

*Aspiration Talks*¹

10 March 1970

A: We would like to speak to you about work in Aspiration. What we would like to know, what we are looking for, is the right attitude...

What is the trouble?

A: The trouble is...

Each one pulls in his own direction.

A: Each one pulls in his own direction. No one is really in contact with what is true.

We have to bear in mind that we are starting from the present state of humanity. So you must face all the difficulties; you must find the solution.

(Pointing to the tape-recorder) What is that?

B: I am recording for the people of Auromodèle, Sweet Mother.

(Mother laughs) You shouldn't have told me!

A: But, Sweet Mother, you know, several solutions are open to us. For instance, on one hand...

¹ Between March and August of 1970, Mother met weekly in her room a small number of Aurovilians, many from Aspiration community — hence the name “Aspiration Talks”. After an offering of flowers and the introduction of new persons, there was usually a period of conversation, though sometimes only what Mother called a “bath of silence”. The following talks were edited from tape-recordings of these twenty-two meetings.

Each man has his solution, and that is the great difficulty. To be in the Truth, each one has his solution. And yet we must find a way for all these solutions to work together.

(Silence)

So the framework must be vast, very flexible, and there must be a great goodwill from everyone: that is the first condition — the first individual condition — goodwill. To be flexible enough to do the best thing to be done at each moment.

A: But for example, we are told that we must have factories, that we must produce, and some of us have no feeling for that sort of work. We would prefer a seeking which is more...

More inward?

A: More inward, rather than to launch into factories, work, production for the sake of money, etc. That is not what we feel, that is not what we want to do in Aspiration at the moment. We would like to know what you think about it.

(Mother concentrates and there is a long silence.)

To be practical, you must first have a very clear vision of your goal, of where you are going. From this point of view, take money for example. An ideal which may be several hundred years ahead of its time, we don't know: money should be a power which belongs to nobody and which should be controlled by the most universal wisdom present. Put on the earth someone who has a vision vast enough to be able to know the needs of the earth and precise enough to be able to tell where the money should go — you understand, we are very far from that, aren't

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we? For the moment, the gentleman still says, “This is mine”, and when he is generous, he says, “I give it to you.” That’s not it.

But there is a long way to go between what we are and what must be. And for that we must be very flexible, never losing sight of the goal, but knowing that we cannot reach it at one bound and that we must find the way. Well, that is much more difficult, even more difficult than to make the inner discovery. Truly speaking, that should have been made before coming here.

For there is a starting-point: when you have found within yourself the light that never wavers, the presence which can guide you with certitude, then you become aware that constantly, in everything that happens, there is something to be learnt, and that in the present state of matter there is always a progress to be made. That is how one should come, eager to find out at every minute the progress to be made. To have a life that wants to grow and perfect itself, that is what the collective ideal of Auroville should be: “A life that wants to grow and perfect itself”, and above all, not in the same way for everyone — each one in his own way.

Well, now there are thirty of you, it is difficult, isn’t it? When there are thirty thousand of you, it will be easier, because, naturally, there will be many more possibilities. You are the pioneers, you have the most difficult task, but I feel it is the most interesting one. Because you must establish in a concrete, durable and growing way the attitude that is needed to truly be an Aurovilian. To learn every day the lesson that is needed to truly be an Aurovilian. To learn every day the lesson of the day.... Each sunrise is an opportunity to make a discovery. So, with that state of mind, you find out. Everyone does.

And the body needs activity: if you keep it inactive, it will begin to revolt by becoming sick and so on. It needs an activity, it really needs an activity like planting flowers, building a house,

something really material. You must feel it. Some people do exercises, some ride bicycles, there are countless activities, but in your little group you must all come to an agreement so that each one can find the activity which suits his temperament, his nature and his need. But not with ideas. Ideas are not much good, ideas give you preconceptions, for example, "That is a good work, that work is not worthy of me," and all that sort of nonsense. There is no bad work — there are only bad workers. All work is good when you know how to do it in the right way. Everything. And it is a kind of communion. If you are fortunate enough to be conscious of an inner light, you will see that in your manual work, it is as if you called the Divine down into things; then the communion becomes very concrete, there is a whole world to be discovered, it is marvellous.

You are young, you have plenty of time before you. And to be young, to be really young, we must always, always keep on growing, developing, progressing. Growth is the sign of youthfulness and there is no limit to the growth of consciousness. I know old people of twenty and young people of fifty, sixty, seventy. And if one does manual work, one keeps in good health.

So now you must find the solution.

A: All right.

Everything you can do... there are all sorts of things, all sorts. And you should see among yourselves how it can be arranged. You will come and tell me, all right?

B: Yes, all right.

Then, good-bye. Come again in a week.

