

Nama - Japa



Sri Ramakrishna Das

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PREFACE

Nama-Japa plays an important role in Sri Aurobindo's Integral Yoga. Even it could be said that Nama-Japa is the best method for the transformation of the body. The usefulness, method and action of Nama-Japa have been brought out by the author of this booklet in a most lucid and fascinating, yet simple manner. This book was originally written for an Indian audience and published in Oriya, one of the Indian languages. Therefore a number of the examples given in the text refer to the Indian social setting or are derived from the famous stories of India's great mystical heritage – the famous epics of the Mahabharata and the Ramayana, the Upanishads, Puranas and Vedas. Though some of these stories may be unfamiliar to the Western reader, we firmly believe that the content and message of this beautiful booklet is equally relevant and a practical help to all sincere aspirants of Sri Aurobindo's yoga, East or West.

The Publisher

*A key to a Light still kept in being's core,
The sum-word of an ancient mystery's sense.
Her name ran murmuring on the lips of men
Exalted and sweet like an inspired verse...*

Sri Aurobindo

THE ROLE OF NAMA-JAPA¹ IN THE YOGA OF TRANSFORMATION

I

THE USEFULNESS OF NAMA-JAPA

In the yoga of transformation, the best and unfailing method to reach the goal and to overcome without much effort all insurmountable difficulties, obstacles, and deceiving attacks of the hostile forces, is to surrender oneself at the feet of The Mother like a small child and repeat Her name. At no time is it safe to tread the path of this yoga without this impenetrable armature.

The aim of this yoga is the realization of the Divine in the transformed mind, vital and body, and to be completely free from death, disease, old age, sorrow, suffering and ignorance. This is, without exception, the aim of life for everyone in this world. There is not a single person who wants sorrow, suffering, ignorance, disease, old-age and death. But since the beginning of

1 Repeating the Name of the Lord.

creation, men have been in the grip of disease, old-age, sorrow, suffering, ignorance and death. When the Divine Himself comes to the earth as an *Avatar*² in a human body, He willingly accepts all these insurmountable rules of this death-bound earth. Starting from the rishis, munis, sages, acharyas of the Vedic ages down to the sadhus and saints, nobody could think of or even imagine the transformation of mind, vital and body.³ To realize God in mind, vital and body was not possible by any powerful sadhana (practise of yoga) of the old yogas, or by any yoga-shakti (power of some realization), therefore the sadhaks⁴ separated mind, vital and body and with the help of their *antaratma* (inmost soul) which is an eternal, pure and true part of the Divine, they obtained Nirvana, Liberation or Divine Realization. All these are personal realizations. By these realizations sorrow, suffering, ignorance, darkness, jealousy, envy, ego, selfishness and falsehood have not disappeared from the world; on the contrary, they have gradually increased. All this however, will eventually disappear and this death-bound world will be turned into a Divine Heaven. Since the right time for this change had not yet come, the great men, rishis, munis and sages of old had not even conceived of it.

According to the evolutionary process, the development of mind has reached its summit, therefore the time has come for the transformation of mind, vital and

2 Incarnation of the Divine in a human body.

3 Rishis, Munis, Acharyas, Sadhus - terms used as synonyms for different kinds of yogis and teachers of spiritual truths and texts.

4 Persons who practice yoga.

body or, for the establishment of the *Supramental Consciousness*⁵ in the transformed mind, vital and body. According to the Decree and Will of the Divine – *Satchidananda*⁶ – He Himself came upon earth in a human body as The Mother and Sri Aurobindo and as the representatives of the human race, they did sadhana (practise of yoga) and brought down and established in this world the transforming *Supramental Force of Pararddha* (the world of Truth and Light). This *Supramental Force* is doing the work of transformation. This transformation is the aim of life of each and every human being. Those who have faith in the Divine and those who do not, all human beings are unknowingly marching towards this goal, though on a wrong path. Since they have no knowledge of the aim, the sadhana for realizing the goal becomes obviously wrong. For this reason the individual is undergoing more and more sorrow and suffering.

Since The Mother and Sri Aurobindo have established the transforming *Supramental Force* upon earth, the proper time has now come and man has got the opportunity to reach his goal. Mother will completely protect the sadhak from all obstacles and dangers if he depends completely on Her like a small child and surrenders himself at Her feet, and continuously repeats The Mother's name, *Ma*, with faith and dependence on Her. Like a Mother who crosses a difficult path keeping

5 Supramental Consciousness/Force - Transforming Divine Force, which Sri Aurobindo brought down into the earth atmosphere and which will divinize mind, life and body creating Divine Life here on earth.

6 Sat - Existence, Chit - Consciousness, Ananda - Bliss

her child in her lap, The Mother's Power will fully help the sadhak to reach the goal and overcome all sorts of obstacles and hindrances. But until the end of this transformation the sadhak has to make a conscious surrender. In this yoga of transformation, the sadhak, along with doing Nama-Japa, should surrender his whole being at the feet of The Mother. This is the only way to reach the goal and to face and overcome the obstacles, hindrances and attacks of the adverse forces.

Just as The Mother and Sri Aurobindo are one and the same Truth, The Mother, Mother's Power (*Matrushakti*) and the transforming *Supramental Power* are also one and the same Truth. Just as water and its waves, or words and their meaning are inseparable, the Divine, Sri Aurobindo and The Mother, *Supramental Shakti* or the name *Ma*, are different only in words and expression, but in essence they are one and the same. Since the Divine, Sri Aurobindo, The Mother and the *Supramental Shakti* are one and the same, then in the integral yoga if one surrenders to The Mother, the *Supramental Force* starts the work of transformation in the *adhara* (mind, vital, body) of the sadhak. Since The Mother and Her name are one Truth and Principle, Her physical presence remains always with the sadhak when he repeats The Mother's name. The difficult sadhana of transformation becomes very easy by doing Nama-Japa.

It has been stated earlier that the practice of the integral yoga is not safe without surrender. Surrender and aspiration can only come if the sadhak is conscious. By keeping an attitude of surrender and aspiration and a determined will power, the sadhak can become conscious.

