

The Mother's Force

What Is the Mother's Force?

What is the Yoga shakti? What is Yogic mind-force, Yogic life-force and Yogic body-force?

In the Yogic consciousness one is not only aware of things, but of forces, not only of forces, but of the conscious being behind the forces. One is aware of all this not only in oneself but in the universe. There is a force which accompanies the growth of this new consciousness and at once grows with it and helps it to come about and to perfect itself. This force is the Yoga shakti. It is here asleep and coiled up in all the centres of our inner being (chakras) and is at the base what is called in the Tantras the Kundalini Shakti. But it is also above us, above our head as the Divine Force — not there coiled up, involved, asleep, but awake, scient, potent, extended and wide; it is there waiting for manifestation and to this Force we have to open ourselves — to the power of the Mother. In the mind it manifests itself as a divine mind-force or a universal mind-force and it can do everything that the personal mind cannot do; it is then the Yogic mind-force. When it manifests and works in the vital or physical in the same way, it is then apparent as a Yogic life-force or a Yogic body-force. It can awake in all these forms, bursting outwards and upwards, extending itself into wideness from below; or it can descend and become there a definite power for things; it can pour downwards into the body, working, establishing its reign, extending into wideness from above, link the lowest in us with the highest above us, release the individual into a cosmic universality or into absoluteness and transcendence.

23 March 1933

You often speak of the Mother's Force. What is it?

It is the Divine Force which works to remove the ignorance and change the nature into the divine nature. 18 June 1933

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Why do I feel that it is I who do this thing or that? For is it not true that it is the Mother's force which does everything in us?

When I speak of the Mother's force, I do not speak of the force of Prakriti which carries on things in the Ignorance but of the higher Force of the Divine that descends from above to transform the nature. 4 August 1933

Progress in Sadhana and the Mother's Force

When you say to someone, "You are open to the Mother", do you mean open in a general way? Are not all in the Asram more or less open to the Mother as soon as they have accepted her as the Mother? And when the Mother has accepted a sadhak, does her Force not begin to work in him and is it not always with him?

All are not open to the Force. X never was in the least degree and there are others who shut themselves up in their own self-will or their own formations, ideas or desires. If there is no opening, the Force may act for a long time without response — and if there is an insufficient opening then the progress will be slow and chequered by great difficulties.

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Let nothing and nobody come between you and the Mother's force. It is on your admitting and keeping that force and responding to the true inspiration and not on any ideas the mind may form that success will depend. Even ideas or plans which might otherwise be useful, will fail if there is not behind them the true spirit and the true force and influence. 23 March 1928

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The illnesses you have are the signs of the resistance of your physical consciousness to the action of the Divine Power.

If you cannot advance in your sadhana, it is because you are divided and do not give yourself without reserve. You speak of surrendering everything to the Mother but you have not done even the one thing which she asked of you and which you have promised more than once. If after having called the action of the Divine Force, you allow other influences to prevail, how can you expect to be free from obstruction and difficulties?

20 November 1928

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Nowadays my vital nature gets excited about anything and everything, even trifles. From morning to night it is in an unhappy condition. I have my doubts whether it can be changed. I know that it is not in my power to do the work; the Mother's Grace alone can do it. My outer mind needs some rays of hope.

It is to be assumed that you are capable of the change since you are here in the presence and under the protection of the Mother. The pressure and help of the Mother's Force is always there. Your rapidity of progress depends upon your keeping yourself open to it and rejecting calmly, quietly and steadily all suggestions and invasions of other forces. Especially the nervous excitement of the vital has to be rejected; a calm and quiet strength in the nervous being and the body is the only sound basis. It is there for you to receive, if you open yourself to it always.

27 August 1932

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When I look at the way the Mother deals with people, I feel that she does not love them equally in an outward way. Is this feeling true?

The Mother's Force is working in all alike, according to their capacity they will receive it and it will work in them; if there is any difference, it is their own nature that makes it.

6 February 1933

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This restless mind and unquiet vital are not peculiar to you; they are the human nature from which every sadhak starts. What you have to get is the Mother's force and grace bringing with it deliverance, peace and Ananda which you say you from time to time experience. That in the beginning does come only for a short time, but as you persist in the path, it increases in frequency and stays longer until it can be made a permanent experience. It is this that will cure the defects of which you complain.

16 June 1933

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Once you wrote, "Before you read offer it to the Mother and call down her force." Is her force not already in us and working?

If it is, then you will have no difficulty.

4 August 1933

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Is not every sadhak ready to receive and contain the Mother's force at any time and in any circumstance? Who would not want to hold its constant action?

It is not a question of mental wish but of capacity and whether all the parts of the being are ready and can retain it. If everybody were containing the constant action of the Mother's force, the sadhana would be finished by now and the siddhi complete.

7 August 1933

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Is it not time for me to let the Mother's Force take charge of the Yoga, instead of allowing the Adhar to think it is doing the Yoga?

That can be only when all is ready.

In that case is it necessary for the mind to aspire? Because once the Force is there, it will set everything right.

The system has first to be accustomed to the Force working.

9 May 1934

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All has to be done by the working of the Mother's force aided by your aspiration, devotion and surrender.

30 October 1934

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The Mother has already given you orally the answer to your letter and the directions you asked for. As she told you, your concentration should be in the heart centre and all the rest — the rising above the head etc. — should come of itself in the natural process of the sadhana. Through the heart you will get the closer and closer touch of the Mother and the working of her Force in the whole being.

9 December 1934

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In a dream yesterday I was walking in the street, carrying some kind of big flat drum. Just for fun I touched it with my fingers and very sweet musical sounds were produced. Perhaps it was a broken drum, for no one expected any music to come from it, but as I went on playing, fine music was coming out.

It is a symbol of the harmony that can be brought out of the human nature in spite of its present imperfection when one gives it the true touch, that is, puts it under the true psychic influence.

People around me were charmed by the music. I was very happy and played more and more; many new fine tunes were coming from the drum as if they were simply ready made.

Always keep open to the Mother's Force — let the inner consciousness develop — only that will help and deliver from all difficulties as the openness in the physical grows in you.

12 January 1935

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There are some people here who remain constantly in despair and gloom because they have become conscious of their minutest imperfections, but they are unable to get rid of them.

They are unable for two reasons: (1) because they yield to despair and gloom and the illusion of impotence, (2) because they try only with their own strength and do not care or know how to call in the working of the Mother's force. 10 June 1936

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Sometimes I feel a thick wall between me and the Divine. At other times there is a pressure on me and I feel quietude come into me.

Persevere in spite of the fluctuations. The Mother's force is at work *all the time*, even when the thick wall is there, so that there may be no wall in future. 24 June 1936

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You have written that "the Force is there". Why then do I not feel it except for a short time after pranam? Formerly I felt that the Force above was doing the sadhana. Why do I not feel it now?

The Mother's Force is not only above on the summit of the being. It is there with you and near you, ready to act whenever your nature will allow it. It is so with everybody here.

15 November 1936

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This evening X told me, "Fill your entire nature with the Mother's power." In my past sadhana I have never consciously invoked power; the entire stress has been on purity and clarity. But if that is the need of my nature, I will pray for power along with other things.

It is not necessary to ask for Power. It is the Mother's Force that must work in the being and if it is there, all necessary power will come. c. 1936

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When a sadhak works with the right attitude and the higher Force acts in him directly, how does the Force work to purify or remove his defects and imperfections?

It acts by awakening the inner consciousness gradually or swiftly, by replacing the principle of ego-service by the principle of service of the Divine, by making him watch his actions and see his own defects and pushing him to rectify them, by establishing a connection between his consciousness and the Mother's consciousness, by preparing his nature to be taken up more and more by the Mother's consciousness and force, by giving him experiences which make him ready for the major experiences of Yoga, by stimulating the growth of his psychic being, by opening him to the Mother as the Universal Being, etc. etc. Naturally it acts differently in different persons. 7 May 1937

Reliance on the Mother's Force

My mind is not yet quiet and that is why I am not getting any joy in my sadhana, any experience or realisation — nothing at all. This makes me very sad and unhappy. May the Mother bestow on me the flow of Peace and help me to open my closed heart-centre.