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24 March 1970

Come in. (*Mother laughs.*)

(Those who enter offer flowers to the Mother. Pointing to the flowers named “Service”, she says, laughing:)

Service to Auroville.

(Mother arranges the flowers and distributes them. While giving “Service” and “Transformation” flowers, she remarks:)

It is service which leads to transformation. I mean it seriously.

A: Sweet Mother, may we ask you a question?

Yes.

A: It is on behalf of Aspiration in general.

Oh!

A: In Aspiration some people would like to know whether it would be possible for it to be not always the same people who come to see you on Tuesdays.

You see, I am quite willing, but it is up to you. (*Mother laughs*)

No! I am willing to see four of you.

(Turning to C) I have called him for the first time today, but in his place other people could take turns in coming. In any case I will be seeing him. But with you three, a fourth person can come, taking turns, a different one each time.

A: Very well.

All I ask is that they should be sincere, that they do not come out of mere curiosity. If they are sincere, if they truly want to progress, they may come one at a time, I am quite willing. I do not even need to know their names. You see, that has no importance to me. It is only the quality of the receptivity that counts. If they are open and feel that it does them good, then fine, it is very good....

(To C) So you will come once a week to keep me informed about the garden.... You, you people come from Auroville; him, he works here.... Is that all right?

A: Quite all right, Sweet Mother.

(Long silence)

How many of you are there out there?

A: About forty.

(Mother laughs) I'm going to ask you an indiscreet question. How many are sincere? You can't know that just by looking at them. There won't be forty coming here! How many asked you if they could come?

B: Five, six.

That's reasonable. Who?

B: There were D, E, F—and many people there feel much love for you, you know.

(Silence)

I am going to set two conditions. To want to progress — that is really a moderate condition. To want to progress, to know that

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everything is yet to be done, everything is yet to be conquered. The second condition: to do something every day, some activity, some work, anything, something which is not for oneself, and above all something which is an expression of goodwill for all — you are a group, aren't you? — simply to show that you do not live solely for yourselves as if you were at the centre of the universe and the whole universe had to revolve around you. That is how it is for the vast majority of people, and they don't even know it. Each one should become aware that, spontaneously, one puts oneself at the centre of the universe and wants everything to come to oneself, just like that, in one way or another. But one should make an effort to recognise the existence of the whole, that's all. It is to widen one's consciousness, just to become a little less tiny.

So those who adhere to my programme will come once a week, in turn. Is that all right?

(To C) As for you, I shall give you a rose for your mother because she likes them very much. So you will give her this. And you will come... you should not come on the same day, because it takes too much time. What day?

G: Monday is all right, Friday too.

(To C) Which day is more convenient for you?

C: Monday, Sweet Mother.

So on Monday you will bring me news of your gardening.

Very good. We must have a beautiful garden.

Well, then, is it all right? I shall see you next Tuesday, with someone, anyone, it's all the same to me, you can just tell me when he comes.... Those who want to progress and who think that the world is vaster than themselves, than their own consciousness.

(Silence)

G: They have arranged a Judo mat over there, Sweet Mother. B is teaching Judo. He is a brown belt and he can teach.

Oh! You have met Mr. H?

B: Yes, I have practised Judo with him.

(To G) What does he think of him?

B: We have not been taught in the same way; it is difficult for me to tell you what I think of him because we don't have the same technique.

G: They don't have the same technique, Sweet Mother; they have not been taught in the same way. He worked with him while he was here in the Ashram, for three months, and then he went to Auroville.

They don't have the same technique?

G: Yes, they don't work in the same way.

(To B) Where did you learn?

B: In France. H learned in Algeria, I think.

And then there are those who have learned in Japan and they really know. (General laughter)

B: There are about ten of us, Sweet Mother, practising Judo.

There are as many Judos as there are people practising it. Ten is

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all right. The first thing is to learn how to fall. (*General laughter*)
All right. So I shall see you next Tuesday. Good-bye.

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31 March 1970

Any news?

A: Yes.

What news?

A: We have two questions to ask you, if you don't mind. The first one is about a young boy from the Tamil village next to Aspiration. For some time now he has been coming to work in the garden at Aspiration; and we feed him, and little by little he has started to participate, to live a little bit with the camp. And I, J and K have decided to take responsibility for this child, along with the whole group, of course, but the three of them especially; and to look after him and little by little to integrate him into the life of the camp. Do you think it is all right?

It is all right, on condition that the parents agree. You should have someone talk with the parents and tell them, if they agree, ask them, explain to them. You cannot take a child, just like that, without the agreement of the parents, his father and mother.

A: L is looking after village relations. He is going to try and see the family and get in touch with the father and mother, to see whether it is possible.