But the determination must be very firm, the attitude of surrender must be intense, and there must be a burning aspiration, then only consciousness is possible. The sadhak has to do many years of sadhana to reach such a stage. But in the initial stages of sadhana the sadhak has no support whatsoever for concentrating the mind and remaining constantly conscious. During meditation he can concentrate in the depth of the heart or above the head for a short while. When the sadhak surrenders, Mother's Power starts the work of transformation in the sadhak and at this time he can concentrate well. Or when the Divine Qualities such as peace, concentration, ananda (bliss) and equanimity descend, then the sadhak remains in ananda for a while. Neither is this always possible nor does it happen every day in the initial stages of sadhana. After a long time it happens occasionally. The rest of the time, various kinds of mechanical thoughts perturb the sadhak. Through the adverse forces, all sorts of obstacles come. Such disturbances continue until the sadhak has progressed much in his sadhana.

On the other hand, if there is no intensity in the sadhana of the sadhak, he cannot, at the beginning, always surrender consciously nor can he aspire consciously. At that time, his only support is to do the work as a service to the Divine. Without the descent of peace and ananda, life as well as sadhana appear dry and uninteresting. Depression, despair and doubt try to drag the sadhak away from the path of yoga. But by the repetition of The Mother's name, *Ma*, the sadhak can

remain conscious from the very beginning of sadhana with relative ease. Though *Ma-Nama-Japa* is quite easy, it is greatly effective and very powerful. Whether sadhaks take their sadhana seriously or not, if one is firmly determined from the beginning of sadhana to repeat The Mother's name, *Ma*, one can always do so.

Whether there is faith and interest in Nama-Japa or not, if the sadhak practices Nama-Japa, faith and reliance on Nama-Japa will automatically come to him. Since there is no difference between The Mother and Her name, Mother's presence always remains with the sadhak. He can remain always conscious if he constantly does Nama-Japa. Because of Nama-Japa, the difficult task of remaining always conscious becomes easy and simple. If one remains conscious, then surrender and aspiration become gradually easy. The sadhak develops a spontaneous faith in the presence of The Mother. Along with Nama-Japa, it is not difficult to uphold the idea: "I have taken refuge in You", or "I am Your child." Depending upon the sadhak's nature and liking, he can, along with Nama-Japa, hold on to the above ideas or he can aspire for the awakening of his *Psychic Being*.⁷ If one can always do Nama-Japa in this way, then surrender becomes easy and spontaneous.

If the sadhak does not repeat The Mother's name as mentioned above, but does work for The Mother in the beginning stages of his sadhana, his work becomes Divine work, because he has already accepted the aim to realize the Divine in a transformed mind, life and body. But this is not very fruitful since the sadhak does not remain conscious and does not surrender consciously. It may take

7 The immanent Divine in the individual.

him many years to remain conscious while working and to surrender consciously. *Ma*—this Nama-Japa, brings forth consciousness quickly and makes surrender easy. When in this way the consciousness and the attitude of surrender become firm and strong, then the sadhak can become aware of the transforming work of the Divine Forces during meditation, as well as at other times.

Some people say that mechanical Nama-Japa has no effect. If this is true, why do the spiritual seekers fear mechanical thoughts so much? They apply innumerable methods of sadhana for stopping mechanical thoughts; when mechanical thoughts are stopped, the sadhana comes to a point where no more personal effort of the sadhak is required. All paths of sadhana for the realization of the Divine make an effort to stop mechanical thoughts and to concentrate. Even in ordinary life, man fears mechanical thoughts, and for this reason he suffers from unhappiness and restlessness. If these useless mechanical thoughts have so much influence, will not the Divine's name – which is the same as the presence of that particular form of the Divine which is being evoked – produce any influence whatsoever? The scriptures, Puranas, Upanishads and Vedas⁸ as well as sages, saints, acharyas, great souls, rishis and munis all have highly praised the effect of Nama-Japa. Thus Tulsidasji (famous saint and poet of northern India) says: “Who am I to describe the effect of Nama-Japa when *Rama*⁹ himself is

8 Puranas, Upanishads, Vedas - ancient mystical texts in Sanskrit. The Vedas are the most ancient texts of knowledge

not able to explain the power of this name.” And what a big sinner Ajambil¹⁰ was! But he attained liberation by uttering the name of his son – Narayan- at the time of death.

Mechanical thoughts come spontaneously, they do not require any effort. On the contrary, life after life, sadhana is required to stop them. Try to do Nama-Japa. Let’s see how easily you can do it! Firm determination and a strong will are required for *Ma*-Nama-Japa. How can this Japa be mechanical when it requires a very strong will and determination? It has been previously said that Nama-Japa is easy. The reason for this statement is that in comparison to other methods of yoga, Nama-Japa is much easier, though at the same time it is very powerful.

NAMA-JAPA IN WORK

The aim of Sri Aurobindo’s yoga is the transformation of the sadhak’s mind, life and body into Divine Truth and Principles and to realize the Divine in the transformed mind, vital and body.

Work is always done with the body. The energy behind the work is that of the vital. The method and skill of doing the work are those of the mind. Work is accomplished by the combination of these three beings, mind, vital and body. Since in Sri Aurobindo’s yoga, mind, vital and body will be transformed, the work done by them

9. Rama was one of the incarnations of the Divine on earth and the main character in the famous Hindu epic the Ramayana.

10. Derived from the story of the thief Ajambil!. Ajambil had a son who was named Narayan, which is one of the holy names of the Lord.