There has always been too much reliance on the action of your own mind and will — that is why you cannot progress. If you could once get the habit of silent reliance on the power of the Mother — not merely calling it in to support your own effort — the obstacle would diminish and eventually disappear.

14 July 1929

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You should not rely on anything else alone, however helpful it may seem, but chiefly, primarily, fundamentally on the Mother's Force. The Sun and the Light may be a help, and will be if it is the true light and the true Sun, but cannot take the place of the Mother's Force. 28 May 1930

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There is no aspiration in me, no capacity to follow something higher. I feel dullness inside. But I do feel quiet from the pressure on my head. I must be patient and keep faith — then you will make me conscious.

Quietude first; with it confidence in the Mother's Force that is working on you. When the physical mind is obliged to be quiet, it has this impression of inactivity and dullness at first. When it opens more and more to the Force, that impression will disappear.

12 November 1932

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If one gives full and constant consent to the Mother's working, how can the attempt of other beings to enter into one succeed?

If you give consent to the Mother's working alone, then it cannot.

It is not always an attempt. One receives the thoughts and feelings of the others without any attempt or intention of theirs, because they are in the atmosphere.

31 July 1933

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The depression has come upon you because you accepted the thought that you were not doing what you should and not using the chance Mother had given you. Such thoughts should never be indulged for they open the door to depression and depression opens the door to the old movements; they used to come formerly from the idea that you were unfit, now it is this idea that you are not doing all you ought to do. As a matter of fact you have been progressing with a surprising rapidity for the last days at a rate that we ourselves did not expect from you. But whether the progress is rapid or slow, the attitude should always be an entire faith and reliance on the Mother; just as you do not think that the progress was the result of your own effort or merit, but of your taking the right attitude of reliance and the Mother's force working, so you should not think that any slowness or difficulty was due to your own demerit but only

seek to keep this attitude of reliance and let the Mother's Force work, — slowly or rapidly does not matter.

The dream was again one of these experiences of test or ordeal on the vital plane which you have been having — here it was the test of temptation by power, comfort, riches, attractive things, as it was formerly the test by fear, difficulty, trouble. The evidence of all these tests is that your inner being is perfectly ready and free to go unwaveringly to the goal. There is nothing there that is wrong or defective.

Keep the reliance steady in your heart and do not allow self-distrust, depression or sadness to invade you from outside.

14 November 1935

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How can I do Yoga when I know nothing about your Yoga? I do not even know what to do.

There are two ways of doing Yoga, one by knowledge and one's own efforts, the other by reliance on the Mother. In the last way one has to offer one's mind and heart and all to the Mother for her Force to work on it, call her in all difficulties, have faith and bhakti. At first it takes time, often a long time, for the consciousness to be prepared in this way and during that time many difficulties can come up, but if one perseveres a time comes when all is ready, the Mother's Force opens the consciousness fully to the Divine, then all that must develop develops within, spiritual experience comes and with it the knowledge and union with the Divine.

9 April 1937

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You say after several years you have not changed your nature. I only wish the external nature were so easy to transform that it could be done in a few years. You forget also that the real problem — to get rid of the pervading ego in this nature — is a task you have seriously tackled only a short time ago. And it is not in a few months that that can be done. Even the best sadhaks find after many experiences and large changes on the

higher planes that here much remains to be done. How do you expect to get rid of it at once unlike everybody else? A Yoga like this needs patience, because it means a change both of the radical motives and of each part and detail of the nature. It will not do to say, "Yesterday I determined this time to give myself entirely to the Mother, and look it is not done, on the contrary all the old opposite things turn up once more; so there is nothing to do but to proclaim myself unfit and give up the Yoga." Of course when you come to the point where you make a resolution of that kind, immediately all that stands in the way does rise up — it invariably happens. The thing to be done is to stand back, observe and reject, not to allow these things to get hold of you, to keep your central will separate from them and call in the Mother's Force to meet them. If one does get involved as often happens, then to get disinvolved as soon as possible and go forward again. That is what everybody, every Yogi does — to be depressed because one cannot do everything in a rush is quite contrary to the truth of the matter. A stumble does not mean that one is unfit, nor does prolonged difficulty mean that for oneself the thing is impossible.

The fact that you have to give up your ordinary work when you get depressed does not mean that you have not gained in steadiness — it only means that the steadiness you have gained is not a personal virtue but depends on your keeping the contact with the Mother — for it is her force that is behind it and behind all the progress you can make. Learn to rely on that Force more, to open to it more completely and to seek spiritual progress even not for your own sake but for the sake of the Divine — then you will go on more smoothly. Get the psychic opening in the most external physical consciousness. That and not despondency is the lesson you ought to draw from your present adverse experience.

Becoming Conscious of the Mother's Force

Yesterday I felt a great Peace and Power. I felt the Mother's atmosphere around me and a strange nearness to her. I thought

that the Mother's thought or consciousness must be with me.
Is this true?

The Force is always around you, for the Mother has put her consciousness there — but it works with especial force when we think of you, and that is what you feel. Your consciousness of it — what you describe of your feeling about it, is quite correct — to become clearly conscious in all parts of the being takes time. 6 July 1933

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X told me that he does not feel it is the Mother's force that works in him, since with his own force he is able to lift 40 lbs. of grain.

What is meant by one's own force? All force is cosmic and the individual is merely an instrument — a certain amount of the force may be stored in him, but that does not make it his own.

There are certain possibilities in the way of the experience. First there is the faith, or sometimes a mental realisation and this of itself is enough to make one open to the Mother's force so that it is always available at need or call. Even if one does not feel the Force coming, yet the results are there and visible. The next is when one feels oneself like an instrument and is aware of the Energy using it. A third is the contact with the Power above and its descent (spontaneous or at call) into the body — this is the more concrete way of having it, for one physically feels the Force working in one. Finally there is a state of awareness of close contact with the Mother (inward) which brings a similar result. 12 May 1934

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What I have to see is that my consciousness supports the working of the Mother's Force in me. For example, if my being constantly supported the Mother's work, there would hardly be any halt in sadhana due to the *tamas* in me; the *tamasic* inertia would get transformed into peace without rising up and darkening the other parts of the being.

Yes, that is how it should happen — but it is difficult so long as the inner being is not conscious and receptive at all times and in all conditions — and it is difficult and takes time to establish such a condition. 23 January 1935

Descent of the Mother's Force

What you feel streaming down must be the Mother's overhead Force. It flows usually from above the head and works at first in the mind centres (head and neck) and afterwards goes down into the chest and heart and then through the movement of the whole body.

It is the effect of this working which you must be feeling in the head up to the shoulders. The Force that comes down from above is the one that works to transform the consciousness into that of a higher spiritual being. Before that the Mother's Force works in the psychic, mental, vital and the physical plane itself to support, purify and psychically change the consciousness.

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When you began to meditate, you saw the Mother's face; that is very good, it means that there is an inner connection established. The absence of the smile does not mean that she is displeased or that you have done anything against her will. At the same time the Mother's force descended on you, it was the pressure of her Force that you felt on the head and breast — everybody feels in the beginning this pressure — and what you felt in the breast was the working of the Force. In the Yoga these are signs of the action of the Yoga and you must observe quietly what happens without getting disturbed, remembering the Mother always and trusting in her action upon you. 25 June 1932

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When there is obscurity or habitual thoughts, the narrowness of the physical mind becomes prominent. But now and then, the physical mind seems to become limitless, thoughtless and without obscurity. Is this a true feeling?

Yes. All the parts that have to be changed must widen like that before the higher consciousness can descend into them.

Is there any relation between the Mother's descent into the physical parts and the descent of the forces that are working in me?

Certainly. In a sense, the descent of the higher forces is the Mother's own descent — for it is she who comes down in them.

21 December 1933

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As I sat to pray, I felt an electric force pass through my spinal cord. It was like the electricity from a battery passing from the crown of my head down to the end of my backbone. The more it went downward, the more strong and joyous was the rapture I felt. What is this?

