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This talk is based upon Sri Aurobindo's *Bases of Yoga*, Chapter 1, "Calm–Peace–Equality".

Sweet Mother, what does "the reduction of the mental being to the position of a witness" mean?

Have you never felt this? As though you were a little behind or above things, and were looking at them taking place but were not doing anything yourself? Witness means an observer, someone who looks on and does not act himself. So, when the mind is very quiet, one can withdraw a little in this way from circumstances and look at things as though he were a witness, a spectator, and not participating in the action himself. This gives you a great detachment, a great quietude, and also a very precise sense of the value of things, because it cuts the attachment to action. When you know how to do this with yourself, when you can withdraw and watch yourself acting, you learn many things about yourself. When you are all mixed up and take part in the action, you do not observe yourself acting, you don't know what you are like. But when you draw back and look at yourself, you can perceive many imperfections which you wouldn't have seen otherwise.

(To a child) Do you have a question to ask?

Here it is written: "The experience of this 'solid block' feeling indicates the descent of a solid strength and peace...."

It is always the same thing: people writing letters, you understand; they describe their experiences. So he uses the same words that they use for answering. This "solid block" feeling within

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oneself — he explains what it means: he says that it indicates the descent of a strength.

Sweet Mother, what does “solid peace” mean?

You see, there is a negative peace, that is, an absence of disturbance; but solid peace is a positive peace. One may feel a peace which is absolutely positive, which is not the negation of the absence of peace, a peace that is something solid, concrete, very... almost active, you see, that is, having a power of contagion, of spreading through the whole being and bringing peace even in places where there is none. This becomes something very positive and concrete... as though one were touching a solid object. This indeed is true peace. The other is just the preceding step — the negation of the disturbance — that is to say, one remains untroubled, one has no vibration which shows any disturbance.

(To a child) And then? Your question today?

Mother, it is not a question from this book.

Eh? It is not from this book? Oh! But we don't have an entire library here. *(Laughter)*

(To another) So, you have a question?

What does “the experience of the silent Self” mean?

Everyone has in himself a being which he calls the “Self”, and which is completely silent and immobile. So, if one becomes conscious of this being in himself, one has the experience of the silent Self. It is an immobile and silent being which is within, which is like an aspect of the true being and also an aspect of the witness we were just speaking about. It is this silent being which, when it turns to things and looks at them, becomes the witness. But it can turn inwards, not look on, be in its silent

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contemplation. It depends on which side one turns to. It is a solid point in the being, in which the light of truth shines.

If one feels that there is a calm in the atmosphere and everywhere, does this mean that the calm is within oneself?

Eh? Yes. The first thing that comes is that... for example, if one has a certain experience of a particular kind — as one may have an experience of peace, an experience of calm, one may also have an experience of perfect benevolence, an experience of understanding or of compassion — the thing, the experience is as though the consciousness were possessed by one of these movements; and so there occurs this thing which seems strange afterwards, but which for the moment is altogether natural — one feels everywhere, in everyone, in the whole atmosphere, all around himself and, if the consciousness is vast enough, in the entire earth, exactly the *same* peace or the *same* compassion or the *same* benevolence. And so one can say in all sincerity, with a completely living experience: “The universe is perfect benevolence.”

If you come out of it, naturally this does not apply any longer. But while you are in the experience, it is altogether true — at that time. And then, if you push this, these experiences, farther (and this is exactly what happens to people who try to identify themselves consciously with the Divine), when you attain this identification and have the consciousness of the Divine in you, instantly you feel that the Divine is everything and everywhere, in all things, that there is nothing but the Divine. And people who have had this experience have said this, they have said, “But there is only the Divine, all is Divine, the Divine alone exists.” Yet, when one comes out of the experience, if one continues to say it, he almost tells a lie, in the sense that this no longer corresponds at all to the state of consciousness he is in.

When one is in an ordinary external consciousness, everything is not at all divine, far from it. So those who come and tell

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you that in this external consciousness all is divine, are humbugs! But when they are in the experience and live the Divine, when they have become the Divine, then for them everything is divine. They perceive nothing but the Divine, and they may say, "All is divine", because they perceive only the Divine. But as soon as they come out of this experience, they can no longer say it.

But one may say anything. One may say, "All is peace, all is equanimity, all is compassion, all is comprehension, all is light."

Each time one sincerely has an experience and is entirely absorbed in the experience, all that one sees becomes identical with one, because in fact it is everywhere and when one becomes conscious of it in oneself, one becomes conscious of it in everything. It is true.