cannot be excluded from this yoga. All necessary work should be done well and should be offered to The Mother with an attitude of service to Her, as a sadhana to reach the goal. Work performed with this attitude becomes Divine work. When the sadhak always remains in a higher consciousness, then he will have such an attitude. But in the early stages of sadhana it is not possible for all sadhaks to remain in a higher consciousness while working. It may be possible during meditation. The sadhak remains in the mental consciousness during the initial stages of sadhana. By surrender, aspiration and the transforming work of the Divine Power, the sadhak may remain in the higher consciousness and surrender his work, but this may take a long time. For many sadhaks, it may even take years. While working, the sadhak wanders in various worlds of thought. He cannot even think that the work he is doing is Divine work. With a little effort though, if the sadhak repeats The Mother's name, *Ma*, he can do the Divine work and offer it at Her feet right from the beginning of sadhana. If the sadhak remains vigilant, conscious, and firmly determined, then he can always do Nama-Japa and does not forget it even while working. While doing any work, the sadhak may repeat The Mother's name with the help of his tongue or silently in his mind and along with it maintain the attitude: "I am Yours, I have taken refuge in You"; or he can hold on to the idea of surrendering his whole being to The Mother; or he can aspire for awakening the *Psychic Being* (the immanent Divine in the individual). If the sadhak repeats Mother's name, and works with this attitude, then he will find interest, enthusiasm, happiness, inspiration and

joy in his work and even after doing a lot of work, he will not feel any tiredness. Work done with this attitude becomes Divine work and is an offering at the feet of The Mother. By doing Divine work with this attitude, the change of consciousness takes place easily and in a comparatively shorter time. Also, work done with this attitude brings reliance on The Mother's Grace. The Mother has said in *Questions and Answers*: " In all pursuits, intellectual or active, your one motto should be, 'Remember and Offer' ".¹¹

The Mother has said that in all actions, one has to "Remember and Offer". Unless you remember, you cannot offer. By doing Nama-Japa of *Ma*, one can remember Her.

THE MOTHER ON NAMA-JAPA

"I have also come to realize that for this sadhana of the body, the mantra is essential. Sri Aurobindo gave none; he said that one should be able to do all the work without having to resort to external means. Had he reached the point where we are now, he would have seen that the purely psychological method is inadequate and that a japa is necessary, because only japa has a direct action on the body. So I had to find the method all alone, to find my mantra by myself. But now that things are ready, I have done ten years of work in a few months. That is the difficulty, it requires time... "

"And I repeat my mantra constantly - when I am

¹¹ The Mother, *Questions and Answers*, Cent. Edn., Vol.3, p.26

awake and even when I sleep. I say it even when I am getting dressed, when I eat, when I work, when I speak with others; it is there, just behind in the background, all the time, all the time.”

“In fact, you can immediately see the difference between those who have a mantra and those who don’t. With those who have no mantra, even if they have a strong habit of meditation or concentration, something around them remains hazy and vague. Whereas the japa imparts to those who practice it a kind of precision, a kind of solidity: an armature. They become galvanized, as it were.”¹²

Mother has clearly stated how necessary it is to do Nama-Japa for the transformation of the body: “I have also come to realize that for this sadhana of the body, the mantra is essential...because only japa has a direct action on the body.”

And Mother has also said that She completed ten years of sadhana in just a few months: “I have done ten years of work in a few months.”

It is essential to do Nama-Japa all the time. The Mother Herself has told how She was always repeating the mantra: “And I repeat my mantra constantly, when I am awake and even when I sleep, I say it even when I am getting dressed, when I eat, when I work, when I speak with others; it is there just behind in the

12 Mother’s Agenda, 1951-60, Vol.1, p.301

background, all the time, all the time.”

The Mother has differentiated between those who do Nama-Japa and those who go deep in meditation and concentrate but do not practice Nama-Japa. She has said:

“In fact, you can immediately see the difference between those who have a mantra and those who don't. With those who have no mantra, even if they have a strong habit of meditation or concentration, something around them remains hazy and vague. Whereas the Japa imparts to those who practice it a kind of precision, a kind of solidity: an armature. They become galvanized, as it were.”

From the above statements of The Mother, it can be seen that three quarters of the difficulties of this arduous and great task of transformation of the body will be solved by doing Nama-Japa. Thus the great and difficult transformation has now become easy, and the practice of this yoga of transformation has become possible even for ordinary people.

NAMA-JAPA IN WORLDLY LIFE

The transformation of the body is the aim of everyone's life, and all are advancing towards its realization unknowingly through their work. Even though this is so clear and so real, still those who are not conscious of this aim of life, whose *Psychic Being* is not awakened and for whom worldly life is everything, if they do Nama-Japa, they can immediately get happiness, peace, ananda and live happily in their family-life; the *Psychic Being* can thus be awakened and in the course of time they will advance

on the path of Divine Realization which is the inevitable goal of life.

From the rich to the poor, the learned to the ignorant, the saint to the sinner, all types of people are suffering from social, worldly, and family-troubles. Some are worried about wealth, some are worried about illnesses of their children, about misunderstandings, quarrels and differences of opinion between brothers, mothers-in-law and daughters-in-law, fathers and sons, disputes at work, political disputes, quarrels in the family, fear of enemies, fear of serious illnesses, fear of one's death and in the case of women, fear of their husbands' and childrens' death. All these make life restless and burdensome. Those who have such anxiety and fear in great measure lose their balance of mind and some, unable to withstand it, commit suicide. They live a life full of sorrows and difficulties. If such people take the help of Nama-Japa, *Ma*, and aspire with a firm determination to do Nama-Japa always, then with Nama-Japa, they will immediately get peace and happiness and will be freed from difficulties and obstacles.

When fear and worries come regarding any event, when there are problems which we are not able to solve, or any incident which causes mental worry, then immediately start *Ma-Nama-Japa* and along with it surrender the fear, anxiety, restlessness or any other obstacle and hindrance at the feet of The Mother. In other words, along with Nama-Japa one should think: "I offer this at Thy feet, You transform it and solve this problem." If Nama-Japa is done with this attitude, then worries,

fear, anxiety and sorrow will go away, peace will be established, one will get from within the sure indication for the solution of complicated problems, and difficulties will be overcome easily. There will be no quarrels and opposition in the house of a person who does Nama-Japa in this manner. Brothers in a joint family will not separate from one another. Goodwill will prevail between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law. They will be honored in the society as an ideal family.