It is the descent of the Mother's Force from above through the spinal cord — it is a well-known movement. There are two or three kinds of descent. One is this touching the base of the centres which rest on the spinal cord. Another is through the head into the body going from level to level till the whole body is filled and opening all the centres of consciousness. Another is a descent enveloping the Adhar from outside. 1 February 1934

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Last night I felt that the Mother's Force, instead of descending through the head as usual, came down directly through the forehead centre.

It can come in anywhere, but the normal way of descent is through the head. 8 May 1934

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When the Peace is established, this higher or Divine Force from above can descend and work in us. It descends usually first into the head and liberates the inner mind centres, then into the heart centre and liberates fully the psychic and emotional

being, then into the navel and other vital centres and liberates the inner vital, then into the Muladhara and below and liberates the inner physical being. It works at the same time for perfection as well as liberation; it takes up the whole nature part by part and deals with it, rejecting what has to be rejected, sublimating what has to be sublimated, creating what has to be created. It integrates, harmonises, establishes a new rhythm in the nature. It can bring down too a higher and yet higher force and range of the higher Nature until, if that be the aim of the sadhana, it becomes possible to bring down the supramental force and existence. All this is prepared, assisted, farthered by the work of the psychic being in the heart centre; the more it is open, in front, active, the quicker, safer, easier the working of the Force can be. The more love and bhakti and surrender grow in the heart, the more rapid and perfect becomes the evolution of the sadhana. For the descent and transformation imply at the same time an increasing contact and union with the Divine.

That is the fundamental rationale of the Sadhana. It will be evident that the two most important things here are the opening of the heart centre and the opening of the mind centres to all that is behind and above them. For the heart opens to the psychic being and the mind centres open to the higher consciousness and the nexus between the psychic being and the higher consciousness is the principal means of the Siddhi. The first opening is effected by a concentration in the heart, a call to the Divine to manifest within us and through the psychic to take up and lead the whole nature. Aspiration, prayer, bhakti, love, surrender are the main supports of this part of the Sadhana — accompanied by a rejection of all that stands in the way of what we aspire for. The second opening is effected by a concentration of the consciousness in the head (afterwards, above it) and an aspiration and call and a sustained will for the descent of the divine Peace, Power, Light, Knowledge, Ananda into the being — the Peace first or the Peace and Force together. Some indeed receive Light first or Ananda first or some sudden pouring down of Knowledge. With some there is first an opening which reveals to them a vast infinite Silence, Force, Light or Bliss above them

and afterwards either they ascend to that or these things begin to descend into the lower nature. With others there is either the descent, first into the head, then down to the heart level, then to the navel and below and through the whole body, or else an inexplicable opening — without any sense of descent — of peace, light, wideness or power or else a horizontal opening into the cosmic consciousness or, in a suddenly widened mind, an outburst of knowledge. Whatever comes has to be welcomed — for there is no absolute rule for all, — but if the peace has not come first, care must be taken not to swell oneself in exultation or lose the balance. The capital movement however is when the Divine Force or Shakti, the Power of the Mother comes down and takes hold, for then the organisation of the consciousness begins and the larger foundation of the Yoga.

11 September 1934

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The experiences you have are a good starting-point for realisation. They have to develop into the light of a deeper state in which there will be the descent of a higher consciousness into you. Your present consciousness in which you feel these things is only a preparatory one — in which the Mother works in you through the cosmic power according to your state of consciousness and your karma and in that working both success and failure can come — one has to remain equal-minded to both while trying always for success. A surer guidance can come even in this preparatory consciousness if you are entirely turned towards her alone in such a way that you can feel her direct guidance and follow it without any other influence or force intervening to act upon you, but that condition is not easy to get or keep — it needs a great one-pointedness and constant single-minded dedication. When the higher consciousness will descend, then a closer union, a more intimate consciousness of the Presence and a more illumined intuition will become possible.

17 November 1934

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The stream which you feel coming down on the head and pouring into you is indeed a current of the Mother's Force; it is so that it is often felt; it flows into the body in currents and works there to liberate and change the consciousness. As the consciousness changes and develops, you will begin yourself to understand the meaning and working of these things. 21 August 1936

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Something is growing in you, but it is all inside — still if there is the steady persistence it is bound to come out. For instance, this white dazzling light with currents, it is a sure sign of the Force (the Mother's) entering and working in the *ādhāra*, but it came to you in sleep — that is to say, in the inner being, still behind the veil. The moment it came out, the dryness would disappear.

5 February 1937

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What the Mother did was to light the fire within — if you did not feel it, it must be because the outer covering has not yet allowed it to come through into the outer consciousness. But something in the inner being must have kept it and opened more widely — that is shown by your experience in sleep, for that was evidently an action of the Mother in the inner being. The descent of this current in the spine is always a descent of the Mother's Force working in the centres to open them; the strong force of the current which you felt is an evident proof that the wider opening is there. You have only to persist and the effects both of the fire and the force will come out in the surface consciousness — for always there is a preparatory work behind the veil in the inner being before the veil thins or disappears and all the working can be done with the participation of the outer consciousness.

22 April 1937

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The Mother's force can come down quite nicely and gently — there is no need of palpitations, giddiness or nausea for that.

Pressure of the Descending Force

This is the meaning of your experiences:

(1) The power of the Divine Mother from above is descending upon you and the pressure you feel on your head and the workings of which you are aware are hers.

Put yourself completely into her hands, have entire confidence, observe carefully and accurately all that happens and write that here. There is no need of special instructions since what is needed is being done for you.

(2) The first pressure was on your mind. The centres of the mind are (a) the head and above it, (b) the centre of the forehead between the eyes, (c) the throat and the vital mental (emotional) and sensational mind centres from the breast downward. It is this latter which is the first *prāṇa* of which you became aware. The action of the Power was to widen these two parts of you and raise them up towards the lowest centre of the higher consciousness above your head, so that hereafter they might both be consciously governed from there and that these might both move in a wide universal consciousness not limited by the body.

(3) The other *prāṇa*, the restless one of which you became aware, is the vital being, the being of desire and life-movement. The work of the Power has been directed towards quieting the restless movements and making it wide in consciousness as with the Mind. The large body you felt was the vital body, not the physical, *sthūla śarīra*.

(4) The basis of your Sadhana must be silence and quiet, *śānti, nīravatā*.

You must remain and grow always more and more deeply quiet and still both in yourself and in your attitude to the world around you. If you can do this, the sadhana is likely to go on progressing and enlarging itself with a minimum of trouble and disturbance.

Never mind your family difficulties and say nothing to your people. Go on quietly trusting to the Power that is at work in you.

8 September 1927

It is the pressure of Mother's force. If you keep quiet and don't resist, then instead of being uneasy, it will make you happy.

11 August 1932

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From time to time there is a feeling of pressure and heaviness in different parts of the body as the pressure comes down. When it passes, the mind is at peace, the heart free, the body light and easy.

The pressure is that of the Mother's force. When there is a resistance, you feel the pressure. When the resistance is cleared away, there is the lightness and ease.

4 October 1932

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Nowadays in the evening I try to remain calm and pray for half an hour. Then I feel a weight or pressure on my head. It is so calm and cool, yet has such force and fire. Then I am disturbed by nothing whatever. Formerly I also felt this on certain days, but then I lost it due to some disorder of the consciousness.

This weight or pressure on the head is always the sign that the Mother's Force is in contact with you and pressing from above to envelop your being and enter the Adhar and pervade it — usually passing by degrees through the centres on its way downward. Sometimes it comes first as Peace, sometimes as Force, sometimes as the Mother's consciousness and her presence, sometimes as Ananda.

When you lost it before, it must have been due either to some uprising of vital imperfections in yourself or an attack from outside. Of course the pressure need not always be there, but if things take the ordinary course, it usually recurs or else continues until the Adhar is open and there is no further obstacle to the descent of the higher consciousness.

18 September 1933

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From time to time, I feel a pressure above my head and also in my head and forehead. For the last few days, when I sit for

meditation, there is a feeling as though ants were crawling at the top of my neck and in the spinal cord. Does this have any value?

