This talk is based upon Mother’s essay “The Four Austerities and the Four Liberations”, Part III.

Sweet Mother, I did not understand this: “At the beginning of this manifestation, in the purity of its origin, love is composed of two movements, two complementary poles of the urge towards complete oneness. On the one hand there is the supreme power of attraction and on the other the irresistible need for absolute self-giving.”

There is nothing to understand; it is a fact. You don’t know what “the power of attraction” means? You don’t know what “the need for self-giving” means?... Well, you put them face to face and when they unite, that creates love. It is as simple as that. If you wish, it is like the obverse and reverse of the same medal; but it is not the obverse and reverse. These two things are destined to unite by their very nature and it is through this meeting that love in its external manifestation is born.

After that you have said: “No other movement could have better bridged the abyss that was created when in the individual being consciousness was separated from its origin and became unconsciousness.”

Yes, because the moment the individual consciousness broke off from the divine Consciousness, from its divine source, it created the sense of separation. The moment the individual consciousness ceased to follow, did not remain identified with the movement of the divine Consciousness, this produced a separation. The divine Consciousness follows its own movement, and if the individual consciousness does not remain united and
does not follow or changes the course or slows down on the way, this creates a separation. And it is this separation that is the cause of all misery. All the miseries in the universe are the result of this separation of the individual consciousness which, for some reason or other, did not remain identified with the primal Consciousness, its origin, and separated from it. Separated... it did not deliberately separate itself, but it did not remain identified. So, not remaining identified, while the divine Consciousness followed one particular movement, it followed another, and naturally this caused them to move farther and farther away from each other. Let us take an illustration: one goes forward with a certain movement, a certain speed, and the other, not having remained united, is unable to follow and consequently, little by little, falls farther and farther behind, far, far, very far; the first one goes ahead and the other is left behind. It goes limping along while the first one flies; it takes one step while the other leaps. So this brings about a greater and greater separation. And it is this separation which has created all other separations, and it is all these separations which have caused universal misery — or in any case the misery on earth, the one we know. It began by a separation of consciousness and finished with a separation of worlds and of the elements of matter. It began by a division of consciousness and ended with the kind of division we see (Mother points at those around her). There are thousands of things all separated from one another and it is the cause of all these miseries. If they had remained united in consciousness, there would have been no misery. But as the consciousness was separated, this separation of consciousness caused the separation of forms and the separation of forms produced all the miseries.

If the sense of unity were re-established, the miseries would disappear.

*Before our nature is transformed, can a person love another truly?*
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Love another? I have said there that it is impossible. I have said that if one wants to know what love is, one must love the Divine. Then there is a chance of knowing what love is. I have said that one grows into the likeness of what one loves. So if one loves the Divine, gradually, through this effort of love, one grows more and more like the Divine, and then one can be identified with the divine love and know what it is, otherwise one can’t.

Inevitably, love between two human beings, whatever it may be, is always made of ignorance, lack of understanding, weakness and that terrible sense of separation. It is as though one wanted to enter the presence of a unique Splendour and that the first thing one did was to put a curtain, two curtains, three curtains between oneself and that Splendour, and one is quite surprised to have only a vague impression and not at all the thing itself. The first thing to do is to remove the curtains, to take them all away, to go through and find oneself in the presence of the Splendour. And then you will know what that Splendour is. But if you put veil after veil between it and yourself, you will never see it. You may have a sort of vague feeling like “Oh! There is something”, but that is all.

Naturally, there are all those who don’t care for the Splendour, who turn their back upon it and live in their instincts, who are just animals, a little perfected. Let us not speak of these. We have only to let them do what they like, that is of no importance at all. They don’t affect us. It is not for them that I have written these things.

In order to know how to love truly, should the nature be transformed?

The quality of the love is in proportion to the transformation of your consciousness.

I don’t understand.
It is childishly simple. If you have the consciousness of an animal, you will love like an animal. If you have the consciousness of an ordinary man, you will love like an ordinary man. If you have the consciousness of an élite being, you will love like an élite being, and if you have a god’s consciousness, you will love like a god. It is simple! That’s what I have said. And so, if by an effort for progress and inner transformation, by aspiration and growth, you pass from one consciousness to the other and your consciousness becomes vaster and vaster, well, the love you experience will be vaster and vaster. That is quite clear!