Quarrels, arguments and oppositions take place due to ego and selfishness. Ego and selfishness give rise to jealousy and hostility. But due to the influence of Nama-Japa our ego and selfishness and the adverse forces are gradually purified; they are enlightened by Nama-Japa. Ignorance and darkness are gradually transmuted by the light of Nama-Japa; and by the light and power of devotion and knowledge, our petty ego and selfishness cannot act.

The Sanskrit letter म (Ma) is *chandra-bija* (like ananda – see also page 63) and the letter अ (a) is *agni-bija* (like fire). With the Nama-Japa of म (Ma), ignorance as well as all the results of wrong doings will be burnt into ashes, and Ananda, Peace, Equanimity - all these Divine Qualities - will shine forth, then one remains in peace and happiness and wishes for the good and welfare of others. Because of this, the home turns into a spiritual ashram.

Only by Nama-Japa can one live peacefully and happily at home, advancing on the path towards the goal of Divine Realization. In the past, it was not possible to have this kind of ideal families in large numbers. Now the

Supramental Power is doing the work of transformation. Sadhaks, who have accepted transformation as the aim of their life, are now progressing on the path of yoga. The influence of the *Supramental Power* of transformation is working in the earth atmosphere. Because of the influence of the *Supramental Force*, those who will not take up sadhana now for the transformation of mind, life and body, but who do Nama-Japa only for living a peaceful and happy family-life, can achieve this. They will form ideal families in large numbers, and then the suffocating indiscipline, injustice, untruth and falsehood prevailing in the family, society, country and the world will gradually diminish. Consequently, this will help the progress of sadhaks who are doing sadhana, having accepted transformation as the aim of their life. The more the sadhaks progress, the more will peace and order in ideal households, in the society and in the country increase. Therefore all should do Nama-Japa.

NAMA-JAPA CAN REMOVE OBSTACLES AND DANGERS

It has been said that the transformation of mind, life and body is a very difficult task because their nature and movements like lust, anger, etc. do not want to be transformed. As soon as the *Supramental Force* touches the sadhak or he advances a little on the path of yoga, peace, light, ananda, knowledge descend from above in a little measure into the sadhak's mind, life and body;

then his lower movements of lust, anger, greed, attachment, ego, selfishness, jealousy, enviousness, depression, mechanical thoughts, unwillingness to change, inertia, laziness, illness, etc. come forward one after another or in twos or threes to resist the work of transformation. The Divine Power does not allow all the adverse forces to attack the sadhak at the same time. As much as the sadhak can tolerate and surrender to the Divine, in that proportion the Divine Force touches him. Besides this, because of our outward behavior, misunderstandings or differences arise sometimes with others. Fear of disease and death and other types of fears attack some sadhaks and make them disturbed or restless. If the sadhak remains conscious of these attacks and always repeats Mother's name, *Ma*, and along with it keeps the attitude: "I am Yours, I surrender all these enemies at Thy feet" and wills and endeavors to do Nama-Japa quickly, then he can do so and the difficulties will go away. While doing Japa, the tongue and lips may move but there should be no sound. In spite of doing Japa quickly, the breathing process will not be disturbed. If Japa is done with the attitude of surrender, then mechanical thoughts cannot intervene. If such an attitude of surrender remains, Mother's Power will protect the sadhak like a little child. Hostile attacks will cause no harm to the sadhak. Faith and dependence on Nama-Japa and The Mother's Power will increase.

Those sadhaks whose faith and confidence in The Mother are not perfect, whose sincerity for surrender is weak, who do not continuously repeat *Ma*-Nama-Japa, and who do not remain alert towards the attacks of lust, anger, ego and selfishness and allow them scope, their minds are

affected by the attacks of these hostile forces; and if the pressure becomes intolerable, instability perplexes these sadhaks, and they are upset by it. It becomes very difficult to be free from such types of obstacles. For some, this type of condition becomes very dangerous.

But if the sadhak remains conscious and alert, not allowing the attacks by relying on The Mother and doing *Ma-Nama-Japa*, then he can easily become free from the attacks of the hostile forces. By *Nama-Japa*, The Mother's Force helps in a very concrete manner and indicates the way to free oneself from the clutches of the hostile forces.

Ma-Nama-Japa has to be done continuously. Along with *Japa* one has to think: "I am Yours, I am surrendering these adverse circumstances at Thy feet." The impact of and the obstacles posed by the attack are reduced by this kind of *Japa*. After some time the obstacle is completely transformed.

By overcoming an obstacle in this way, the sadhak's interest, love and faith in *Nama-Japa* increase, and his reliance on The Mother's Force gets stronger. Also the sadhak's inner strength, fearlessness, courage and patience increase. By faith and reliance on The Mother, and by maintaining an attitude of surrender along with doing *Nama-Japa*, the obstacles and hindrances in the sadhana of transformation are reduced to a great extent, and the sadhak will not be afraid of obstacles which may come in the future. The sadhana which would otherwise take many years can thus be done in comparatively less time.

By keeping an attitude of surrender along with doing Nama-Japa, the influence of the *agni-bija* (like fire) of The Mother's name, *Ma*, will slowly burn the power of the adverse forces into ashes and will gradually transform them. Gradually adverse thoughts become less. By remaining conscious and doing Nama-Japa with an attitude of surrender, the passage of adverse thoughts gets blocked. When wrong thoughts, fear and anxiety are absent, then there will be no harmful pressure on the brain of the sadhak. If this much is done, then the sadhak obtains a strong foothold on the path of sadhana. Disease and other obstacles do come during the process of physical transformation, but because of The Mother's all-powerful blessings which are always protecting the sadhak, he does not become disturbed or depressed by these attacks. On the contrary, remaining more and more engrossed in Nama-Japa, he surrenders himself at the feet of The Mother.

Question: The Mother said that Sri Aurobindo did not give any mantra ("Sri Aurobindo gave none"), but Sri Aurobindo has written about Japa at several places in the epic poem *Savitri*, *The Synthesis of Yoga* and in *Letters on Yoga*, and has also said that the mantra of this yoga is the name of The Mother or His name along with The Mother's name. I am reproducing here some extracts from words of Sri Aurobindo about Nama-Japa:

"As a rule the only *mantra* used in this Sadhana is that of the Mother or of my name and the Mother's."¹³

A MANTRA:

13 Sri Aurobindo, On Himself, Cent. Edn., Vol.26, p.511

“OM Sri Aurobindo Mira.