You can write to him¹ that the pressure he feels on his head is the pressure of the Mother's force (the force of the higher consciousness) preparing an opening through the three upper centres (brahmarandhra, base of sahasradala; inner mind centre in the forehead; and the heart or psychic-emotional centre). The feeling in the spine is due to a very slight flow of the current of the Shakti from above—the spine being the base of all the centres and the channel through which the Force tends most easily to flow from one centre to another (Sahasradala = the centre where the human or mental and the higher or spiritual consciousness meet).

15 September 1935

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If the term “pressure” is a wrong one to describe the Mother's recent dealings with me,² what is the sense in which it is used in *The Mother*—she “puts on them the required pressure” [p. 18] and “the vehemence of her pressure”? [p. 20]

I was speaking of your case only—it was not my intention to say that the Mother never uses pressure. But pressure also can be of various kinds. There is the pressure of the Force when it is entering the mind or vital or body—a pressure to go faster, a pressure to build or form, a pressure to break and many more. In your case if there is any pressure it is that of help or support or removal of an attack, but it does not seem to me that that can properly be called pressure.

In the same book you say “her hands are outstretched to strike and to succour”. [p. 19] What do you mean by “strike” here?

It expresses her general action in the world. She strikes at the Asuras, she strikes also at everything that has to be got rid of

¹ Written by Sri Aurobindo to his secretary, who replied to the enquirer.—Ed.

² See letter of 5 June 1936 on pages 118–19.—Ed.

or destroyed, at the obstacles to the sadhana etc. I may say that the Mother never uses the Mahakali power in your case nor the Mahakali pressure.

5 June 1936

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The suggestion that the pressure of sadhana is unbearable has got fixed in my mind, particularly after reading in two places that those whose nerves are weak are better off living outside the Ashram. One place is in one of your letters, and another in the *Conversations*, where the Mother says: "You must have a strong body and strong nerves. . . . If you have to bear the pressure of the Divine Descent, you must be very strong and powerful, otherwise you would be shaken to pieces."³ Are these things applicable to me?

These things refer to beginners who are not open and have not a fit Adhar, yet want to do the sadhana.

Your body is not weak and you have considerable vital strength. Moreover you have the openness to the Force and the habit of receiving it, and there is no reason why there should be any upsetting by the Force. It is not the Force, but the suggestion of these vital Forces that produces the upsetting.

7 September 1936

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The feeling of the vibration of the Mother's force around the head is more than a mental idea or even a mental realisation, it is an experience. This vibration is indeed the action of the Mother's Force which is first felt above the head or around it, then afterwards within the head. The pressure means that it is working to open the mind and its centres so that it may enter. The mind-centres are in the head, one at the top and above it, another between the eyes, a third in the throat. That is why you feel the vibration around the head and sometimes up to the neck, but not below. It is so usually, for it is only after enveloping and entering the mind that it goes below to the emotional and

³ *The Mother, Conversations 1929–1931 (Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 2003), p. 11.*

vital parts (heart, navel, etc.) — though sometimes it is more enveloping before it enters the body. 24 March 1937

Faith and the Working of the Mother's Force

Is it so difficult to have faith and confidence in the Mother? Even with a little of that attitude, the descent was taking place in you.

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If you want to get back your faith and keep it, you must first quiet your mind and make it open and obedient to the Mother's force. If you have an excited mind at the mercy of every influence and impulse, you will remain a field of conflicting and contrary forces and cannot progress. You will begin to listen to your own ignorance instead of the Mother's knowledge and your faith will naturally disappear and you will get into a wrong condition and a wrong attitude. March 1928

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Put your faith in the Divine Shakti, set your mind at rest and let the Mother's Force work. 26 August 1933

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There is no reason to be discouraged. Three years is not too much for the preparation of the nature and it is usually through fluctuations that it gradually grows nearer to the point where a continuous progress becomes possible. One has to cleave firmly to the faith in the Mother's working behind all appearances and you will find that that will carry you through. 31 August 1935

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I can try to call down the Mother's Force, but faith and surrender would require a wonderful Yogic poise and power possible only in born Yogis, I think.

Not at all. A wonderful Yogic poise and power would usually bring self-reliance rather than faith and surrender. It is the simple people who do the latter most easily. 10 August 1936

Surrender to the Mother and the Working of Her Force

Is it the Purusha who consents to the Mother's Force acting in the whole being?

Yes.

If the Purusha does not consent to the working of the Mother's Force, does it mean that the other beings (mental, vital, physical and psychic) also cannot come to the front to enable the sadhak to receive the Mother's Grace?

No. The Purusha often holds back and lets the other beings consent or reject in his place.

22 April 1933

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Make the central surrender. The Mother's Force will do the rest.

25 October 1933

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In this process of the descent from above and the working it is most important not to rely entirely on oneself, but to rely on the guidance of the Guru and to refer all that happens to his judgment and arbitration and decision. For it often happens that the forces of the lower nature are stimulated and excited by the descent and want to mix with it and turn it to their profit. It often happens too that some Power or Powers undivine in their nature present themselves as the Supreme Lord or as the Divine Mother and claim the being's service and surrender. If these things are accepted, there will be an extremely disastrous consequence. If indeed there is the assent of the sadhak to the Divine working alone and the submission or surrender to that guidance, then all can go smoothly. This assent and a rejection of all egoistic forces or forces that appeal to the ego are the safeguard throughout the sadhana. But the ways of Nature are full of snares, the disguises of the ego are innumerable, the illusions of the Powers of Darkness, Rakshasi Maya, are extraordinarily skilful; the reason is an insufficient guide and often turns traitor; vital desire is always

with us tempting to follow any alluring call. This is the reason why in this Yoga we insist so much on what we call *samarpaṇa* — rather inadequately rendered by the English word surrender. If the heart centre is fully opened and the psychic is always in control, then there is no question; all is safe. But the psychic can at any moment be veiled by a lower upsurge. It is only a few who are exempt from these dangers and it is precisely those to whom surrender is easily possible. The guidance of one who is himself by identity or represents the Divine is in this difficult endeavour imperative and indispensable. 11 September 1934

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Nothing is impossible if the nature of the psychic being is awake and leading you with the Mother's consciousness and force behind it and working in you. 19 October 1935

Assimilation of the Mother's Force

Allow a quiet and steady will to progress to be settled in you; learn the habit of a silent, persistent and thorough assimilation of what the Mother puts into you. This is the sound way to advance. March 1928

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As for the Mother's force, when one receives it the best is to be quiet till it is assimilated; afterwards it is all right, not lost by outward movements or mixing. 24 January 1935

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Ramana Maharshi says that if "you meditate for an hour or two every day, you can then carry on with your duties. If you meditate in the right manner . . ."

A very important qualification.

"then the current of mind induced will continue to flow even in the midst of your work. It is as though there are two ways

of expressing the same idea; the same line which you take in meditation will be expressed in your activities.”⁴

If the meditation brings poise, peace, a concentrated condition or even a pressure or influence, that *can* go on in the work, provided one does not throw it away by a relaxed or dispersed state of consciousness. That was why the Mother wanted people not only to be concentrated at pranam or meditation but to remain silent and absorb or assimilate afterwards and also to avoid things that relax or disperse or dissipate too much — precisely for this reason that so the effects of what she put on them might continue and the change of attitude the Maharshi speaks of will take place. But I am afraid most of the sadhaks have never understood or practised anything of the kind — they could not appreciate or understand her directions.

9 February 1936

Calling the Mother's Force

I tried to meditate, but I simply had to give it up as the mind would not cooperate.

When you cannot meditate, remain quiet and call in the Mother's Peace or Force.

8 April 1933

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Suppose I am in a fix and call down the Mother's force which is above me. Now, how am I to know whether or not it has descended?

By the feeling of it or the result.

And suppose it has descended, and I am doing my lessons — can I then order it to guard me from outer influences and simultaneously keep me in complete touch with the Mother?

⁴ Paul Brunton, *A Search in Secret India* (London: Rider & Company, [1934] 1943), p. 156. The quotation is a paraphrase of Ramana Maharshi's words by Brunton. — Ed.

