

## Organisation and Work

*“[For the Ashram] there has never been, at any time, a mental plan, a fixed programme or an organisation decided beforehand. The whole thing has taken birth, grown and developed as a living being by a movement of consciousness (Chit-tapas) constantly maintained, increased and fortified.”*

*Sri Aurobindo (22 August 1939)*

That is to say, the movement of consciousness has never ceased at any moment. It is not that a “movement of creation” was started and then stopped and then again started — constantly the consciousness is recreating, so to say, continues its creation; it is not a thing which has been done and which grows out of what has been done. It *continues* to be like this. The consciousness is at work constantly, and not as a continuation of what was before, but as a result of what it sees at each instant. In mental movement, there is the consequence of what has been done before — it is not that, it is the consciousness seeing *constantly* what is to be done. It is extremely important to understand, because it is like this that it continues to work, for everything. It is not at all a “formation” whose growth must be looked after: the consciousness at each second follows — it follows its own movement.... That permits everything; it is just that which permits miracles, reversals, etc.; it permits everything. It is just the opposite of human creations. And it has been like that, it continues to be like that and it will always be like that as long as I am there.<sup>1</sup>

\*

<sup>1</sup> Tape-recorded.

Statistics and calculations are purely mental and here all mental rules are eventually contradicted by the working of the higher force.

\*

I am very fond of proper organisation — if those who organise want sincerely to do it — I require only clear and precise information. When this is given and there is sufficient trust in the Organising Power it is sufficient. The rest will be done.

\*

*(About bad service in an Ashram department)*

The bad service comes always when the proper *consciousness* is lacking at the head.

A clear and precise vision of what is to be done and a steady, calm and firm will to have it done are the essential conditions for an organisation to be run properly. And as a general rule, never ask from others the virtues you do not possess yourself. I have a strong feeling that in X department the supervision is not what it ought to be.

\*

*(A sadhak did not want to work more than two hours a day. His supervisor wrote to Mother:)*

*I told him that I was not demanding anything; I work as much as I can, for it is in the service of my dear Mother. I cannot insist on anyone else doing the same; only I am informing Mother about what we do.*

You replied very well, but obviously it is difficult to give conscientiousness to someone who has none and to put heart into someone who is lazy.

3 May 1935

\*

## Words of the Mother – I

*Those around me are not working as well as they used to.*

The way out? It is to take it coolly, not to mind and to go on with the work quietly... expecting that better days will come...

\*

*There is an all-round deterioration of work and workers.*

Yes, the disorder is general. The only help is *faith*.

\*

It is not that there is a dearth of people without work in the Ashram; but those who are without work are certainly so because they do not like to work; and for that disease it is very difficult to find a remedy — it is called laziness...

\*

When human passions guide the work, I can only stand apart as a witness. I am politely informed of what is decided — never asked for what is to be done.

I cannot give orders because if orders were disobeyed, it would automatically lead to a catastrophe.

So there is nothing else to do than to wait patiently for the passions to cool down and... hope for the best.

Perhaps some people may wake up to the necessity of working hard.

\*

There are too many conflicting opinions and feelings for me to give an order.

\*

Now times are difficult for everybody. There is war and everybody suffers.

Those who have the immense privilege of being here quiet and in safety must at least show their gratitude by discarding all petty quarrels and silly grievances.

Everyone must do his or her work conscientiously and earnestly, and overcome all obscure selfish movements.

27 September 1939

\*

*I know at the present moment cooperation and coordination are essential for the Ashram; I try my best but fail miserably. Perhaps it is the same story with every one of us.*

Do not take it as a personal affair. Disharmony and confusion are spread all over the world because of the resistance of the falsehood to the action of the Truth. Here as the action of the Truth is more conscious and concentrated, the resistance is exasperated. And in this great turmoil most of the individuals are moved like puppets by the forces in the conflict.

\*

As for the conditions in the Ashram, it is as you say and probably worse. I shall say like Sri Aurobindo: unless the *consciousness* changes nothing can really be done.

You will interfere — and it is good as an example and a demonstration — but the next day it will become worse.

We cannot even call down the Truth to manifest. The falsehood is so widely and deeply spread that the result would be a wholesale destruction. Yet the Grace is infinite, it may find out a way.