Open my mind, my heart, my life to your Light, your Love, your Power.

In all things may I see the Divine.”¹⁴

Sri Aurobindo gave to some sadhaks the mantra:

“OM Anandamayi Chaitanyamayi Satyamayi Parame.”

Here only a few extracts from Sri Aurobindo on Nama-Japa have been reproduced but in His works He has written about Nama-Japa and mantra-Japa in many places and also to several sadhaks.

SRI AUROBINDO ON NAMA-JAPA

“Any name, any form, any symbol, any offering has been held to be sufficient if there is the consecration along with it...”¹⁵

“There is, of course, a third way, the reliance on the power of the mantra or name in itself;”¹⁶

“The name of the Divine is usually called in for protection, for adoration, for increase of bhakti, for the opening up of the inner consciousness, for the realization of the Divine in that aspect. As far as it is necessary to work in the subconscious for that, the Name must be effective there.”¹⁷

“Namajapa has a great power in it.”¹⁸

14 *ibid*, p.512

15 Sri Aurobindo, *The Synthesis of Yoga*, Cent. Edn., Vol.20, p.75

16 Sri Aurobindo, *Letters on Yoga*, Cent. Edn., Vol.23, p745

17 *ibid*, p746

18 *ibid*, p.746

“A psychic fire within must be lit into which all is thrown with the Divine Name upon it.”¹⁹

“Here must the traveller of the upward way –
For daring Hell’s kingdoms winds the heavenly route –
Pause or pass slowly through that perilous space,
A prayer upon his lips and the great Name.”²⁰

“Arousing consciousness in things inert,
He imposed upon dark atom and dumb mass
The diamond script of the Imperishable,
Inscribed on the dim heart of fallen things
A paean-song of the free Infinite
And the Name, foundation of eternity,”²¹

“A key to a Light still kept in being’s core,
The sun-word of an ancient mystery’s sense,
Her name ran murmuring on the lips of men
Exalted and sweet like an inspired verse”²²

“They sang Infinity’s names and deathless powers
In metres that reflect the moving worlds,”²³

“Usually the Mother’s name has the full power in it; but in certain states of consciousness the double Name may have a special effect.”²⁴ (The double name – *Sri AurobindoMira*) (Above question contd.): Despite the fact that Sri Aurobindo spoke so much about Japa, The Mother said, “Sri Aurobindo gave no mantra.” What is the significance of this statement of The Mother? Kindly explain it clearly.

19 Sri Aurobindo, *The Synthesis of Yoga*, Cent.Edn.,Vol.20, p.155

20 Sri Aurobindo, *Savitri*, Cent. Edn., Vol.28, Bk.2, Canto 7, p.210

21 *ibid*, Bk.?, Canto 8, p.232

22 *ibid*, Cent. Edn., Vol.29, Bk.4, Canto 2, p.367

23 *ibid*, BK.4, Canto 4, p.383

24 Sri Aurobindo, *On Himself*, Cent. Edn., Vol.26, p.512

Answer: Sri Aurobindo said, “the only *mantra* used in this Sadhana is that of the Mother or of my name and the Mother’s”.²⁵

This is the mantra of this yoga. Apart from this, Sri Aurobindo has written about Japa at various places. At that time, sadhana was in such a stage that there was no special need to do mantra-Japa. That is why Sri Aurobindo did not put so much stress on it. Rather according to The Mother, Sri Aurobindo said that one should be able to do all the work without having to resort to external means. Thereafter The Mother again said: “Had He reached the point where we are now, He would have seen that the purely psychological method is inadequate and that a japa is necessary, because only japa has a direct action on the body.”²⁶

Within each of the old yoga sadhanas, there are many ways of practice. Accordingly, the sadhaks of different sects of one school give priority to one method while other methods, though practiced, are given a secondary importance.

Although Sri Aurobindo had spoken about Japa and written mantras, the power in Japa to influence the body had not been awakened or activated because the *Supramental Force* had not yet descended at that time. For this reason, Sri Aurobindo did not give the most important place to Nama-Japa, but to surrender and aspiration. This has been made clear in the book *The Mother*.

25 *ibid*, p.511

26 Mother’s Agenda, 1951-60, Vol.1, p.301

In 1950, Sri Aurobindo brought down the *Supramental Force* into His body and then left His body. After that, The Mother reached such a level of transformation that She gave foremost importance to Japa in sadhana. She said that Japa was inevitable for the transformation of the body. Besides this, it has been written that The Mother used to do Nama-Japa in Her childhood. The Mother Herself has said that when Sri Aurobindo was present in His body, She used to do Japa of *Oh Lord*, referring to Sri Aurobindo, whenever She was facing any difficulties or obstacles, and by this Japa all obstacles and difficulties disappeared in a short time. But after Sri Aurobindo left His physical body, whenever She would repeat this Japa of *Oh Lord*, She was, in effect, addressing Herself; for this reason She gave up this Japa.

The Mother has said that Sri Aurobindo gave no mantra, though He has written so many things about Nama-Japa. Although The Mother Herself had been doing Nama-Japa earlier, while the physical transformation was in process, She stated in 1959 that She had discovered an easy method for transformation: "I had to find the method all alone, to find my mantra by myself."²⁷

What The Mother may have wanted to point out is that all the sayings of Sri Aurobindo regarding Nama-Japa, and The Mother's doing of Nama-Japa, were meant as a help in sadhana in order to overcome all sorts of hindrances and obstacles. But these secrets – that the Japa is inevitable

27 *ibid*, p.301

for the physical transformation and that it acts directly on the body and that the sadhana of many years can be accomplished in a few months – had not been revealed at that time. Those secrets were discovered by The Mother Herself. Before that, transformation of the body had not begun. How then could others have known these secrets, and why should they have felt any necessity for knowing them? The purpose of The Mother’s statement was to give most importance to Nama-Japa rather than to surrender and aspiration for the transformation of the body.