You can't order anything to the Mother's force; the Mother's force is the manifestation of the Mother herself.

I cannot understand how this force can deal with action.

You think the Mother's force has nothing to do with action or that it is too feeble to act? Or what? What is a force meant for but to act?
26 June 1933

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I am again feeling that depression, but I cannot find out its cause. I feel a burning pain inside me and then some part in me becomes very hostile. There is also some inertia in the nature.

These are the two difficulties, one of the vital dissatisfaction and restlessness, the other of the inertia of the physical consciousness which are the chief obstacles to the sadhana. The first thing to do is to keep detached from them, not to identify yourself mentally with these movements — even if you cannot reject them — next to call on the Mother's force quietly but steadily for it to descend and make the obstacles disappear.
31 January 1934

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My mind becomes quiet for some time, but then many absurd thoughts rush in and I cannot quiet them down. Then I feel very much harrassed. How long will it take to calm down my mind?

What is still restless in the vital has to quiet down for the peace of mind to be even and constant. It has to be controlled, but only control will not be enough. The Mother's Power has to be called always.
10 April 1934

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Please initiate me into a tangible form of Yoga. I make this assurance that I shall follow your instructions to the very letter and refer to you my doubts and difficulties on the way.

There is no method in this Yoga except to concentrate, preferably in the heart, and call the presence and power of the Mother to take up the being and by the workings of her force transform the consciousness; one can concentrate also in the head or between the eyebrows, but for many this is a too difficult opening. When the mind falls quiet and the concentration becomes strong and the aspiration intense, then there is a beginning of experience. The more the faith, the more rapid the result is likely to be. For the rest one must not depend on one's own efforts only, but succeed in establishing a contact with the Divine and a receptivity to the Mother's Power and Presence.

30 November 1934

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When these attacks of illness come, remain quiet and call on the Mother's Force to remove them.

17 February 1936

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To stand separate and not let the mind be overcome, is the first step. The next is to learn how to call down the Mother's Force whenever the attack comes, so that the attack may be pushed away at once or at least very soon before it can affect the outer vital and the body. If that can be done, the body will recover very soon with the inflow of the forces.

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What should I do so that my work becomes an offering? What should I do so that I can always be with the Mother?

What you should do is to have confidence and try to remain always confident and cheerful. If you feel depressed call for the Mother's Force to remove the depression. If you fall ill, call the Mother's Force to cure you. When you work call the Mother's Force to support you and do the work through you.

Receptivity and Openness to the Mother's Force

Do not allow yourself to be troubled or discouraged by any difficulties, but quietly and simply open yourself to the Mother's force and allow it to change you. 10 March 1931

*

When you decided to tell the Mother, it had the effect of opening something in your physical consciousness and the Mother's Force acted. It often happens so — the action of the Mother's Force depends on a certain power of receptivity in the mind or vital or body — and openness is the first necessary condition for the receptivity. 29 May 1933

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How to become one with the Divine?

Open yourself to the Mother's Force and aspire — in time you will become one with the Divine. 15 June 1933

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The vital defects and difficulties are the same in all and also the shortcomings of the mind. One has to open in faith and confidence to the Divine; the Mother's Force will gradually put everything right. 15 September 1933

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I am overcome with disappointment and depression. After reading your last letter, everything crumbled down in a wave. You said you would increase the Mother's light and consciousness in me, but I can't receive them correctly when I feel like this. I used to believe that the Mother was always there to help, but now you have uprooted that blind faith of mine. Why did you write like that? A little encouragement from your side would make me stronger to reach the destination.

I wrote so because the action of the sadhana does not depend on the Mother alone, but also on the attitude, will and openness

of the sadhak. That is a well-known fact of the spiritual life which everybody is supposed to know. The Mother's Force can do everything only when there is a real and true and complete surrender and openness to the Mother. All these things have been written again and again and it ought not to be necessary to repeat it to each one as if it were a new and unheard-of idea.

12 January 1934

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I had a terrible headache today. What is this all about? If it is Yogic in origin, I will have some comfort. Is the Mother breaking some resistances inside?

No. To make people ill in order to improve or perfect them is not Mother's method. But sometimes things like headache come because the brain either tries too much or does not want to receive or makes difficulties. But these Yogic headaches are of a special kind and after the brain has found out the way to receive or respond, they don't come at all.

20 June 1935

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If one remains in full confidence in the Mother and psychically open, then the Mother's force will do all and one has only to give consent and keep oneself open and aspire.

12 November 1935

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It is no use giving way to depression or self-distrust, they are only obstacles to the change you want and which the Mother is working at in you. The suggestions which raise these things are always one-sided and exaggerated and one ought not to listen to them. It is not by his own strength or good qualities that anyone can attain to the divine change; there are only two things that matter, the Mother's force at work and the sadhak's will to open to it and trust in her working. Keep your will and your trust and care nothing for the rest — they are only difficulties that all meet in their sadhana.

13 May 1936

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I feel the descent of the Mother's peace and power and the action of her Force down to the physical. Why then does this trouble still persist? Is the nervous part of my being not receiving the Force or is it receiving it but refusing to change?

The Peace and Force come down, but the nervous weakness also rises up and resists and counteracts their influence and prevents them from settling in the being. That is because your mind assents to the nervous weakness, accepts its suggestions as true, is full of apprehensions and doubts, believes even that it is the Force which creates the nervous trouble. If you fear the action of the Force, how can the Force do its work? 5 September 1936

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It is certain that one's own effort is necessary, though one cannot do the sadhana by one's own effort alone. The Mother's Force is needed, but the sadhak must open himself to it, reject what opposes the Force, put his full sincerity, aspiration, will power into the sadhana. It is only when all is open and there is the full surrender that the Divine Power takes up the sadhana so entirely that personal effort is no longer necessary. But that cannot happen at an early stage — one must go on opening oneself, consecrating oneself, making the surrender till that later stage comes. This has been explained in the book *The Mother*.

17 March 1937

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Open what is closed. The Mother does not withhold her force from anyone — it is there for all in abundance. Her pleasure is in giving her force, not in withholding it. But if you keep your mind filled with thoughts of this kind, about X and others, and your needs and grievances, you shut yourself up in that and there is no room for the higher consciousness and its force to come in.

Pulling the Mother's Force

I am depressed that the Divine has made me meditate the wrong way for three and a half years without letting me know

it was wrong. Why did I feel that I must stimulate my aspiration through great concentration in meditation in order to expedite my progress? Why only now has the Mother told me that I have been meditating in the wrong way, with too much strain and stiffness and tension? This makes me sad beyond words. The more I think about it, the sadder I become. I am so bewildered and confused.

What am I to do? It seems to me that before I was trying to fit the wrong key into the lock of the faery palace, but now I have been left with no key at all.

What is needed is to profit by the discovery and get rid of the impediment. The Mother did not merely point out the impediment; she showed you very expressly how to do it and at that time you understood her, though now (at the time of writing your letter to me) the light which you saw seems to have been clouded by your indulging your vital more and more in the bitter pastime of sadness. That was quite natural, for that is the result sadness always does bring. It is the reason why I object to the gospel of sorrow and to any sadhana which makes sorrow one of its main planks (*abhimāna*, revolt, *viraha*). For sorrow is not, as Spinoza pointed out, a passage to a greater perfection, a way to Siddhi; it cannot be, for it confuses and weakens and distracts the mind, depresses the vital force, darkens the spirit. A relapse from joy and vital elasticity and Ananda to sorrow, self-distrust, despondency and weakness is a recoil from a greater to a lesser consciousness, — the habit of these moods shows a clinging of something in the vital to the smaller, obscurer, dark and distressed movement out of which it is the very aim of Yoga to rise.