And he will go there?

A: Yes, yes.

This is what I am saying. That is the condition. He must go there, talk to the father and mother, explain things to them, ask them whether they agree. If they do, it is very good, quite all right.

A: Because there is no question of cutting him off from his village...

No, no.

A: But to try little by little...

On the contrary...

A: We must not...

On the contrary, he must maintain the contact. Then it is fine. Now, the second question?

A: The second question is about visitors, the people who come to Aspiration. There are two categories: those who stay for the day and have their meals there, and those who want to spend the night and who want to stay. We do not know what attitude we should take towards them in general.

Spending the night is not possible, is it? You have no room?

A: No, we have no room.

But where do they come from? Are they sent by the [Sri Aurobindo] Society or do they come just like that?

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A: Some of them are sent by the Society, but not all. We don't always know where they come from.

There ought to be some supervision.

A: Because sometimes it creates misunderstandings, which are not...

You should have an office, that is to say, there ought to be someone there all the time, someone who could receive people coming from outside, interview them, find out who has sent them, where they come from, why they have come. He should be an Indian. That is absolutely indispensable, someone who speaks...

A: Some Indians come, but many Europeans as well — Germans, for instance, and Englishmen, Americans and Frenchmen too; they just happen to be passing by and...

There should be one Indian and one European who can speak at least French and English. If he could speak German too it would be still better. But nowadays, with English...

Spending the night — I don't agree, because we know nothing about what they are like or what they want or why they have come. Those who come with a recommendation, someone knows them, they have been sent to us, that is different; but those who come just like that — there must be someone to tell them what it's all about, and that it is not an object of curiosity.

A: But, Sweet Mother, for instance, let us take an example: if someone has already come to Aspiration and has left to go and work somewhere else, and he would like to come back from time to time, what attitude should we... in that case, could he spend the night there?

Is he a nice person?

A: Yes, he is a nice person.

Then it is all right. That is quite different, it is different. I am talking about strangers, people whom we do not know and who come just like that. Who could receive them?

A: Well, in fact I don't really know. We ought to discuss it among ourselves. I don't know.

Yes, perhaps it would not be much fun.

A: Not always.

But it would be rather useful, it would be very useful. It would be enough to have a table and a chair — you invite them in and interview them. If necessary, there could be a stool for them!

A: We could also give them something to drink...

(Mother laughs) Oh! That's too much. "What do you expect from us, who told you about us", etc.... And then it ought to be someone with a little psychological insight. If he sees that the people are sincere and interesting, then it is all right; but to spend the night — better not.

A: On the other hand, we have decided to ask for money from people who have a meal there.

Yes, ask them to pay.

A: Ask them to pay — is it all right?

Yes, yes, it is all right. You have only to set a fixed price. Who is doing the cooking?

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A: We have had a cook for a month, a Tamil man who learned to cook during the fifteen years he spent in France; and there are people helping him in the kitchen. But he is always there.

(Jokingly) You could open a little restaurant!
Do you know M?

A: Yes.

He has some sort of shop for selling things.

A: Yes, a store.

Yes, that's it. But there is no one to look after it at night and so there are thefts. And it seems that you have too many people and not enough accommodation. So what I suggested was that each month someone could go there to sleep at night and come back in the morning, if it's not too far.

A: It's three kilometres away.

G: Three or four kilometres, Sweet Mother.

Oh, well that's nothing.

A: By cycle it is nothing.

By cycle — do you have bicycles?

A: Yes, though actually we don't have enough. We must get some more. We don't have enough cycles but we can find some more.

And all you have to do is go there in the evening, at night, and come back in the morning. At night the bicycles won't be needed

[at Aspiration]. But if you know M, he could take one of you along and show him and explain it to him.

A: All right.

I think it will be all right.... I don't know what it's like, I couldn't say, but I hope that it will be comfortable.

A: And what do you think about making a big hut to house twenty or twenty-five people? It was one of N's ideas.

I think that until there is enough accommodation for everyone it is quite indispensable. I'm not saying that it will be super-comfortable, but it is most indispensable.

The young boy, the young Tamil boy who is coming — what are you teaching him, English or French?

A: Oh, for the moment we're not really teaching him anything.

Poor little fellow, you simply put him to work...

A: Oh no, not only that.

G: They feed him as well, Sweet Mother.

A: Gradually, as he comes more often, we will organise something and teach him French.

You must involve him in the life there, and then it would be interesting. When children hear you speak, they want to know what is being said and they learn the language. Indians are wonderful at learning languages. They can learn four or five languages without mixing them up. This young boy would learn very well — it would be a good thing.

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(Long silence)

Good, it is all right. Then... Good-bye.