Question: If Japa was not necessary at that time, and Sri Aurobindo gave first place in sadhana to aspiration, rejection, and surrender, why then did He write about Japa in so many places in His books?

Answer: In the future, at the time of physical transformation, Japa would play the most important part. This is the reason why Sri Aurobindo wrote about Japa.

All incarnations of the Divine come with a dual consciousness. When they remain in the Divine Consciousness, the entire course of action of the future is decreed by them. But all day to day work is done by them with the human consciousness. Occasionally, when it is necessary, even the day to day work is done while remaining in the Divine Consciousness. This happens rarely. For this reason Sri Aurobindo did not include Japa in practice during the period of His sadhana, but wrote about Japa, because He knew that it would be needed in the future. This was an act of His Divine Consciousness.

This can be clearly understood from the characters of Sri Rama and Sri Krishna:²⁸

It was clear to Sri Rama in His Divine Consciousness that He would be sent to the jungle for 14 years in order to kill Ravana (the king of demons) and that His wife Sita would be abducted. So, before killing Kharadusan, a demon, He told Sita: “As long as I have not killed the demons, you have to hide inside the fire.”

Sita-Devi entered the fire, leaving behind a Maya (illusion) Sita. That is why the illusory Sita entered the fire after Ravana (the king of demons) was killed, in order to remove Sri Rama’s doubt, and the real Sita emerged from the fire.

In Valmiki’s *Ramayana*, when Maricha (a demon) came in the form of a golden deer, at that time Lakshmana (Rama’s brother) said clearly: “This illusory deer is the demon Maricha.”

But in spite of hearing this, Sri Rama did not pay any attention to Lakshmana’s words and ran after the deer to kill it. Rama had previously cut asunder the canopy and the crown of Ravana who was in far-off Lanka, by shooting an arrow from the top of Suvalaya-mountain. In the same way, if He had wanted to kill the deer, He could have done so with one shot, regardless of how far away the deer would have been from Him.

But instead, He went a long way, following the deer. [And

28 Sri Rama and Sri Krishna were incarnations of the Divine (Avatars), living on earth at different points in time. Their lives are recounted in the 2 great Hindu-Epics, the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*.

when He found upon His return that Sita had been abducted], He inquired about Her from the trees, animals and birds. The Avatars come as the representatives of the human race for establishing a new Truth and Ideal; therefore they do not always remain in the Divine Consciousness but remaining in the human consciousness, they behave like human beings. This is the reason why Sri Aurobindo did not give supreme place to Japa in sadhana at that time. Also at that time, the *Supramental Power* had not yet descended upon earth. Hence, the latent power in Nama-Japa which awakens the body consciousness, illumines the body, prepares the body-cells to aspire, had not manifested. Because of the descent of the *Supramental Force*, the power which was latent in Nama-Japa has been revealed. In 1950, Sri Aurobindo brought the *Supramental Force* down to earth and left His body.

The Mother held the *Supramental Force* in Her body and carried out the work of physical transformation. She reached a stage in the process of transformation of the body where She realized that Japa was absolutely dispensable, and She accomplished 10 years of sadhana in a few months.

Question: This is difficult to understand – did Sri Aurobindo not reach this stage in sadhana which Mother had arrived at?

Answer: Sri Aurobindo had not reached that stage of transformation which the Mother had reached. The *Supramental Power* had not descended upon earth at that time and was not doing the work of physical

transformation. Without the *Supramental Force* the transformation of the body was not possible. Sri Aurobindo brought down the *Supramental Force* on earth and sacrificed His body. After that, the *Supramental Force* started the work of transformation through The Mother. Sri Aurobindo found that the *adhara* (mind, vital, body) of the sadhaks was not prepared to hold the *Supramental Force*, in the same way as the earth was not able to hold the force of the descent of the river Ganga.²⁹ Like Lord Shiva who received the first impact of the descent of Ganga, Sri Aurobindo brought down the *Supramental Force* into His body and sacrificed it. Holding this *Supramental Force* in Her body, The Mother started the work of transformation. After leaving His physical body, Sri Aurobindo remained in the subtle body and was helping The Mother with Her work of transformation. This is why Sri Aurobindo did not reach that stage of physical transformation which The Mother had reached by working with the *Supramental Force*.

Sri Aurobindo and The Mother are *Avatars* of the *Divine-Satchitananda* (Existence-Consciousness-Bliss). When the *Avatar* comes as the representative of the human race in a human body, He works to show the correct path to humanity. The *Avatar* does not do all works applying His Divine Power (*Aishwarya*). Below are given some examples from the *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*, to exemplify this point:

29 Bhagiratha, an ancient king of the solar dynasty, did Tapasya (peanance) to bring the Goddess Ganga (river Ganga) down to earth, to revive the lives of thousands of princes of his dynasty who had been burnt into ashes, due to a curse of a rishi. Lord Shiva, who was very much pleased with Bhagiratha's Tapasya, agreed to reelve the initial impact of the force of the descent of the Goddess Ganga on his head in order to save the earth from destruction.

— In the battle which was fought in Sri Lanka, Garuda came and freed Sri Rama when He was tied up with special knots made by the cobras.

— When Lakshman's heart was pierced by a lethal arrow (*Shaktibheda*, an arrow which is shot with a special power), Hanuman went to the Himalayas and brought *mrityu-sanjivani* and *bisalya-karani* (two life-saving herbs), and due to these medicines Lakshmana survived.

— Sri Krishna was defeated by Jarasandha (a demon) 20 times and had to flee from the battle field; in the end He got Jarasandha killed by Bheema.

The Divine comes always as the representative of the human race, therefore He does not apply His Divine Force in His main work of establishing the particular ideal for which He has incarnated. But all Divine Qualities and Force remain always present in the *Avatar*.