It is therefore quite incorrect to say that the Mother took away the wrong key with which you were trying to open the faery palace and left you with none at all. For she not only showed you the true key but gave it to you. It was not a mere vague exhortation to cheerfulness she gave you, but she described exactly the condition felt in the right kind of meditation — a state of inner rest, not of straining, of quiet opening, not of eager or desperate pulling, a harmonious giving of oneself to the Divine Force for its working, and in that quietude a sense

of the Force working and a restful confidence allowing it to act without any unquiet interference. And she asked you if you had not experienced that condition and you said that you had and knew it very well. Now that condition is the beginning of psychic opening and, if you have had it, you know what the psychic opening is; there is of course much more that afterwards comes to complete it but this is the fundamental condition into which all the rest can most easily come. What you should have done was to keep the key the Mother gave you present in your consciousness and apply it — not to go back and allow sadness and a repining view of the past to grow upon you. In this condition which we term the right or psychic attitude, there may and will be call, prayer, aspiration. Intensity, concentration will come of themselves, not by a hard effort or tense strain on the nature. Rejection of wrong movements, frank confession of defects are not only not incompatible, but helpful to it; but this attitude makes the rejection, the confession easy, spontaneous, entirely complete and sincere and effective. That is the experience of all who have consented to take this attitude.

I may say in passing that consciousness and receptivity are not the same thing; one may be receptive, yet externally unaware of how things are being done and of what is being done. The Force works, as I have repeatedly written, behind the veil; the results remain packed behind and come out afterwards, often slowly, little by little, until there is so much pressure that it breaks through somehow and forces itself upon the external nature. There lies the difference between a mental and vital straining and pulling and a spontaneous psychic openness, and it is not at all the first time that we have spoken of the difference. The Mother and myself have written and spoken of it times without number and we have deprecated pulling⁵ and straining and advocated the attitude of psychic openness. It is not really a question of the right or the wrong key, but of putting the key in the lock in the right or the wrong way, — either, because of

⁵ There is a steady drawing of the Force possible which is not what I mean by pulling — drawing of the Force is quite common and helpful.

some difficulty, you try to force the lock turning the key this way and that with violence or confidently and quietly give it the right turn and the door opens. 5 May 1932

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What is meant by pulling? When we want something from the Mother with a vital desire, is it pulling? What is its effect on us?

Yes; that is one kind of pulling — its effect is to blind and confuse the consciousness. But there is also a pulling for right things which is not bad in itself, and most people use — e.g. for Light, Force, Ananda. But it brings more reactions than a quiet opening to the Divine. 1 June 1933

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Can you explain in a few master strokes what you mean by “pulling down”? As I understand it, it is when one makes mental efforts of concentration and meditation without having any eagerness for it.

That is not what is meant by pulling. When one is open and too eager and tries to pull down the force, experience etc. instead of letting it descend quietly, that is called pulling. Many people pull at the Mother's forces — trying to take more than they can easily assimilate and disturbing the working. 7 April 1935

The Mother's Force and the Forces of the Lower Nature

There is in me a revolt of the vital against the Light resulting in much vital confusion. I hope that one day all my desires and ambition will go away and I will depend completely on the Mother. In the meantime, as these things too come from the Mother, there is nothing to do but wait.

What things? The vital confusion and desires? It is entirely false to say that these things come from the Mother. They come from the lower Nature and its darkness and ignorance. The Mother's Force is *not* the lower Nature, it is the Power of the Divine

Truth and Light working upon the lower Nature to drive out the confusion and falsehood and desire from it and to transform everything into the Truth and Light.

It is equally false to say “so there is nothing to do but wait”. There is something to do and I have repeatedly told you what it is — I have told you not to go down into the lower vital unless you can go there with the Mother’s Force and Light supporting you. If you are pushed or fall into the lower vital confusion, then to remain quiet (not discussing or consenting to whirl round in the lower vital chaos), to reject the vital suggestions and experiences and open yourself calling down the Mother’s Force to change this part of the being.

Instead of that you begin “experiencing” the chaos and trying to follow every jump and whirl in it and speculating about it with the result that you get falsehoods like these two — the falsehood that “these things too come from the Mother” and the falsehood that “there is nothing to do but wait” and you consent to them!

When will you learn to remember and follow the plain instructions I have given you instead of believing in the ignorant mind and the confused suggestions of this vital chaos?

10 June 1930

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I am practising with the feeling that the Mother is in everything. When I make a mistake, I think: “This also the Mother has done through me to bring me to full consciousness.” I believe that the sadhaks cannot consciously commit mistakes.

The Mother does not make people commit mistakes; it is the Prakriti that makes them do it — if the Purusha does not refuse his consent. The Mother here is not this lower Prakriti, but the Divine Shakti and it is her work to press on this lower Nature to change. You can say that under the pressure, the Prakriti stumbles and is unable to reply perfectly and makes mistakes. But it is not the Mother who makes you do wrong movements or does the wrong movements in you — if you think that, you

are in danger of justifying the movements or their continuance.

11 April 1933

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What is the truest and surest means to recognise the Mother's Force when it acts and to distinguish it from other egoistic or ignorant forces?

One has only to be perfectly sincere, not to justify one's own desires and faults by the mind's reasonings, to look impartially and quietly at oneself and one's movements and to call on the Mother's Light — then gradually one will begin to discern everything in that light. Even if it cannot be done perfectly at once, the judgment and feeling will get clearer and surer and a right consciousness of these things will be established.

If a sadhak cannot fully discriminate between the Mother's Force and the egoistic and ignorant forces and cannot reject the lower forces, what will be his condition? And what is the best step for him to take on the path of Yoga?

All these questions are met by my answer. One cannot be perfect in discrimination at once or in rejection either. The one indispensable thing is to go on trying sincerely till there comes the full success. So long as there is complete sincerity, the Divine Grace will be there and assist at every moment on the way.

1 July 1933

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There are two cosmic Forces — one the higher Cosmic Shakti which is a form of the Mother, the other a Power of the Ignorance. You have not to open to the latter, only to the Mother.

25 October 1933

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I told you that when I make some mistake, then the lower forces rise up to trouble me, but you replied: "It is not necessarily due to some mistake or fault that they rise." But my

experience is that so long as the Mother's name is on my lips nothing undivine can touch me. It is only when I am careless and forget to say her name that mistakes occur.

And what does the carelessness come from? It is because the habit of the lower nature makes you forget. That is an action of the lower forces. It is only by the higher force meeting the lower forces and its pressure on them (this is the contact) that the habit of forgetfulness disappears. 25 January 1935

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How is it that the Mother cannot or will not move the hostile forces to action, since even the Asura and Rakshasa and Pisacha are her children?

As for the Asuric forces, their movement is part of the ordinary cosmic movement in the Ignorance, but Mother is not here to encourage that movement, but to bring down the higher Truth in which they have no place. If then she moves the hostile Forces to act against her and her work and the sadhaks (which they are quite ready enough to do of themselves), it would mean that she is working against herself and trying to frustrate her own purpose in being here! Such an action would be absurd in the extreme. 8 April 1935

The Mother's Force and the Three Gunas

When one feels that it is the Mother's Force that acts through one and not one's own force, is it the Mother's Force alone that works in one's actions while the gunas remain quiescent?

No, the gunas are there and not quiescent—for they are the instrumentation. If the force and the inner consciousness are very strong then there is a tendency for the rajas to become like some inferior form of tapas and the tamas to become more like a kind of inert shama. That is how the transformation begins, but usually it is very slow in its process. 29 January 1936

Conditions for the Working of the Mother's Force

When you can receive the Mother's peace in the mind and heart, it will act on the vital also and calm it. Once the vital is calm then force can be there in it and give it strength.

There is no intention of test or ordeal. But for the Mother's force to act certain conditions are necessary. There must be a certain acceptance, a will steady and persistent to reject what comes in the way of her action and to receive her force alone.

But why should you be always thinking about X or others? You have very little to do with X now, and it is no use thinking only of the past. Leave him to the Mother to deal with and forget all that.

