22 June 1955

Mother reads from *Lights on Yoga*, “Planes and Parts of the Being”.

*How can one awaken his Yoga-shakti?*

It depends on this: when one thinks that it is the most important thing in his life. That’s all.

Some people sit in meditation, concentrate on the base of the vertebral column and want it very much to awake, but that’s not enough. It is when truly it becomes the most important thing in one’s life, when all the rest seems to have lost all taste, all interest, all importance, when one feels within that one is born for this, that one is here upon earth for this, and that it is the only thing that truly counts, then that’s enough.

One can concentrate on the different centres; but sometimes one concentrates for so long, with so much effort, and has no result. And then one day something shakes you, you feel that you are going to lose your footing, you have to cling on to something; then you cling within yourself to the idea of union with the Divine, the idea of the divine Presence, the idea of the transformation of the consciousness, and you aspire, you want, you try to organise your feelings, movements, impulses around this. And it comes.

Some people have recommended all kinds of methods; probably these were methods which had succeeded in their case; but to tell the truth, one must find one’s own method, it is only after having done the thing that one knows how it should be done, not before.

If one knows it beforehand, one makes a mental construction and risks greatly living in his mental construction, which is an illusion; because when the mind builds certain conditions
and then they are realised, there are many chances of there being mostly pure mental construction which is not the experience itself but its image. So for all these truly spiritual experiences I think it is wiser to have them before knowing them. If one knows them, one imitates them, one doesn’t have them, one imagines oneself having them; whereas if one knows nothing — how things are and how they ought to happen, what should happen and how it will come about — if one knows nothing about all this, then by keeping very still and making a kind of inner sorting out within one’s being, one can suddenly have the experience, and then later knows what one has had. It is over, and one knows how it has to be done when one has done it — afterwards. Like that it is sure.

One may obviously make use of his imagination, imagine the Kundalini and try to pull it upwards. But one can also tell himself tales like this. I have had so many instances of people who described their experiences to me exactly as they are described in books, knowing all the words and putting down all the details, and then I asked them just a little question like that, casually: that if they had had the experience they should have known or felt a certain thing, and as this was not in the books, they could not answer.

_Sweet Mother, what is the significance of the thousand-petalled lotus?_

That is how they describe it. It is because there’s a centre there, very, very complicated. I think it means the countless powers of thought, it is the multiplicity of knowledge in all its forms. It must be that. Why, this is still another instance: people who have read, studied, and have the experience afterwards, well, they always describe it like that, with names they have picked up in books and with descriptions of the lotuses as they are given in books; but those who have the spontaneous experience without having read or learnt anything before having it, they describe it
altogether vividly, with an individual reality, so to say. Each one approaches the experience in his own way. When these centres awake... it is a fact that there are centres, and it's a fact that they awake, and it's a fact that this changes vastly the whole working of the consciousness and energy, but the description, if it is spontaneous and sincere, is different for everyone. One can have the feeling of a similarity with something, but giving a fixed and precise description of what happens is always an intervention of the mind.

This phenomenon is very real, concrete, it is felt with all the reality and intensity of even a physical phenomenon. But each person describes it with a form particular to himself, except as I say, when he has read and studied, and his brain is full of all that is written in books; then automatically what he has read gives a form to his experience, and this takes away from it something of the spontaneity which gives such an impression of being sincere and truthful; it becomes a mental construction. If you have read and read much that it is like a serpent which is coiled up, well, quite naturally when you concentrate and try to awaken it, you see a serpent which is coiled, because you think about it like that. If you are told about a thousand-petalled lotus, you see a thousand-petalled lotus. But it is a mental superimposition upon the fact of the experience itself. But the feeling of something that's innumerable, that's one and innumerable at the same time, and that kind of impression of something opening, awakening, beginning to vibrate, responding to the forces and giving you an intensity of light, of understanding, of opening to higher regions, this is... the substance of the experience. Yet when you begin to describe it with images which you have found in books, it is as though suddenly you were making it either superficial — fossilised, so to say — or artificial or even insincere.