But it is not solely true, all the rest is also there. And the opposite is also true: when you enter a state of hatred and have the experience of hatred, the whole world for you is full of hatred; at that time almost nothing else exists but hatred.

The more your experience becomes absorbing for you, the more does all the rest become identical.

Then, Mother, is there not any true reality, does all depend on oneself?

No, it is just the opposite!

One becomes conscious of the reality only when one becomes conscious of it in oneself. All this is true. Indeed, it is true: you cannot say that it exists unless you experience it yourself. When you do not experience it, if you say, "It is like this", well... You can say, "There was a time when it was like this for me"; then that's right. But if you say, "It is like this", at a time when you don't feel it, it is quite simply a mental statement.

But everything is there! Everything is there... all the things which you can experience and infinitely more which you cannot, because a being is not absolutely complete in himself. If he were complete in himself, he could have the experience of the whole,

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without any exception. And in fact, potentially it is like that. Only, each one develops according to his own line. It comes to saying this: that one is conscious of the universe only to the extent to which the universe is in his consciousness. For you the universe stops at your consciousness, no matter what others may say. Everything that you read, for example, all the descriptions you are given, all the sentences you hear, you can understand only as far as they correspond to something in your consciousness; and if they are not in your consciousness, you do not understand them, and consequently they do not exist for you. But this does not mean that they do not exist outside you.

You were saying that there is this experience when one sees the Divine everywhere.

Yes.

One sees the Divine everywhere means what? Is it...?

Because one has become the Divine in oneself; so, in this case, the Divine is everywhere.

No.... When you say, "One sees the Divine everywhere"...

Yes.

What does that mean, what does one see exactly? Does one see a...

What does one see? (*Laughter*) One perceives, if you like; one can see, but not see with a physical image. There is not only the physical sight, it is not seeing with... And in fact, one can see with one's eyes, if the eyes are plastic enough to allow the higher Consciousness, the divine Consciousness to pass through them.

One can see also, one can see also, but one no longer sees things as they are physically, that's natural.

If you keep a tiny part of your outer consciousness, if you are not entirely absorbed in the experience, you may see the two superimposed. But then the perception is not as clear and total. Yet it may happen that, for example, there is something in you which keeps the outer physical consciousness, and at the same time there is something which is sufficiently absorbed in the experience of the Divine for the Divine alone to count for you and the rest to be as if you were seeing a thing through a fine veil, a very thin tissue or a transparent paper. Then the paper or tissue exists, but it does not prevent you from seeing things in the other way.

So one can, one can have the perception of the Divine in the world, in others, and at the same time see a kind of vague appearance of these things, and it gives you this experience — which may then remain very vividly in your consciousness — of the unreality of external forms; to what an extent it is only... yes, it is like a sheet of thin paper, it has no consistency, no body, it is something altogether superficial and unreal; and the divine Presence, the divine Splendour behind, is the only thing which exists, which is true, solid, durable. This experience one can have.

Mother, the psychic being in us is always in contact with the Divine: so one should have this experience all the time, for...

If one were in contact with one's psychic being all the time, yes. But it is a fact: from the moment one is in contact with one's psychic being all the time, one is in contact with the divine Presence all the time. And you may reverse the statement and say, "I shall know that I am in contact with my psychic being all the time, when I am in contact with the divine Presence all the time, in all things. This will be a proof for me that I am in contact with my psychic being."

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This changes the state of consciousness totally, totally, one cannot...

You know, there are people who come and ask you, “Am I conscious of my psychic being?” One can tell them, “This itself is the proof that you are not.” Because if you are, you can no longer ask this. It changes your state of consciousness completely.

Is that all? Then... (*Turning to the child who wanted to ask a question outside the book*) If we don’t need the text, you can ask your question.

Mother, there are people who suffer from certain illnesses year after year, we know. Now, if we observe this illness, we see that it comes at a particular time of the year and this goes on the next year also, and it is like that. But the time is fixed. Then what is the reason, and how can one get rid of this?

What is...?

The reason...