\*

## Words of the Mother – I

Sri Aurobindo says that he wishes to make an endeavour to set things right by yogic means rather than by steps of an exterior kind; but for this it is necessary that things should go on for some time as they are at present. For that your cooperation will be necessary and he is sure that he can count on your goodwill to make the necessary effort towards that end.

\*

It remains absolutely true that I am mostly busy with something I consider more important than exterior organisation — for the moment — and that is why I expect each one to do his duty to the best of his capacity and with his eyes fixed upon the magnitude of the Divine's work which will surely help him in his personal difficulties.

Times are hard for everybody and in everything — but it is surely to teach us to overcome our limitations.

\*

*(For some time Mother was supposed to have retired from day-to-day work.)*

This is very interesting but not unexpected. Since I have “retired”, each one seems to do according to his own ideas without correlation with the others and — under the pretext of not disturbing me — without consulting or even informing me!

Although by my own means I know more or less what is going on, I simply smile and do not interfere. Each one must learn by experience.

I am waiting for the day when order will conquer disorder and harmony be the master of confusion. I am behind all effort in this direction.

\*

Needless to say that my force and help is intensely with all those who, along with me, are fighting this state of affairs. And all I

ask of them is to be confident and to endure. The Truth shall triumph. *Bon courage!*

\*

I am blaming nothing, nor anybody and know that each one does the best he can. It is evident that the job is very difficult. But are we not here to conquer difficulties?

\*

To do properly the work of the Ashram one must be strong and plastic enough to know how to utilise the inexhaustible Energy which is backing you all.

I expect everybody here to rise to the height of the needs.

If we are not able to do even that much, how can we hope to be ready for the descent of the Light of Truth when it will come to manifest upon earth?...

\*

When I give work to someone it is not only for the sake of the work but also as the best means to advance on the path of Yoga. When I gave you this work, I was quite aware of your difficulties and shortcomings, but at the same time I knew that if you opened yourself to my help and force you would be able to surmount these obstacles and at the same time to increase your consciousness and open yourself to the Divine's Grace.

Now it is time for you to make a real progress and to check your outbursts of temper whenever your will is contradicted. If you want to please me — and I have no doubt of that — you will sincerely try to collaborate with X and to carry on with him the work.

I do not want anyone of you two to be the boss of the other — I want you both to feel as brothers, children of the same Mother, working sincerely and courageously for the sake of her love.

## Words of the Mother – I

I hope you will agree to this and I assure you that my love and blessings will always be with you in this endeavour.

19 January 1945

\*

Here is exactly what I said to X: “I give you the responsibility of the enterprise, the organisation and the carrying on of it. The plans and projects will have to be shown to me for my sanction. For the execution, I shall ask Y, whose enthusiasm I appreciate, to work with you according to the instructions you will give him and to fully collaborate, having in view that it is Sri Aurobindo’s and my work, and to do his utmost to make it a success.”

To yourself I say:

Let the work start and be fully organised.

I have no intention of giving posts and positions before something is done and each one proves by acts what he is capable of doing.

It is by the efficiency and the quality of the work that I will judge the workers.

And it is only afterwards that titles can be given.

Never forget that here it is for the *perfection of the work* that we are striving, not for the satisfaction of the ego.

\*

I do not give positions to the sadhaks — I give them work; and to all I give an equal opportunity. It is those who prove to be most capable and most sincere, honest and faithful that have the biggest amount of work and the greatest responsibility.

Whatever the external circumstances, they are, without exception, the objective projection of what is inside yourself. When in your work you find something giving trouble outside, look within and you will find in yourself the corresponding difficulty.

Change yourself and the circumstances will change.

26 June 1954

\*

I am glad that through experience you have become conscious of the fact that I am with you.

This is the true relation between us, much more than a superficial contact.

1) Here, at the Ashram, our aim is to express a higher Truth, not to follow the ordinary human conventionalities.

I do not give to these official documents any undue importance. They are mere necessities in the present condition of the world, but do not correspond to any deep reality.

2) In the actualities of life the power of a man does not depend on an official title, but on the force and the light of his inner consciousness.

\*

I have read your letters and am well satisfied with the confidence you have in your capacity to do the work. It is true that you have the capacity, but you will agree that there is a difference between having the capacity and having the knowledge; and to have the knowledge of a work it must be learned.

