human form of love and discover the principle of divine Love which is behind it. Then one is sure to get a result. This is better than drying up one’s heart. It is perhaps a little more difficult but it is better in every way, for like this, instead of egoistically making others suffer, well, one may leave them quiet in their own movement and only make an effort to transform oneself without imposing one’s will on others, which even in ordinary life is a step towards something higher and a little more harmonious.