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7 April 1970

Nothing to report?

(Long silence)

Have you changed something in the organisation? Someone told me that you had.

A: It is going to change.

Oh! It has not changed.

A: Not yet. It is going to change.

(Long silence)

If anyone wants a “bath of silence” they can come, it doesn’t matter. If anyone wants a “bath of silence” more often than once in a while, they can come, it doesn’t matter. They can sit there at the back.

I’ll leave the arrangements to you.

(Silence)

Good-bye.

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14 April 1970

G: (Referring to O) *He is German, Sweet Mother. He is the one who draws the comics, like Claude de Ribaud-Pierre. He is the one who does that, Mother.*

(Referring to P) *He has just arrived, Mother. He is a mason.*

Ah!

G: *He is from France and he is a mason. He is going to leave for some time to fetch his wife and then come back.*

There is work here.

(Long silence)

I am going to give each of you a packet to keep the contact. You are familiar with these packets. You must keep the packet.

Do they all understand French?

G: *Not O.*

(In English) I can speak in English if you like.

G: *O does not understand, Mother. He is German. He understands English.*

(In English) There are some petals, flower petals inside, but they are charged with force, and if you keep them upon you, the contact with me is kept. So, if you refer inside, when you withdraw... if you refer inside, you can re-establish the contact and even have an answer to a question.

Take it. Here.

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(Silence)

Nobody has a question? *(In English)* No question?

(Silence)

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21 April 1970

G: (Referring to L, who wrote to Mother asking how Aurovilians should relate to the local villagers) *This is L. He is the one who asked the questions.*

Ah! For your questions, the best way, you see, it is education. To educate them not by words and speeches but by example. If you can make them mix with your life and your work, and they get the influence of your way of being, your way of understanding, then, little by little, they will change. And when they become curious and ask questions, then it will be time to answer and to tell them what you know.

G: *Here are some offerings from the villagers.*

Oh!

G: *L brought them, Mother — from the villagers.*

Oh!

L: *Two persons.*

They know of my existence?

L: *Yes, Mother! (Laughter)*

Two?

L: Two.

Then you will give them that. (*Mother gives two Blessings Packets.*) You'll tell them: the Mother is sending that for you. And you tell them: keep that upon you, it will help you.

Is there someone else?

G: Yes, Q, a German girl. She is also working in the Dispensary, Mother.

You speak English? It is with Dr. R that you are working?

G: With Dr. R, yes, Mother.

(*To A*) You understand English?

A: Yes.

Then I say it in English. Because I have been told that in Aspiration there is a big number of cats and dogs. It is true? You know, I have nothing against cats and dogs. I have kept some also at one time. But the climate is not good; it is almost impossible to avoid... to avoid rabies. And then, you understand, it becomes dangerous and you will have to kill them, which is not a pleasant business. It would be better to diminish the number as much as possible. I have been obliged to ask not to keep dogs; some keep them all the same. But you can't have a pleasant contact with them. They carry the illness. There are some diseases, rather serious, and dogs, cats, carry them. I don't want to give nasty descriptions, but... It is not safe and it cannot be peaceful. Do you know the illness they carry? There are two: one is plague, the other is leprosy.

Are they personal animals or belonging to the community?

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A: Some belong to the community, but some are personally owned.

They live in their huts?

A: Some of them. (Murmurs of disagreement; A corrects himself) *No, they don't live in the huts any more.*

They are not allowed to come in?

A: No, not in the huts, but even so they are in the camp. They are often in the cafeteria where we have our meals.

And then, well, they breed. (*Laughter*) There is no end to it. And breeding — what can we do? Drown them all? It is not pleasant. Naturally, you could easily tell me: if we chase them away from here they will go somewhere else. But, anyway, what I would like is that this should not be encouraged. You know, you will have more cats and dogs than human beings. That's how it is. Then — there is one interesting thing you could do. Far, far away, in some deserted area where no one lives, you could put them all together, in a protected area, so that they could not get out. Then they will find something to eat. Say, a spot of virgin forest — they still exist in India. With cats it is very easy. When a cat has kittens, if you carry the babies off somewhere and put them there, the mother never comes back, she stays with the little ones. Something should be found, a remote spot. They still exist in India. But not on Auroville land.

In fact, all I am asking you to do is not to allow the number to increase, in any case. One day you will come to me all in tears, saying: life has become unbearable! (*Laughter*) So, I am warning you.

In the village, do they have cats and dogs?

L: Yes, dogs — many, but not many cats.

Do you want a short moment of silence?

(Long silence)

So, good-bye.

All: Good-bye.

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28 April 1970

Who are the new ones?