Always the most interesting cases for me have been those of people who had read nothing but had a very ardent aspiration and came to me saying, “Something funny has happened to me, I had this extraordinary experience, what can it mean truly?”
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And then they describe a movement, a vibration, a force, a light, whatever it might be, it depends on each one, and they describe this, that it happened like that and came like that, and then this happened and then that, and what does it all mean, all this? Then here one is on the right side. One knows that it is not an imagined experience, that it is a sincere, spontaneous one, and this always has a power of transformation much greater than the experience that was brought about by a mental knowledge.

*Then, Mother, this means that it is better not to read?*

On condition that one truly has within himself the ardour of aspiration. If you are born for this, for the yoga, and this is the thing which dominates all your existence, that you feel, yes, before knowing anything, that you need to find something which is in you, then sometimes a word is enough, a conversation which simply orients you — it is enough. But for those who are seeking, who grope, who are not absolutely sure, who are pulled this way and that, have many interests in life, are not steady, stabilised in their will for realisation, it is very good to read, because it puts them in touch with the subject, it gives them some interest in the thing.

What I mean is that every definite mental formation always gives a particular colouring to the experience. As for example, with all people brought up in a certain religion their experiences will always be coloured by this religion; and in fact, to reach the very source of the thing one must free oneself from the external formation.

But there is a kind of reading which awakens in you an interest in the thing and can help you in the first seekings. Usually, even if one has had experiences one needs a contact of thought or idea with the thing so that the effort may be crystallized more consciously. But the more one knows, the more one must be absolutely sincere in his experience, that is, he must not use the formative power of his mind to imagine and so create the
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experience in himself. From the point of view of orientation it can be useful; but from the point of view of the experience, it takes away from it its dynamic value, it has not the intensity of an experience which comes because the moral and spiritual conditions necessary for it to occur have been fulfilled. There is the whole mental conditioning which is added and which takes away something of the spontaneity. All this is a matter of proportion. Each one must find the exact amount he needs, how much of reading, how much meditation, how much concentration, how much... It is different for each one.

Sweet Mother, here it is written: “It is part of the foundation of Yoga to become conscious of the great complexity of our nature, see the different forces that move it and get over it a control of directing knowledge.” Are these forces different for each person?

Yes. The composition is completely different, otherwise everybody would be the same. There are not two beings with an identical combination; between the different parts of the being and the composition of these parts the proportion is different in each individual. There are people, primitive men, people like the yet undeveloped races or the degenerated ones whose combinations are fairly simple; they are still complicated, but comparatively simple. And there are people absolutely at the top of the human ladder, the elite of humanity; their combinations become so complicated that a very special discernment is needed to find the relations between all these things.

There are beings who carry in themselves thousands of different personalities, and then each one has its own rhythm and alternation, and there is a kind of combination; sometimes there are inner conflicts, and there is a play of activities which are rhythmic and with alternations of certain parts which come to the front and then go back and again come to the front. But when one takes all that, it makes such complicated combinations that
some people truly find it difficult to understand what is going
on in themselves; and yet these are the ones most capable of
a complete, coordinated, conscious, organised action; but their
organisation is infinitely more complicated than that of primitive
or undeveloped men who have two or three impulses and four or
five ideas, and who can arrange all this very easily in themselves
and seem to be very co-ordinated and logical because there is
not very much to organise. But there are people truly like a
multitude, and so that gives them a plasticity, a fluidity of action
and an extraordinary complexity of perception, and these people
are capable of understanding a considerable number of things,
as though they had at their disposal a veritable army which
they move according to circumstance and need; and all this is
inside them. So when these people, with the help of yoga, the
discipline of yoga, succeed in centralising all these beings around
the central light of the divine Presence, they become powerful
entities, precisely because of their complexity. So long as this is
not organised they often give the impression of an incoherence,
they are almost incomprehensible, one can’t manage to under-
stand why they are like that, they are so complex. But when
they have organised all these beings, that is, put each one in its
place around the divine centre, then truly they are terrific, for
they have the capacity of understanding almost everything and
doing almost everything because of the multitude of entities they
contain, of which they are constituted. And the nearer one is to
the top of the ladder, the more it is like that, and consequently
the more difficult it is to organise one’s being; because when
you have about a dozen elements, you can quickly compass
and organise them, but when you have thousands of them, it is
difficult.