There could be many reasons. It depends on the person you ask. If you ask an astrologer he will tell you, “It is the stars, when the stars come into the same position, the same conditions recur.” Well, this is not so wrong. It can be like that. It can also be the individual’s reaction to certain types of climate, you see, or to the sun’s position; or it may be quite simply a bad habit. That’s all. (*Laughter*)

And if one forms... If by chance it has happened to you twice consecutively, then you form... you have a good formation, you see, which remains like that (*gesture*) in the subconscious, without showing itself — if you don’t observe it! And then, just when the time draws near, quite gently it pushes up from within and tells you, “Take care, the time is coming, the time is coming,

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the time is coming!” So naturally, that comes along too. Usually these things are like that.

But almost everything that happens in the physical is like that. The first time it may be quite simply a concurrence of circumstances; then, the mind intervenes and makes a construction. Now, if one accepts the construction, one is sure that it functions with clockwork precision. But even if one says, “Oh, nonsense, it is only an idea!” and does this (*gesture*), still the idea, instead of going away, enters inside, into the subconscious, simply the subconscious mind, and there it remains quietly. And then, when the time comes to manifest itself, from inside, like this, it makes a kind of... as though it were tickling the memory a little, nothing more than that, just that. If it rubs the memory just a little, like that, then suddenly one day you remember: “Why, last year, at this time I was ill.” And crash! There it is, it has entered. It has entered the zone of the active consciousness, and a few days later the thing happens.

But when you have had either an experience or, like this, some kind of phenomenon or an illness (above all in the case of illness or even an accident), the body remembers for a very long time. If you want to be completely cured, you must cure this memory in the body, this is absolutely indispensable. And whether you know it or not, you work in order to cure the memory in the body. When the remembrance is effaced, the body is truly healed.

Unfortunately, instead of destroying the remembrance, you push it back. Most of the time you push it down into the subconscious and sometimes into the inconscient, still more deep. Well now, if it is pushed back, if it is not completely effaced, then very gently, very gently, without seeming to do so at all it comes up to the surface; and something of which you have been cured for years, if by chance it crosses your mind simply like that, just like a little dart, as fast as that, like a passing dart: “Why, at this time I had that”, you may be sure that sooner or later — a few seconds, a few minutes, a few hours or days later,

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it will return. You can... It may come back in a much milder form, it may come back in the same form, it may come even more strongly. That depends on your inner state. If you are in a pessimistic state, it will come back more strongly. If you are in an optimistic state, it will be much weaker. But it will come back and you will have to begin the battle all over again against the memory of your body so as to destroy it — if this time you are more attentive. If you can destroy it, you are cured. But if you don't destroy it, it will return. It will take a longer or shorter time, it will be more or less total, but it will return. It can come back in a flash. If you are wide awake and, when it returns, if you have enough knowledge and indeed enough clear-sightedness to tell yourself, "Well, here is that wretched remembrance come back again to play its tricks", then you can give, can strike a violent blow and indeed destroy its reality. If you know how to do this, then it is an opportunity to get rid of the thing immediately. But it is not very easy to do this.

Pavitra: *How to do it?*

How to do it? (*Mother laughs.*) How to do it? It is the same thing as, the same method as, knowing how to destroy a formation, you understand.

It is a certain strength to dissolve things, which can undo formations. It depends on the nature of the formation. If it is like this, a formation of an adverse kind, then you need the force of a perfectly pure constructive light. If you have this at your disposal, all that you have to do is to bombard the thing with it, and you can dissolve it. But it is an operation which must be performed with inner forces; it cannot be done physically.

That is why all physical remedies, you see, are simply palliatives; they are not cures, because they are not strong enough to touch the living centre of the thing.

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(Silence)

The same phenomenon occurs with moral difficulties. If one could succeed in destroying their remembrance, destroying in oneself the memory of the state one is in when in that difficulty, if one is sincere it would be the end of all difficulties for ever.

(Long silence)

Mother, for instance, when one makes a resolution to do something, one finds that sometimes one comes into conflict with the feelings of others. Then what should be done in this case?

When...?

When one has decided to do something...

Yes.

... then one finds that sometimes one comes into conflict with another's feelings.

Into conflict?

That is to say...

Yes, yes, I understand quite well.

So what should be done?

It depends absolutely on the case. It is difficult to say... First of all... *(Silence)* If it is just an external and superficial decision based on the little knowledge one has, and the little qualities and little defects one has, then naturally, if one comes into conflict

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with other wills of a similar quality — you see, the wills may be different but the quality is the same, then one has to decide according to the circumstances and in accordance with the inner result one wants to get. It is very difficult to say, in each case the decision must be different.