G: The new ones: D, you have already seen her once for her birthday. S, you know her, you have seen her several times already. T has often written to you; he wrote several letters and he also came for his birthday. U, you don't know U; he is a mechanic, he works with V on the cars. W's father, N. B, who comes every week. And A (Mother laughs).

So we are going to stay quiet. I shall talk to you some other day.

There will be... Do you know the small Ashram brooches? Well, there is going to be one for Auroville. Because there are people who come and settle down on Auroville land and they refuse to go and see the Committee, saying, "Auroville is free!" And they settle down there. But all the same, we need to be able to distinguish between those who are recognised Aurovilians and those who are more fanciful. So something is being prepared — of course, it is not ready yet. I only wanted to show you. (*Mother takes a sheet of paper from her table.*)

It will be a small brooch about this size. It is like this. The circle will be made of silver; and here are the four aspects, and Sri Aurobindo's square with the lotus. And "Auroville" will be

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written all around it. So you will wear that in your button-hole — the recognised Aurovilians! (*Mother smiles.*)

(*Silence*)

There. So, have a good week.

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26 May 1970

Are there any questions?

A: Yes. There have been some reactions about the little booklet that you gave us on religions, about the sentence which says: "Our search will not be a search by mystic means."²

They don't know what mystic means are?

A: Maybe they don't know, but perhaps what we do not know either is this: why not by mystic means? I have been asked the question.

By mystic means I mean the way of those who withdraw from life, like the monks, the people who withdraw into convents, or like the sannyasins here, those who abandon life to find spiritual life, who make a division between the two and say, "It is either one or the other." We say, "That is not true." It is in life and by living life entirely that one can live the spiritual life, that one *must* live the spiritual life. The supreme consciousness has to be brought *here*. From the purely material and physical point of

² "Our research will not be a search effected by mystic means. It is in life itself that we wish to find the Divine. And it is through this discovery that life can really be transformed."

view, man is not the last race. As man came after the animal, so another being must come after man. And as there is only one Consciousness, it is the same Consciousness which having had the experience of man will have the experience of a superhuman being. And so if we go away, if we leave life, if we reject life, then we will never be ready to do that.

But if you had read Sri Aurobindo, you would have understood, you would not have asked this question. It is because there is a lack of preparation from the intellectual point of view. You want to know everything without having studied.

(To A) Now, what else do you have to say?

A: That is all. Yes, there is something else, if you don't mind. It is a letter from T. A letter from T who is here and who asked me to read it to you.

All right.

A: (Reading) "Concerning what you have written about religions, a prayer rises up towards you. We ask for the Divine's Truth, fulfilled in the Truth of our being; we ask that our actions may manifest His Truth, that our minds and hearts may be exclusively moved by His Truth. We implore the full Light of His Truth on all that is still unconscious. With His Truth we want to know, through His Truth we want to act, and in His Truth we want to be. This is the prayer of Auroville to the Supreme. Be the triumphant Mother of our consciousnesses."

It could be put up on the notice board. It is very good, very good.

(*R indicates that he has a question to ask.*) What do you have to say?

R: I have a question, Mother, a practical question.

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Practical?

R: It seems very difficult to be able to want to achieve any specific aim and at the same time to love everyone. When we begin to want something and try to act with a particular result in mind, immediately we cut ourselves off from everyone who does not agree with that. In practice, how can we do both at the same time?

You cut yourself off from people who do not think as you do?

R: Really... all the time....

But not a single person thinks as you do!

R: Of course.

So how can you love anyone?

R: As long as I don't want anything, it is all right.

Oh!

R: Yes!

(Mother concentrates for two or three minutes)

It is because when you want something, it is the ego that wants. So, the ego... must be ignored. The first thing to do is not to act for yourself but to act in obedience to the Divine, to express the divine Will. For your part, you have no orders to give. As long as it is a personal will, a personal desire, it is not the true thing, and you cannot... Not only is it not the true thing, but you cannot know the true thing!

That must be (*gesture of rejecting something forcefully*)...
that must be expelled!

That is why alone, we are nothing at all. This is life. We do not act for ourselves. We do not act from our personal will and for a personal result. We act only by the divine Will and for the divine Will. So much so, that effortlessly, spontaneously, we can feel the greatest tenderness for our physical enemy. When you have felt that, you will understand. That is the whole limitation, the whole limitation.

When conflicts arise, and they arise all the time, for all of us — immediately it is as if one were drawing back into one's own skin. For that is what happens: each one draws back inside himself. But the difficulty is that even when one has relatively little personal will, if the person next to you expresses a personal will, it is exactly... First of all it creates a reaction and then too, if you are more or less in agreement with it, you take this will, you see, and you begin to reflect it all around. So you can see what happens. And that is going on all the time. First one person has a will, and then another, and so on, endlessly. That is happening everywhere; the strongest will prevails. It is worthless, worthless.