Since Sri Aurobindo become the Avatar in order to be the representative of the human race, He did not stress the importance of Nama-Japa for the physical transformation which would only take place in the future. But at the stage of body- transformation at which The Mother had arrived, only surrender and aspiration were not sufficient; The Mother found that Nama-Japa is inevitable for the transformation of the body. The Mother said: "I have done 10 years of work in a few months."

Question: Mother has done Japa of various mantras and has told us about them; then which mantra should we repeat?

Answer: We will repeat only The Mother's name, *Ma*. This one syllable *Ma* is the mantra. Sri Aurobindo has said that in this integral yoga the mantra is: "...that of the Mother or of my name and the Mother's."

The Mother Herself did Japa of various mantras at different times. When The Mother was doing Nama-Japa the sadhaks and sadhikas of the Ashram or anybody else who would come to the samadhi at that time, could hear the Japa of The Mother. The Mother used to repeat the mantra – *Om Namō Bhagavate Sri Aravindaya* – very loudly. In the schools of old yogas there are various types of mantras, but only the name is repeated always. Like the Sri Rama mantras and the Sri Krishna mantras, there are all sorts of mantras; but while the mantras are repeated for some time only, the name is repeated constantly. The Mother has told some sadhaks to repeat the mantra – *Om Namō Bhagavate* – and She Herself has repeated the above mantra for a long period.

The transformation is being done by the *Supramental Force*. The *Supramental Shakti* (Force) and *The Mother* are one and the same Principle because when we surrender to The Mother, the *Supramental Power* starts working. In *Letters on Yoga* and in many other books Sri Aurobindo has told us to surrender to The Mother. At several places in the book, *The Mother*, Sri Aurobindo has very clearly stated that one has to surrender only to The Mother. The Mother is the active (dynamic) Force of the Divine. The Mother's Shakti

and the Divine are a single inseparable Principle. When something is surrendered to The Mother, it means that it is automatically surrendered to the Divine. Sri Aurobindo has repeatedly said to surrender to The Mother alone, since She is the dynamic Force of the Divine. Since Her name is the mantra of this yoga, we have to repeat Her name.

The Mother has written many mantras and has also repeated various mantras. A sadhak can repeat any mantra which is written by The Mother. All these mantras have an influence on the body, but since the name, *Ma*, is only one syllable, it is very easy to repeat. Even when The Mother's Force starts the work of transformation in the sadhak's body, it is very easy to repeat the name, *Ma*, in that particular place of the body where The Mother's Force is working without moving the lips or the tongue.

Since The Mother did not want to repeat Her own name, She repeated the name of the Divine. For us this is not applicable. For us it is right to repeat The Mother's name. Since The Mother is the dynamic Force of the Divine, Sri Aurobindo, we surrender to Her for the transformation of our mind, vital and body; and to repeat Her name is logical, immediately effective and in accordance with the *Shastras* (scriptures).

Question: in the book, *The Mother*, we have been told to surrender to the Divine Shakti. Is The Mother of our Ashram this incarnation of the Divine Shakti? In answer to this question of one of the sadhaks of the Ashram, Sri Aurobindo said: Yes. Besides that, Sri

Aurobindo has said that The Mother of the Ashram is the *Adya Shakti* (Supreme Mother). What Sri Aurobindo has said is perfectly true, but then, if The Mother is the incarnation of the Divine Shakti, how could She not have known beforehand that Nama-Japa is inevitable for the transformation of the body? It is difficult to understand this.

Answer: Since we are human beings, it is natural to have difficulties to understand. But even the Goddess Parvati (consort of Lord Shiva) had difficulties to understand the ways of the Divine. Lord Shiva and Parvati saw Sri Rama at the time when he was wandering in the jungle, sorrow-stricken because of the separation from Sita, running hither and thither, inquiring about Sita from trees, creepers, birds and animals. Lord Shiva got down from his bull (the bull is the 'vehicle' of Lord Shiva) and offered Pranam (obeisance) to Sri Rama saying: "Jai Satchitananda Jagadisha." (Victory to the Lord Satchitananda). Hearing this, the Goddess Parvati doubted. She thought: "The words of Shiva are always just and true. However, if Rama is the *Avatar* of Satchitananda (Existence, Consciousness, Bliss)), He will not, like an ordinary person completely bereft of reason due to grief, inquire the whereabouts of Sita from trees, creepers, birds and animals." Being veiled by illusion and doubt, Parvati questioned Shiva. Lord Shiva replied: "You go and test."

Parvati assumed the form of Sita and appeared in the front of Sri Rama. Seeing Parvati in the form of Sita, Sri Rama bowed down to Her and said: "Shiva is not with you – how did you come here alone?"

The incarnations of the Divine always possess both,

the Divine Consciousness and Power, as well as the human consciousness. Since He (the Avatar) is the representative of the human race, He works from the human consciousness; but the moment He wants to act from His Divine Consciousness, He can do so. This also applies to Sri Aurobindo. Unless it is quite unavoidable, the *Avatars* do not use *Aishwarya* (Divine Power); they behave just like human beings so that man cannot understand their Divinity. The reason for this is that only if the *Avatar* works from the human consciousness, will man be able to accept His Idealism. That is why Sri Aurobindo and The Mother did sadhana like human beings and faced all sorts of obstacles and hindrances. In the initial stages of sadhana, Japa was not so necessary. At the time of the transformation of the body, Japa became necessary. The Mother realized this and wrote about it.

During the Mahabharata battle, Sri Krishna (the all omniscient) used to ask Sahadeva whenever it was necessary to know something about the future or any secret matters. It is very difficult for the mind to understand the conduct of the *Avatar*.

Question: In the old yogas, Nama-Japa was there, but nobody achieved the transformation of the body. Then what secret lies behind The Mother's word that in this yoga of transformation Japa is inevitable? Kindly explain this.