But if one is one of those people who act only when they feel within that it is an order from the higher truth-consciousness, that “This I have decided to do because it has to be done whatever the consequences”, then if one comes into conflict with the preferences, wills, opposition of others, one must quite simply do this (*Mother makes a movement as of turning her back*) and continue on one’s way. But it is only in this case that one has the right to do it.

When it is just a personal movement, moved by one’s personal preferences, one’s personal desires or even one’s personal conceptions, well, as soon as one meets with oppositions one must weigh the problem, see the facts and act according to... (*silence*) the best goodwill one has, the best perception one has. And this depends absolutely on what one wanted to do, and the opposition one meets with. So it is impossible to make a rule of a general kind.

There is only one thing that gives you the right to go straight on your path without caring for *anything*: that’s if you have been set going, set in motion by a higher truth. But you must be *sure* of that. You must not take your desire for the higher truth, you understand, because one very easily makes a mistake. You must know it, and have solid proofs to support it, and know that it is usually something which does not touch you personally. If you are in the least interested in it, one way or another, be on your guard and think twice before being convinced that it is the higher will and the expression of a truth.

However, there are cases where it is like that. “*This* is what ought to be done; this indeed is the truth.” And then, whatever the opposition, one goes straight on one’s way, without worrying about circumstances or consequences. But it is only in this case

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that one has the right to do it; that is, at the time the Divine acts in *you*, you ought no longer to care for *anything* except the divine Will. But if it is not the divine Will, each problem must be resolved according to the case, the circumstances and...

For instance, one has decided not to chat, then...

One meets somebody who chatters?

No...

One just turns one's back and goes away! (*Laughter*) Very simple!

Then the other person will be very angry.

Eh?

The other person will be very angry.

So much the worse for him! (*Laughter*) So much the worse for him. This is exactly the instance, one of the instances I spoke about: not to care. One can, if one likes the person very much and doesn't want to displease him too much, one can tell him gently, "No, please, let us not talk uselessly, it is bad for everybody." That's all. If it is someone you don't care for or who is not important for you, you have only to turn your back upon him and go away.

Especially if he is a friend, someone who, like you, ought to know that this should not be done.... In this case you must be categorical. If it is someone who, through a set of circumstances, ought to know like you that it is something that ought not to be done and if he begins to do it in spite of that, he is *dishonest*. Because when one does something one knows one should not do, one becomes dishonest from that minute; and you are not

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to have any consideration for such a person. You have only to turn round and walk away; and if he gets angry, so much the worse for him. He will only have to... the result will be that he will have to overcome his anger. That's all. This will perhaps do him some good.

There is a great weakness in social relations, a *very* great weakness; and that is why, in fact, one gets angry and gets carried away and says things one should not say. If one were not weak, one would never be violent. Weakness and violence are two things that go together. He who is truly strong is never violent. This is something one should always remember. Violence is *always* a sign of a weakness somewhere. Of course, one sees a man with bulging muscles who is very strong, knocking down another with all his might, and one says, "He is strong!" It is not true. He has muscles, but morally he is very weak. So, he may be strong here and weak there. Usually this is what happens.

But I say, and also people who have observed animals, for example, animals which are very strong: how quiet they are. Naturally, when they run after their prey they put out all their energy; but it is not violence, it is energy. But if you have ever seen a lion — when it has nothing to do, it does not fidget. If it is ill, it is restless. But if it is well, in good health, if it has nothing to do, it will not move, it will be quite still. It will look like a sage. (*Laughter*)

Agitation, violence, anger, all these things are always, without exception, signs of weakness. And especially when one gets carried away in one's speech and says things one should not say, *this* indeed is the sign of a frightful mental weakness — mental and vital — frightful. Otherwise you may hear all the insults in the world, people may tell you all possible stupidities; if you are not weak, you may perhaps not smile outwardly, for it is not always good taste to smile, but deep within you, you are smiling, you let it pass, it does not touch you.... Simply, if your mind has formed the habit of being quiet as it is recommended here, and you have the perception of truth within yourself, you can hear

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anything at all. It does not even produce the semblance of a vibration — everything remains absolutely immobile and quiet. And then if the witness we were speaking about a while ago is there, looking on at the comedy, he surely smiles.

But if you feel the vibrations which come from the other person who throws on you all his violence and anger, if you feel this... at first it does... and then, suddenly, there is a response; and then if you yourself begin to get into a temper, you may be sure that you are as weak as he.

Here you are, my children.

I think this is enough for today.