When we say, "We are at the service of the Divine", it is not just words. It is He who should act through us, not we ourselves. The greatest objection is: How can we know the divine Will? But as a matter of fact, I tell you: if you sincerely renounce your personal will, you will know.

R: Yes, that is clear.

Yes, that's it.

(*Mother remains silent, concentrating on each person present, for about fifteen minutes. Then to A:*) So, you will explain that to them.

We want to change life — we do not want to run away from it.... Until now all those who have tried to know what they called God, to enter into relation with God, they have abandoned

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life. They have said, “Life is an obstacle. We shall abandon life for that.” So, in India you had the sannyasins who renounced everything; in Europe you had the monks and the ascetics. Well, they can escape, even though when they are reborn they will have to begin all over again. But life remains as it is.

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2 June 1970

I have been asked to formulate the aspiration of Auroville. Because there is a lot of goodwill, but it is... it does not seem to be organised. So, I said: the best thing to do is to formulate what Auroville wants to be. That will provide some coordination. But it is a great task.

Each time, we could formulate one of the aspirations, or else you could bring me a question each time. And there will be many of them, so, one question and then either I will answer right away or I will give you the answer the next time. Or else, we can try to express together the aspiration of Auroville.

A: Do you already have some vision of what this aspiration is?

Of course! Of course! I know what I want, I know what I want Auroville to be. But there is a considerable gap... It is Auroville in a few years' time, many years from now.

A: But you think that we shall achieve this future Auroville?

This is how we will proceed: each time you come, I will give you one of Auroville's aspirations and then we'll put them one after the other, and the next time you can ask me a question on what I have said the time before. There is one drawback; it is

not always the same people who come. There are three of you who always come. You must keep up the continuity.

What must one be to be a true Aurovilian? You put the question like that. What must one be to be a true Aurovilian? (To A) Do you have any ideas?

A: For me, the first thing, to really be an Aurovilian, is the will to consecrate oneself wholly to the Divine.

That is good, it is good; but there are not many like that. (To G) Here, give me a piece of paper. I'm going to write that down as number one.

(*Mother writes*) "To Be a True Aurovilian." I have written it with only one "1" on purpose.

So, we shall see about number two.

From the point of view of behaviour, of more-down-to-earth things, for example: We want to be free from all moral and social conventions. But that is where we have to be very careful! One must not liberate oneself from these things by sinking below them into licence and the blind satisfaction of desires; one must liberate oneself from these conventions by rising above them and by eliminating desires, and replace moral rules by obedience to the Divine.

(G offers Mother a notebook in which to write what she has just said.)

It is not in a form which can be written down.

G: Yes, Sweet Mother.

Now we will be silent.

G: There is a question, Sweet Mother.

Eh?

Words of the Mother – I

G: There is a question.

A question? What question? Who has a question?

G: It is B here, who teaches Judo at Aspiration. He says, "Sweet Mother, why is it so difficult to carry on a physical activity, sports or any other, in Auroville in general and particularly in Aspiration?"

Difficult? Why is it difficult?

B: It is difficult, Sweet Mother, to be steady, to go on with an activity, sports or any other, which we have started. So I am asking you why.

Don't you have any students?

B: We have started Judo classes. There were eight of us two months ago, but now we are two or three. And for many activities it is like that.

What reason do they give? Is it laziness, indolence, or because they feel superior?

B: I don't know, Sweet Mother.

If it is laziness, you must begin slowly and gradually build up as the body becomes used to it. If it is because of a sense of superiority, that is a *serious* disease! (*Mother laughs*) It must be cured!

We have been given a body not to reject it but to make it into something better. And that is precisely one of the goals of Auroville. The human body must be improved, perfected, and it must become a superhuman body capable of expressing a being higher than man. And this certainly cannot happen if

we neglect it. It is by an enlightened physical culture and by using physical activities — the activities of the body — not for little personal needs and satisfactions, but to make the body more capable of expressing a higher beauty and consciousness. And for that, physical education has an important place, which should be given to it.

The question “Why are they like that?” — everyone says to me, “They are like this. They are like that. Why are they like that?” And in every domain. And that is precisely why I thought of doing what I spoke of before: formulating the true aspiration of Auroville.

And this cultivation of the body must be done with an enlightened sense, not to do eccentric or marvellous things, but to give the body the possibility of being strong and supple enough to express a higher consciousness.

That will be part of the long list.

They need to be told a little.... Each has come with an aspiration, the idea that he would find something new, but it is not very clear. And so they must be given a clear picture, comprehensive enough for all the aspirations to be able to find their place and their expression. We will do that. We see each other once a week. We will do it little by little.