You take the purest water, water from the crystalline rocks, you collect it in a fairly large vase, and then, in this vase there is a little mud, or much, or a huge quantity of mud. And you could not say it is the same water which came down, yet it is the same, only you have mixed it with so many things in your vase that it no longer resembles it at all! Well, love in its essence is an absolutely pure, crystalline, perfect thing. In the human consciousness it gets mixed with a fairly considerable amount of mud. So it becomes more and more muddy in proportion to the amount of mud.

It has been said that the tiger’s need for devouring is one of the first expressions of love in the world. I think that long before the tiger, there must have been primitive creatures in the depths of the sea which had only this one function: a stomach. They existed only as stomachs. And so they swallowed — that was their one occupation. Evidently that was one of the first results of the Power of Love infiltrating into Matter, for before this there was nothing: there was perfect inconscience, complete immobility, nothing stirred. With Love movement began: the awakening of consciousness and the movement of transformation. Well, the first forms, it may be said, were the first expression of Love in Matter. So we can go from the need of swallowing which is the only consciousness — a need of swallowing, of uniting — right up to... Excuse me, we say that Love is the power of the world — it is a primitive way of uniting with things, but it is a very direct
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way: one swallows and absorbs the thing; well, the tiger indeed
takes a great joy in it. So there is a joy already, it is already quite
a high form of love. You may go higher and end up with one of
the highest expressions of love in human beings: the total self-
giving to what is loved, that is, to die for one’s country or to
give one’s life to defend somebody, and things like that. That
indeed is already... fairly high. It is still mixed with some mud.
It is not the highest form but it is already something. And you
see all the steps, don’t you? Well, from this one has still to climb
a good deal to reach the true expression, to reach what I have
described, which is at the summit of the ascent — I would not
like to travesty my own words (Mother takes her copy of “The
Four Austerities” and reads:)

“Love is, in its essence, the joy of identity; it finds its
expression in the bliss of union.”

At first, before the emanation of love, there is something which
we may express very clumsily by “the joy of identity”. That
indeed is very difficult to conceive, for human thought cannot
conceive of things except by their opposites, while the final stage
is when love has gone full circle in the universe in order to go
back to its origin; then it has the result of all that experience
it gained and it returns to its starting-point. It goes back to its
starting-point with something more which it did not have before
starting: the experience of the universe. And fundamentally, that
is the very raison d’être of creation. It is because the conscious-
ness would not be what it is if it had not expressed itself in a
creation. Well, the return from creation — which, mark it, is not
something that takes place in time — is very difficult to conceive,
for we conceive time and space and for us things are successive,
one thing follows another, but if it were possible to conceive a
total movement which would englobe everything and be at once
the beginning and the end, and which would contain everything,
well, this return, which would not be a return in time, which
would be a return in consciousness — how shall I explain that to you? — the return of love to its origin, instead of being simply the joy of identity, becomes the ecstasy of union — and obviously, if one sees from the pure psychological point of view, there is an enriching of consciousness which comes from the experience gained in the universe; that is, there is a richness of content and a plenitude of consciousness which would not be there if there had been no manifested universe. And that obviously is the most logical explanation, the most logical reason for the creation.

What does this sentence mean, Sweet Mother: “Each time an individual breaks the narrow limitations in which he is imprisoned by his ego and emerges into the open air, through self-giving, whether for the sake of another human being or his family, his country or his faith, he finds in this self-forgetfulness a foretaste of the marvellous delight of love, and this gives him the impression that he has come into contact with the Divine. But most often it is only a fleeting contact, for in the human being love is immediately mixed with lower egoistic movements which debase it and rob it of its power of purity. But even if it remained pure, this contact with the divine existence could not last for ever, for love is only one aspect of the Divine, an aspect which here on earth has suffered the same distortions as the others.”

What is it, what haven’t you understood? That the universe and the world as it is, are a deformation of the Divine? The world as it is, in the state of consciousness in which it is, is a deformation of the Divine, and love here also is a deformation of the Divine. So, even if your love remained as pure as it can be in the manifested world, it could not keep you in constant contact with the Divine unless all the rest was transformed. For it is deformed in the same way as the rest. For it should be said,
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surely, that purity as conceived on earth has nothing to do with
divine purity. At the best it is an approximation.

Haven’t understood? It will come one day.