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If ego-sense comes back upon you so strongly, it must be because something in you admits it. The Mother's force is there always and can help you to get rid of these things, but you on your part must with faith and sincerity accept the Mother and put yourself entirely on her side so as to make it possible for the Force to work with effect. When bad thoughts come, you must reject them, not assent to them in your mind, not give voice to them in your speech, not believe in them or their suggestions. These things cannot vanish in a day, but if you do like that, they will diminish and lose their power to lay strong hold of you and disturb you, and in the end they will disappear. 21 April 1932

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I wish to become ceaseless in aspiration. I feel that it is the Mother's Force that is aspiring in me. But if the Mother herself does not increase my aspiration through her Grace, how can I become ceaseless in it?

It is true that it is the Mother's Force that aspires in you, but if the personal consciousness does not give its assent, then the Force does not work. If the personal consciousness ceaselessly looks for the Divine and assents to the working, then aspiration

and the working of the Force becomes also ceaseless.

9 April 1933

Discrimination and the Working of the Mother's Force

It is dangerous to think of giving up "all barrier of discrimination and defence against what is trying to descend" upon you. Have you thought what this would mean if what is descending is something not in consonance with the divine Truth, perhaps even adverse? An Adverse Power could ask no better condition for getting control over the seeker. It is only the Mother's Force and the divine Truth that one should admit without barriers. And even there one must keep the power of discernment in order to detect anything false that comes masquerading as the Mother's Force and the divine Truth, and keep too the power of rejection that will throw away all mixture.

Keep faith in your spiritual destiny, draw back from error and open more the psychic being to the direct guidance of the Mother's light and power. If the central will is sincere, each recognition of a mistake can become a stepping-stone to a truer movement and a higher progress.

24 May 1930

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How to recognise that a particular thought, feeling or impulse to action has come from the Mother herself and not from some universal force or anything else? If it is apparently a force from the Falsehood it can be recognised as such, but there are many others of a different character and sometimes one goes on thinking that they are prompted by the Mother from within.

It can only be done by discrimination, care, sincerity, a constant control with regard to the mind's movements and the growth of a certain kind of psychic tact which detects any mental imitation or false suggestion of its being the Mother's.

27 April 1933

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About my weaknesses you have mentioned the “inertia and fundamental resistance in the consciousness”. How can I become free of them?

There is only one rule for all these things—to watch oneself closely so as to detect these things always when they show themselves, to reject them always and persistently when seen, to aspire always for their removal, to call always the Force of the Mother to help to remove them. But the most entirely effective thing is if you can feel the Force of the Mother working in you and support its action always. 29 June 1933

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You have written: “But the most entirely effective thing is if you can feel the Force of the Mother working in you and support its action always.” What is the meaning of “support its action always”?

To support its action means that one must recognise the Mother's force when it acts and distinguish it from other egoistic or ignorant forces and give assent to the one and refuse the others. It is again a general rule — its application each sadhaka has to see for himself. 1 July 1933

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The Mother's Force may do everything but one has to become more and more conscious of one's own being and nature and what is below in it.

It is not a question of mental judgment, — that is of little use in these matters, — but of the consciousness feeling and seeing.

Supermind is not organised in the lower planes as the others are. It is only a veiled influence. Otherwise the supramental realisation would be easy. 22 May 1934

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As to the Force, you said, “It creates its own activities in the mind or elsewhere.” In that case does the mind or any other part on which the Force acts express only what the Force has created?

That is the ideal condition when the Force is the true Force only — but there is too much mixture in the nature for that to be possible at this stage of sadhana. 3 August 1934

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You say: “That is the ideal condition when the Force is the true Force only.” Does this mean that what my consciousness feels as the Force is not the real Force of the Mother?

I have said that it gets mixed with the action of the present mind, vital and body. That is inevitable since it has to work upon them. It is only after the transformation that it can be fully the Mother’s Force with no mixture of the separate personality. If the Divine Force in all its perfection without mixture were to act from the beginning, not taking any account of the present nature, then there would be no sadhana, only a miraculous substitution of the Divine for the human without any reason or process.

4 August 1934

Mental Knowledge and the Working of the Mother’s Force

During the evening meditation my mind tries to become conscious of the thoughts which the Mother brings down. Is this the right activity?

It is not altogether the way — if the mind is active it is more difficult to become aware of what the Mother is bringing. It is not thoughts she brings, but the higher light, force etc.

22 March 1933

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With reference to the Mother you once said, “Ask for the consciousness of her force.” Does it mean that I should aspire to know her consciousness and her force?

Yes — not know with the mind only, but to feel them and see them with the inner experience. 18 June 1933

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My mind fails to make out the present state of the being. It does not understand what the Mother's Force is doing.

Plenty of people progress rapidly without understanding what the Force is doing — they simply observe and describe and say "I leave all to the Mother." Eventually the knowledge and understanding come. 17 July 1933

The Mother's Force and the Body

When can it be said that the material being is ready for the Divine?

If the material consciousness is open, feels the Mother's Force working in it and responds, then it is ready. 11 June 1933

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I feel the Mother's light, peace, beauty, joy and love descending from above into each strand of my hair. The whole body, calm and still, becomes absorbed in deep peace.

It can be there in all the atoms of the body since all is secretly conscious. 5 October 1933

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One thing I wish to say about the condition of my body: Do not arrange any medication for me. Medicines are insignificant compared to the Mother's Force and Compassion. Everything will come all right through her Love and Force — this is my strong faith.

For the Mother's Force to work fully in the body, the body itself and not only the mind must have faith and be open.

9 October 1933

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I pray that the Mother's Force may help my body. Kindly let me keep her Light and by that Light mould me through Peace and Love.

Aspire and concentrate for the purification and illumination of the vital. The vital once clear with the Mother's Light and Force in it, it will be easier for the Force to work on the body.

11 October 1933

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Today while I was sitting with others, slowly something came down and filled up all my body. The body became very heavy, like a statue — I could not move. My body, especially the chest, was expanding. Peace! Calm! Ananda! Afterwards, the upper portion of my body slowly became smaller and smaller. Then something entered from the soles of my feet, and I came back to the physical consciousness.

That is very good. It is the Force and Presence of the Mother from above that comes down like that into the body — first in the head and chest and afterwards into the whole body. It is the first fundamental experience of the sadhana from which all the rest begins — for until it comes all else is only preparation. Very often it takes people years to bring it into the body, and with most it comes only by degrees. That it should come in a mass like that and even down to the chest shows that what I told you was true — that once you get free from the old obstacles that were obstructing you, you can have the Yoga experiences as well as anyone else here.

3 December 1933

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Is the heat that I felt in the body the heat of the fever or the heat of the Mother's Force? It exerted a tremendous pressure on my mind, life and body.

That has still to be seen. It is most probably the tapas heat; the question is whether it is turned partially in the body into fever.

7 June 1936

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It is quite true that the Mother has been putting a constant pressure of her Force to help you in overcoming this illness. I

am very glad you have been so vividly aware of it. We do not think it is correct that the Mother can only take the pain away but cannot replace the organs in their right place. This also is possible for the spiritual Force to effect in time. But it is desirable that you should not allow any inner condition of yours which makes the working easy to yield to one like those you speak of which would make it difficult by allowing the old forces to return. Even if that happens, the Mother will still work of course to restore the previous condition until the thing is set right. But a continuous openness is very desirable. 22 October 1936

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Mother is not opposed to your going to Madras for treatment if you feel it necessary; but she is not at all sure that it will result in a radical cure — it may or it may not and, if it does not, it may return worse; so neither can she recommend your going. It depends on your own decision.

The illness has no doubt a physical cause, but there is associated with it a strong resistance to the Force — which is evidently seated in the subconscious, since you are not aware of it. This is shown by the fact that after Mother put a concentrated force there yesterday, the whole thing returned more violently after an hour's relief. That is always a sign of a violent and obstinate resistance somewhere. It is only if this is overcome or disappears that complete relief can come.

Your experiences related in the letter were quite sound and very good. There is no delusion about the Force working in the body, but there are evidently points where there is still much resistance. The body consciousness has many parts and many different movements and all do not open or change together. Also the body is very dependent on the subconscious which has to be cleared and illumined before the body can be free from adverse reactions. 15 April 1938

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The Mother's Force is always pouring down — your body must

now forget its habit of depression or sadness. Let the happiness come into it also.