(To B) You will have to tell them, but I have just said it. They can be told, you can tell them: physical culture has an important place in preparing the body for its new functions. There! (*Mother laughs.*)

(*There follows a quarter of an hour's meditation. Then Mother takes back the notebook in which she has written “To Be a True Aurovilian” and point number one of the “long list” and says:*)

There! I have written number two: “The Aurovilian does not want to be a slave to his desires.” It is a major resolution.

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Words of the Mother – I

9 June 1970

(To A) I have some work for you. (*Mother asks A to read the text of "To Be a True Aurovilian".*)

Well then, what would you prefer: silence first and that afterwards, or that first and silence after? It is in writing: what an Aurovilian must be. Not easy.

A: Silence afterwards.

(*Handing the text to A*) Look at it. Is there enough light?

A: Yes. (A reads the text of "To Be a True Aurovilian".)

It will be continued. If you want to, make a copy, as many copies as you like, but on the condition that the copies are accurate, that there are no alterations.

A: Regarding copies, P told me that you had read the first conversation which we had together and that you didn't want it to be published in its present form.

Such things have to be written. As it stands, it is merely talk. When one is speaking like that, it is not in a form which can be preserved. You see, there is the way you speak, the tone of your voice, the force you put into it, and then the expression which completes what is not explicit. Then, when it is printed, all that is missing, and it becomes just talk. It lacks the essential thing: the consciousness one puts into what one says. The words are not enough.

If I had the time I would correct it for you and then you could publish it; but as it stands now, it is not possible. When you read, you are with the words alone, and very few people are capable of drawing on the force while they are reading. The words must be as precise as possible. That is why I have written

down this text. When it is finished, I will put it in English, then those who don't know French will be able to understand.

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23 June 1970

C: There is much illness at Aspiration just now.

Ah!

C: There are stomach troubles like diarrhoea, dysentery, gastroenteritis.

Oh! Is it because of the food?

C: The doctor says that it is the water. But we have disinfected the water-tank.

Is it surface water?

C: It's water which comes from a fairly deep well.

It would be better to have it analysed. You don't have a filter?

C: No.

There should be one. Only for drinking. Or else it should be boiled and cooled. Otherwise, it is troublesome. It is best to boil it first and then filter it.

G: He can speak of it because he was sick last week, Mother.

C: I am still sick.

Words of the Mother – I

G: He is still sick. He doesn't say that it's himself, but he is sick.

Enteritis?

C: Yes, gastroenteritis.

G: He's had it for a long time now, some fifteen days.

If the water is bad, it keeps coming back. You should get it analysed. (*Mother advises analysis of the water by E.*) Give him some water and ask him to have a look at it. Then we will do what is needed. The best thing, the safest thing is to boil it and then filter it. And then you must be careful about the vessels; make sure they are clean. If you are careless... Boiling it, that's easy. Filtering it — someone could make a filter. Can you take care of it?

C: Perhaps we could buy one in Madras?

G: In Harpagon, Mother, there is someone who knows how to make filters. If he goes there, they could explain it to him. Only the candles have to be bought in Madras.

And then, don't drink just anywhere! That is the only thing, the only precaution you have to take in this country: the water. You get all kinds of diseases from the water. I thought that this had already been explained to you. You can build a filter; make it a big one!

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7 July 1970

A: This is a letter from X. He would like me to read it to you. May I do that?

Yes.

A: (Reading) "Divine Mother, there is great confusion about Auroville's organisation, inner as well as outer. How can we work together towards the realisation of a higher consciousness? It seems that Auroville should become a more homogeneous community with a greater sense of unity. In order to realise this, would it be possible for all the inhabitants of Promesse, Hope, Aspiration, Peace, etc. to meet in order to work together one day a week on a communal garden, perhaps the garden of Truth? Or each person could devote one day a week to a communal farm, to produce food for Auroville. That would help us to get to know each other better and make us more capable of organising ourselves in the right spirit. And perhaps the people engaged in individual projects for Auroville could also work together more closely, so as to form a sort of guiding team in Auroville, so that each one's work could progress more effectively. Would such a concerted effort in Auroville just now help us to do your work?"

"With a prayer for perfection."

The aspiration is good, but... I don't know whether the time has come.

A: He is not the only one. There are several people working in different places in Auroville who feel this need to unite and to do the same work together.

Yes, the idea is good, but this is how I see it. We want to build the Matrimandir; and then, that was the idea: when we begin to build the Matrimandir, everyone who wants to work there will be able to do so. And that would really be working on the central idea.