_Sweet Mother, what kind of love do parents have for their children?_

What kind? A human love, don’t they? Like all human loves:
frightfully mixed, with all sorts of things. The need of possession,
a formidable egoism. At first, I must tell you that a wonder-
ful picture has been painted... many books written, wonderful
things said about a mother’s love for her children. I assure you
that except for the capacity of speaking about the subject in
flowery phrases, the love of the higher animals like the... well,
the mammals for their children is exactly of the same nature: the
same devotion, the same self-forgetfulness, the same self-denial,
the same care for education, the same patience, the same... I
have seen absolutely marvellous things, and if they had been
written down and applied to a woman instead of to a cat, superb
novels would have been made, people would have said: “What
a person! How marvellously devoted are these women in their
maternal love!” Exactly the same thing. Only, cats could not
use flowery language. That’s all. They could not write books
and make speeches, that is the only difference. But I have seen
absolutely astonishing things. And that kind of self-giving and
self-oblivion — as soon as there is the beginning of love, it comes.

But men... I sincerely believe, from all that I have studied, that
there is perhaps a greater purity in animals for they do not
think, while human beings with their mental power, their ca-
pacity of reflecting, reasoning, analysing, studying, all that, oh!
They spoil the most lovely movement. They begin to calculate,
reason, doubt, organise.

Take, for instance, parents. At the risk of removing many
illusions in your consciousness, I must tell you something about
the source of a mother’s love for her child. It is because this child
is made of her very own substance, and for quite a long time, relatively long, the material link, the link of substance, between mother and child is extremely close — it is as though a bit of her flesh had been taken out and put apart at a distance — and it is only much later that the tie between the two is completely cut. There is a kind of tie, of subtle sensation, such that the mother feels exactly what the child feels, as she would feel it in herself. That then is the material basis of the mother’s attachment for the child. It is a basis of material identity, nothing else but that. Feeling comes much later (it may come earlier, that depends on people), but I am speaking of the majority: feeling comes only long afterwards, and it is conditioned. There are all kinds of things.... I could speak to you for hours on the subject. But still this must not be mixed up with love. It is a material identification which makes the mother feel intimately, feel quite concretely and tangibly what the child is feeling: if the child receives a shock, well, the mother feels it. This lasts at least for two months.

This is the basis. The rest comes from people’s nature, their state of development, their consciousness, education and capacity for feeling. This is added to the first. And then there are all the collective suggestions that make up all sorts of stories — for people are wonderful at constructing stories. They write novels about everything. They have used their minds to build up their imaginations which go round in the atmosphere and then are caught just like that. So some catch a certain type of these, others another kind, and then, as imagination is a force of propulsion, with it one begins to act, and then finally one makes a novel of one’s life, if he is in the least imaginative.... This has absolutely nothing to do with the true consciousness, with the psychic being, nothing at all, but people come and talk to you in flowery language and tell you stories — all these are wandering imaginations. If one could see, that is, if you could see this mental atmosphere, that of the physical mind, which is circulating everywhere, making you move, making you feel, making you think, making you act, oh, good heavens! You would lose many
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of your illusions about your personality. But indeed it is like that. Whether one knows it or not, it is like that.

There are many souls upon earth, human beings.... Obvi-
ously, those who have a certain culture, a certain development, a certain individualisation come together usually: instinctively they get together, form groups. And so one can find in space and time a number — not considerable but still sufficiently large — of cultured people who are united, but one must not believe that this gives the exact measure of the culture and development of human beings. It is only like a kind of foam that has been brought up and is on the surface. But even among those people who are already a selection, there is hardly one in a thousand who is a truly individualised being, conscious of himself, united with his psychic being, governed by his inner law and, conse-
quently, almost if not totally free from external influences; for, being conscious, when these influences come, he sees them: those that seem to him to harmonise with his inner development and normal growth he accepts; those which are opposed he refuses. And so, instead of being a chaos — or in any case a frightful mixture — they are organised beings, individual, conscious of themselves, walking through life knowing where and how they want to go.

Of these, if you like, we may say that they are men. That is, they are what Nature may produce of the best as far as men go — they are still men. But this is the summit of man. They are ready to become something else. But unless one is that, one is still to a great extent an animal and a very slight beginning of a man. Only that can be called man. So there you are, you have only to look into yourselves and know... whether you are men or not.

_Au revoir._

I am saying this in the hope that you will become that.