So you must first learn from those who know and the best way of learning is to see them do. When you will know and have proved your thoroughness, steadiness and faithfulness in doing the work, then I will entrust you with the full responsibility and give you the entire management of the work.

\*

There are honest people but they do not have the capacity to work. There are capable people but they are not honest in their work. When I find someone both honest and capable he becomes very precious.

*8 August 1955*

\*

Here every work represents something of the universe. When a new work is started here, new problems of the world come in.

## Words of the Mother – I

That is why I do not invite new problems, but if they come I do not avoid them. I have to bring down the highest consciousness; for that I must organise below and tackle all the problems.

*17 August 1955*

\*

Formerly I used to keep control over everything. Nothing would be done without my first knowing and approving of it. Afterwards I adopted a different mode of acting. I withdrew from all the details and kept myself at a distance, watching things from above, as it were, and sending the right inspiration to each worker in his own field.

This change was necessary for the worker's spiritual development. He has to become aware of my influence inwardly. But he can receive it only if all the workers collaborate. Without collaboration the right inspiration will not be effective. The action from above has a wide sweep: it covers all the departments and is one harmonious whole. If walls are set up in the field of work, dividing and breaking it up, the work can never be according to the spiritual Will.

So bear this in mind: no collaboration, no right working.

*1 December 1957*

\*

There is no question at all of “position” — nor of prestige. X has a lot of knowledge and experience of the stage that we do not have. She is willing to share it with us. So the only sensible thing for us to do is to learn as much as we can and to be grateful for it.

Moreover never forget that we are working here for the Divine and that no egoistic feeling can be allowed to intervene and spoil the work.

Always present with you.

*5 November 1958*

\*

My dear child,

X will come and see you, at my request, to make arrangements for his work in your department.

I ask you to receive him very affectionately, for he is my child just as you are, and to give him the opportunity to do some interesting work in which his capacities will be made good use of.

I would like him to feel at ease and also to feel that he is there to do *my* work.

My blessings.

*2 October 1962*

\*

Without discipline no proper work is possible.

Without discipline no proper life is possible.

And above all, without discipline no Sadhana is possible.

Each department has necessarily a discipline and you must follow the discipline of your department.

Personal feelings, grudges and misunderstandings must never interfere with the work which is done as a service to the Divine and not for human interests.

Your service to the Divine must be scrupulously honest, disinterested and unselfish, otherwise it has no value.

*25 January 1965*

\*

Here nobody can be an exclusive head — everyone must learn to collaborate. It is a very good discipline for vanity, self-conceit and the excessive sense of personal importance.

*17 February 1968*

\*

In the Ashram, negligence in work is treachery.

*15 March 1969*

\*

## Words of the Mother – I

In human life the cause of all difficulties, all discords, all moral sufferings, is the presence in everyone of the ego with its desires, its likes and dislikes. Even in a disinterested work which consists in helping others, until one has learned to overcome the ego and its demands, until one can force it to keep calm and quiet in one corner, the ego reacts to everything that displeases it, starts an inner storm that rises to the surface and spoils all the work.

This work of overcoming the ego is long, slow and difficult; it demands constant alertness and sustained effort. This effort is easier for some and more difficult for others.

We are here in the Ashram to do this work together with the help of Sri Aurobindo's knowledge and force, in an attempt to realise a community that is more harmonious, more united, and consequently much more effective in life.

As long as I was physically present among you all, my presence was helping you to achieve this mastery over the ego and so it was not necessary for me to speak to you about it individually very often.

But now this effort must become the basis of each individual's existence, more especially for those of you who have a responsible position and have to take care of others. The leaders must always set the example, the leaders must always practise the virtues they demand from those who are in their care; they must be understanding, patient, enduring, full of sympathy and warm and friendly goodwill, not out of egoism to win friends for themselves, but out of generosity to be able to understand and help others.

To forget oneself, one's own likings and preferences, is indispensable in order to be a true leader.

That is what I am asking of you now, so that you can face your responsibilities as you should. And then you will find that where you used to feel disorder and disunity, they have vanished, and harmony, peace and joy have taken their place.

You know that I love you and that I am always with you to

sustain you, help you and show you the way.  
Blessings.