Words of the Mother – I

And it should be soon. It should have been already. So there, there will be work for everyone. We have been thinking of beginning the Matrimandir for a long time. In fact, everyone should come and work there, except, of course, those who work elsewhere. There will be work for everybody. It is better than... It is the centre of the town.

You could tell him this: in principle the idea is good. But as for the application, for a long time, more than a year, we wanted to begin the Matrimandir so that everyone could work there. A person would have to say, “No, I do not want to” and have his reasons.

It is like the Force, the central Force of Auroville, the cohesive Force of Auroville.

There will be gardens. There will be everything, all the possibilities: engineers, architects, all kinds of manual work. So you can tell him from me that he has picked up the idea which was in the air, but that we want its application to be truly symbolic. And when we begin to build the Matrimandir, we will put everyone to work on it. Not every day and all the time, but it will be organised.

Is that all you wanted to say?

(Silence)

What has been done with what I wrote?

A: It has been put up on the notice-board. It has been read...

It doesn't seem to have had much effect.

A: It has surely had some effect, but no one has spoken to me about it.

Good. So now, do you want a meditation? Not a meditation:

silence. If possible, mental silence. In order to have true knowledge one must achieve mental silence. You are still... who among you can be silent mentally?

Does everybody understand French?

A: No, not everybody.

(In English) I was asking, who knows how to be perfectly silent mentally? No? Nobody? *(Laughter)* That's what we are trying here.

(To A) Shall we try?

A: Yes! (Laughter)

Who has succeeded? Not yet. Then, silence.

(Long silence)

A noisy silence!

*

28 July 1970

No questions? Yes? What do you have to say?

A: The first thing is that Y is going to buy cows for Aspiration. He is going to Madras tomorrow and he would like to have your blessings. He would like to have three of them, one for each cow and one for himself.

(Mother laughs) What will they do with the blessings?
Where is he going to buy them?

A: In Madras.

Madras is a city. Cows are not born in cities.

Words of the Mother – I

A: But he is going with an expert.

Oh! I'm quite willing to give a blessings packet for him, but not for the cows!

Is that all?

A: There was something else. We would like to know the underlying reason why we of Aspiration may no longer go to the Playground. Last Wednesday there was a talk by Z about Sri Aurobindo's Action and we were not allowed to enter.

It is my fault for not anticipating that. Otherwise I would have told them to let you in for that. I had not anticipated it. I could perhaps ask Z if he would like to give you a talk.

A: He has already done so.

Ah, well then...

A: No, it worked out very well. But we wanted to know the reason.

The reason is something quite different. It had nothing to do with that. The reason is quite simply that it is rather difficult to make a rule that applies for one person and not for another — very complicated. And unfortunately, among the people living in Auroville there are some who drink. And there are other things too... But anyway, one was found almost dead drunk in the Playground. So, naturally, with us here at the Ashram it is forbidden to drink, to drink alcohol. It caused a terrible uproar. That is the reason. It is not an inner reason, it is a very practical reason. It is impossible to say, "This one may go; that one cannot." What can they do at the door? And it almost caused a revolution. If they ask my advice, I would say, I advise you

not to drink because it diminishes the consciousness and ruins your health. But some people do not ask my advice. And I do not want to make rules for Auroville as I did for the Ashram. It is not the same thing.

The people who live in Auroville and insist on following all the old habits—the old ones and the new ones too—which harm the consciousness, which lower the consciousness, things like smoking, drinking and, of course, drugs... all that, it is as if you were cutting pieces off your being. In the Ashram, naturally, I said No. We want to grow in consciousness; we do not want to descend into the pit of desires. To those who refuse to understand I say: the aim of Auroville is to discover a new, deeper, more complete, more perfect life and to show the world that tomorrow will be better than today.

Some people believe that smoking, drinking, etc. will form part of the life of tomorrow. That is their business. If they want to go through this experience, let them do it. They will realise that they are imprisoning themselves in their own desires. But anyway, I am not a moralist, not at all, at all, at all. It is their own business. It is their own business. If they want to go through this experience, let them do it. But the Ashram is not the place for it. Thank God, at the Ashram we have learnt that life is something else. True life is not the satisfaction of desires. I can affirm from experience that all the experiences brought by drugs, all that contact with the invisible world, can be had in a much better, more conscious and controlled way without drugs. Only, one must control oneself. It is more difficult than swallowing poison. But I am not going to preach.

When and if Auroville becomes the example of a higher life, having conquered all desires and opened itself to higher forces, then we will be able to go everywhere. When the Aurovilians become lights moving in the world, they will be welcome. There!

Words of the Mother – I

But I believe I have written something like that. No? What I gave you? They were not just words; these things are very concrete.

Is that all? Or do you have anything else?

A: No.

(Silence)