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First the Mother organises the inner parts of the being; then she begins to work on the outer being. Does this mean that when the inner parts are brought under control, then she begins to work on the physical nature?

It is the usual course, but some work is always being done in the inner parts at all times, because they are interdependent.

The Mother's Therapeutic Force

While working, I suddenly felt a pressure of weakness, a depression in the chest. When I became conscious of it, I opened myself and called the Mother's force. After a few minutes it disappeared. Was it the divine strength that supported me in some mysterious way, or was it the inherent strength of the body that awakened?

The inherent strength of the body does not do things like that. It is the Mother's force that does it, when one calls and opens oneself. Even people who never did Yoga and are conscious of nothing, get cured like that without knowing the reason or feeling the way in which it was done. The Force comes from above or in descending it envelops and comes from without inside or it comes out from inside after descending there. When you are conscious of the play of the Forces, then you feel the working.

5 May 1933

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When I got up from sleep, I found that a cold had already entered my head. My consciousness brought down the Mother's Force and the cold disappeared. Formerly the consciousness used to say passively, "Let the Force work it out", but the effect was not the same. I want to know if the method adopted for the Force is quite the right way.

It is quite the right way. It is very good that you are learning to use the Force.

27 August 1934

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Every time I receive the Mother's touch at Pranam, I feel a sense of strong nourishment, even in the physical being. When she presses her fingers on the opening point of the spinal cord at the top of my head, I feel something subtle coming in which makes my inner being overflow with joy. This sense of nourishment (as if a new substance is being created within) is so strong that even when I am unwell and weak, it completely dominates with its sense of joy and security.

As you suffer from ill-health, Mother presses the nourishment of the divine strength and health into your physical being, renewing its substance with that.

4 November 1934

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If we want the Mother to help someone outside with her Force, but we give her wrong information, does the help she sends miss its mark or does it go automatically where it should? Yesterday I suppose the Mother acted before X gave the wrong information about my uncle, but if she had been misinformed from the start, what would have happened?

Yes, Mother had worked before, but wrong information coming across the working creates a confusion so that it is no longer possible to say what is the result of the working. Of course if the wrong information came at the beginning, it would be still worse. It is very necessary that information given should be correct.

10 June 1935

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I remember the Mother once saying that there is hardly a disease that cannot be cured by Yoga. I was surprised, much surprised, and thought, "What about cancer, then, the most deadly enemy of present civilisation? Can it be cured by Yoga?" What is your opinion?

Of course it can, but on condition of faith or openness or both. Even a mental suggestion can cure cancer — with luck, of course, as is shown by the case of the woman operated on unsuccessfully for cancer, but the doctors lied and told her it had succeeded. Result, cancer symptoms all ceased and she died many years afterwards of another illness altogether. 11 October 1935

*

I had a heated but pleasant discussion with X about the action of the healing force. He argued: “Now that the healing force has arrived here, it is likely to operate in other parts of the world and any Tom, Dick and Harry can wield it even if not spiritually developed.”

It may operate but not through every T, D and H, at first at least.

I contended that the healing force will act only if a man is open to the Mother in some way, through devotion, faith or some kind of rapport. I also said that most probably the healing force can act only if the healer is directly in physical contact with her. Certain conditions are necessary for cure. What do you say?

At first it will be no doubt like that if it is to be the true Force, but when once it is settled in the earth-consciousness a more general use of supraphysical force for healing may become possible.

It is not always necessary either that the rapport you speak of should be conscious. Coué for instance was in rapport with the Mother without knowing it — she told me of his getting something of the force and of the beginning of his work long before he was known to anyone (of course she did not know his name but she described him and his work in such a way that the identification was evident). 3 February 1936

*

X writes that her hip-joint pain is gone and wants me to thank the Mother for removing it. She calculates that her first letter to me mentioning the pain must have reached me on Thursday and her hip pain almost vanished miraculously at eight in the

evening that day. But I did not write to the Mother about X's complaint until Friday. Could it be that when X's letter entered the Ashram atmosphere a response came?

Y spoke to the Mother about X's pain on the same day — so it is not necessary to suppose an automatic effect of the letter itself. But such an automatic effect does often take place either immediately after writing or when the letter enters the Mother's atmosphere.

17 April 1936

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I generally rely in my practice on medicines impregnated with the Mother's force. X is now convinced that there is nothing of any medicine left after potentisation except Homeopathic philosophy (the Mother's force). What is *your* opinion?

I never have opinions — except for the purpose of writing or conversation. To the eye of the Yogin all opinions are true and all are false. It is only realities and results that matter. The Mother's force is a reality and the cure is a result — the medicine is perhaps a phenomenal link between the two.

2 June 1936

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It was precisely out of solicitude for you because the suffering of insomnia and the spasms had been excessive that I proposed to you to take the help of treatment. It is a fact of my experience that when the resistance in the body is too strong and persistent, it can help to take some aid of physical means as an instrumentation for the Force to work more directly on the body itself; for the body then feels itself supported against the resistance from both sides, by means both physical as well as supraphysical. The Mother's force can work through both together.

1 September 1936

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In the last two weeks there has been no improvement in my nervous trouble. I had the belief that the Mother's look and grace at the Sunday Pranam would ease my situation, but it has not. Shall I undergo medical treatment or rely solely on

the Mother's grace and influence which I shall receive at the Sunday Pranam?

Sunday Pranams are not the only way of receiving Force, one can do it at any time by opening to receive in a quiet concentration. If you can do that, any illness can be cured either at once or, if it is chronic, in time. That should be done in any case. But where there is not the full openness, medical treatment can help as an auxiliary. If you like to consult X, he may be able to understand better your case than by second hand and you can see whether you would care to try any remedies he suggests.

28 March 1937

Receiving the Mother's Force at a Distance

I write from Comilla to present to you the sad story of a sad person's life. For over twenty-five years I have suffered from leucorrhoea. I have taken all kinds of treatments, but never succeeded in removing it. My body is becoming weaker day by day. I feel that no doctor can remedy this disease. You and the Mother have come on earth to remove people's sufferings. I pray that you will rid this poor thing of her sufferings for ever.

It is possible for her to be cured,⁶ but only if she has sufficient and complete faith and can receive the force of the Mother. If she can put herself into the true contact, she will cure.

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As to what your other friend asks, it is quite possible for him to receive where he is without coming here if he has the adoration of the Mother in his heart and an intense call. 25 August 1935

*

You spoke of my friend X as receiving the Mother's Force.

⁶ *Written by Sri Aurobindo to his secretary, who replied to the enquirer. — Ed.*

“*In contact with*” the Divine Force which is the force of the Mother — that was what I wrote, I believe.

But which Mother?

How many Mothers are there?

Ours or some universal Mother as people say?

Who is this some universal Mother? How many of these some universal Mothers are there?

I ask because I do not understand how, without invoking the Mother, he gets her Force.

Have you not put him by the photograph and his letter in connection with us? Has he not turned in this direction? Has he not met Y and been impressed by him — a third channel of contact? That is quite sufficient to help him to a contact if he has the faith and the Yogic stress in him. 2 February 1936

*

Has Mother really been sending force to my friend?

I don't know whether Mother is sending force in the accepted sense; I haven't asked her. In any case anyone can receive the force who has faith and sincerity, whose psychic being has begun to wake and who opens himself, — whether he knows or not that he is receiving. If X even imagines that he is receiving, that may open the way to a real reception, — if he *feels* it, why question his feeling? He is certainly trying hard to change and that is the first necessity; if one tries it can always be done, in more or less time. 28 June 1943

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It was 1 a.m. at night when my brother in excruciating pain called me and asked if Sri Aurobindo could heal him. I took out some Prasad flowers that were with me and touched the

affected part with them. And lo! the pain vanished and he began to recover. I want to know if you were aware of this and heard my prayer.

What happens in such cases is that when someone is accepted, the Mother sends out something of herself to him and this is with him wherever he goes and is always in connection with her being here. So when he does anything like what you did in this case with faith and bhakti, it reaches, through that emanation of herself which is with him, the Mother's consciousness inner or outer and the Force goes in return for the result.