26 August 1969

\*

You seem to forget that by the fact that you are living in the Ashram, it is neither for yourself nor for a boss that you are working, but for the Divine. Your life must be entirely consecrated to the Divine Work and cannot be governed by petty human considerations.

28 May 1970

\*

Whatever is done here, must be done in a spirit of complete collaboration with one single aim in view — the service of the Divine.

\*

A community life must necessarily have a discipline in order that the weaker may not be maltreated by the stronger; and this discipline ought to be respected by all those who wish to live in that community.

But for the community to be happy it is necessary that this discipline should be determined by someone or by those who have the greatest broadness of mind and, if possible, by him or by those who are conscious of the Divine Presence and are surrendered to that.

For the earth to be happy, power should be in the hands of those alone who are conscious of the Divine Will. But this is impossible at the moment because the number of those who are *truly* conscious of the Divine Will is negligible and these have necessarily no ambition.

To tell the truth, when the hour comes for this realisation, this will come about quite naturally.

## Words of the Mother – I

The duty of each one is to prepare oneself for that as completely as one can.

*18 February 1972*

\*

I agree that the gate condition is rather distressing. But to write down instructions is very difficult because of all the details that would have to be mentioned.

\*

To the gate-keepers and inmates of the Library House

I have repeatedly said that the “soup verandah” must be kept neat and tidy, free from all personal objects (cups, tumblers, flasks, shoes and sandals, etc.) straying all over the place. It is the most unbecoming sight to give to the visitors entering through the Ashram gate.

I expect not to have to repeat it another time, and that this order will be carried out scrupulously.

*6 June 1932*

\*

### Gate Duty

The Mother considers the duty of the gate-keeper very important and of great responsibility. This duty should be performed with care and vigilance.

Visitors and those coming for inquiry or business should be received with due courtesy, if required offered a seat, and given the necessary information or possible assistance. No distinction should be made between persons.

For any out-of-the-ordinary inquiry, the secretary should be approached.

It will be within the right of the gate-keeper to request people waiting in the gate area without purpose or gathering

in groups, to leave the place. He also should not enter into long conversations with other members of the Ashram, nor should he indulge himself in writing, reading or doing anything else than to concentrate on his duty.

No unauthorised person should be allowed to go into the Ashram compound without permission.

Servants are expected not to touch the filter. They should take water from the cycle-house. In case of need the inmates should accompany the servants.

The gate area should be kept quiet and tidy.

The gate should not be left in charge of any other than those appointed for the work.§

*25 September 1952*

\*

The Mother wants that the people responsible for receiving the visitors should always be very polite and gentle in their behaviour towards them. High and low, young and old, whether they are well-dressed or ill-clad, all should always be received properly with benevolence and good behaviour. It is not necessary that the better dressed people may be more fit for being received well in this Ashram. It should not be that we give more care to the people with a motor car than to an ordinary man looking like a beggar. We must never forget that they are as much human as we are and we have no right to think that we are at the top of the scale.

And our politeness should not be merely an outer form, stiff politeness, so to say. It must be something coming from within. Whatever may be the difficulties and whatever may be the circumstances — Mother fully knows even to the minutest detail the circumstances, when we lose our temper and get irritated in our work, and knowing that fully well she says — whatever may be the circumstances, rudeness or curt behaviour is never permissible.

## Words of the Mother – I

There are difficulties in our way, but Mother says that as a rule our difficulties and our troubles are always such that we do have the capacity of overcoming them. If we can remain at our best we shall always be able to tackle the situation without losing control. Remember, each time we lose control of ourselves, each time we get angry or we have to use the outer means of keeping discipline, it means that at that moment we have fallen low and we could not rise up to the situation. In everything, in every way, it boils down to one rule — always endeavour to make progress, try to be your true self. Even if you have not been able to do it today you must be able to do it tomorrow. But the full effect must be there. Never forget in your action that you are representing the Ashram. People will judge the Ashram from your behaviour. Even if you have to say No, even if you have to reject somebody's request, you can do it with all politeness and courtesy. Try to help each one. Even if others are rude to you, it is not a reason for you to do likewise. If you behave in the same way as the outsiders do, then what is the fun of your being here.§

*9 May 1957*