This brief talk was given to the children as an exception on a Tuesday before the meditation.

We said that we were going to prepare ourselves methodically for the sadhana.... There is one point on which I have already insisted strongly, but unfortunately without much result among you all. And I thought that perhaps it would be good to begin with that to prepare you for a future sadhana.

So, the subject of our meditation this evening will be this: “On the harm done by incontinence of speech.”

Very often I have told you that every word spoken uselessly is dangerous chatter. But here, the situation has reached the very limit — there are things which have been said, said over and over again, repeated by all those who have tried to perfect humanity, unfortunately without much result — it is a question of malicious gossip... of slander, of that pleasure taken in speaking ill of others. Anyone who indulges in this kind of incontinence debases his consciousness, and when to this incontinence is added the habit of vulgar quarrelling, expressed in coarse language, then that amounts to suicide, spiritual suicide within oneself.

I stress this point and insist that you take it very seriously.