Answer: In the old yogas, the aim was not transformation and also the proper time for transformation had not yet come. The transforming

Supramental Power had not been established upon earth and the power for transformation latent in Nama-Japa had not manifested. Moreover, Nama-Japa was not done for the realization of this aim – the transformation of mind, vital and body into Divine Light and Truth – which will free the sadhak from all sorts of sorrow and suffering, disease, old age, and death. Since the hour to realize this aim had not yet arrived, the Divine Incarnations (Avatars) and Maha-Purushas (the great sages) did not come for the realization of this aim. They came only to speed up the evolution-process in order to make the goal of transformation possible. This they accomplished. When the hour had come for the transformation of the body, The Mother and Sri Aurobindo came upon earth to bring down and establish the *Supramental Force* on earth. Since the *Supramental Force* has been established on earth, the power and influence of Nama-Japa have now a direct action on the body, and The Mother Herself realized this. By this Japa, the arduous task of transformation of the body has become easy. Therefore, if we accept this aim and constantly repeat The Mother's name *Ma* with an attitude of surrender, the realization of this aim – transformation – will be comparatively easy and we will also be protected from obstacles and hindrances.

Question: The Mother has said that each sadhak will get his own mantra through an inner aspiration of his heart, or that a sadhak may spontaneously hear a mantra from within which is appropriate for him. This is not possible for the beginners. Hence, which name should be repeated as our Japa?

Answer: The mantra or name which is given by Sri

Aurobindo or The Mother, that mantra or name should be repeated. Sri Aurobindo has said: "The only Mantra used in this Sadhana is that of the Mother or of my name and the Mother's."³⁰

And He has also mentioned in some other places:

Om Anandamayi Chaitanyamayi Satyamayi Parame.

The Mother has said:

"*Sri Aurobindo Saranam mama*",

(Sri Aurobindo is my refuge);

"*Om Namō Bhagavate*";

"*Om Namō Bhagavate Sri Aravindaya*";

"*Namami Matrimirarovindou*";

"*Sri Matrimirarovindou Saranam Mama*";

"*Vijayatam Sri Matri Mirarovindou*".

Out of these a sadhak can do Japa of any name or mantra to which he feels spontaneously inclined. All these mantras and names have extraordinary power and influence, and whichever name or mantra is repeated will influence the body. But in this integral yoga, since we are surrendering to The Mother, the name, *Ma*, consisting of only one syllable is easy to repeat. Or we can regularly repeat for some time during the day: *OM Namō Bhagavate*, and *Sri Aurobindo Saranam Mama (Sri Aurobindo is my refuge)*, and the rest of the time one can repeat The Mother's name, *Ma*; or one can repeat the name which will come from within.

30 Sri Aurobindo, On Himself, Cent. Edn., Vol.26, p.511

II

OBSTACLES AND HINDRANCES

All persons in this world want happiness and peace, but because of enemies like sex, anger, greed, attachment, ego, selfishness, frustration, hopelessness, jealousy, envy, etc., which are present in their nature, they are unable to attain the happiness and peace which they want. These are the great enemies on the path of Divine Realization. Out of these, sex, anger, ego and selfishness are the most powerful. If the sadhak becomes aware of the working of these great enemies, and surrenders them at the feet of The Mother, he can then easily surrender the other enemies as well.

The sadhak can easily recognize the action of sex and anger, but it is not easy to recognize ego and selfishness. We will discuss the workings of these enemies one by one.

ANGER

Anger comes from the nature of the vital. It is extremely powerful. Anger immediately overpowers the *buddhi* (intellect). Sometimes it attacks an individual directly, sometimes it derives support from an event, and sometimes it attacks through another person. When the Divine Power or Force starts working for transformation in the spiritual seekers, then it touches all the defects and imperfections of the lower nature of the mind, vital and body in order to transform them. Like a snake which raises its hood furiously when beaten with a stick on its tail, all the dormant

imperfections in the lower nature come to the front to obstruct the Divine Power's work of transformation. At that time if the sadhak is not conscious, he will only find faults with others, or the nature and qualities of others will appear to him to be defective. He will be under the wrong impression that all others are behaving badly with him and that therefore he himself should also behave badly with others, so much so that even trifles will create controversies or quarrels. Those sadhaks who have a great temper, when they are attacked by anger, their hearts burn with it. Unless they throw these vibrations of anger to another person, they will feel abnormally restless and agitated. When they get angry with another person, they either verbally offend him or quarrel or even come down to blows. After the incident is over, the anger is appeased. If the mind has not been enlightened very much by the soul, then the sadhak thinks: "What has happened was not right, but the anger, restlessness, uneasiness and agitation which were burning in my heart would not have gone if I had not expressed my anger."

In sadhana it is a mistake to support this unhelpful conduct. The anger does not become weak, but gets stronger in this way. It comes with greater force during the next attack. This is contrary to the methods of transformation and control.

One method of transformation is: It is of no importance whether one gets angry for the right or wrong cause, or because of bad or good behavior of others. The

sadhak should think: “Anger is a hostile force, I should never encourage it.” Thinking this, one should do Nama-Japa and surrender the anger which is churning inside. It is obvious that at that time one cannot concentrate or sit quietly. Still one should call The Mother and pray to Her, one should think: “By the Force of The Mother, this anger will be transformed, and since I am Mother’s, She will certainly protect me.”

Nama-Japa should be done quickly. In this manner, it may take a long time for anger to get pacified, but if the sadhak succeeds once, this will increase his courage, patience and confidence for the next time. The second time his concentration on The Mother’s name will be easier than the first time. If The Mother’s name is repeated quickly, anger will go away comparatively faster.

Another method is: When anger comes, don’t convert it into action, tell about it to a person who can give proper advice. If that person is able to give proper advice, anger vanishes quickly and thereafter concentration, faith in The Mother, and the attitude of surrender increase. The sadhak gets rid of depression and sorrow and he is able to feel the presence of The Mother, peace and ananda (bliss). It is not at all right to express the attack of any adverse force in action. If we express the attack in action, the force of the attack of the hostile power increases. Ninety-nine times out of one hundred, decisions taken in anger will be wrong; their outcome will be very bad. As long as the anger has not subsided, one should not attempt to solve any problem.

LUST

Lust and anger are both very powerful, but in comparison to anger, lust is very tricky. Anybody can easily recognize anger, but it is not easy to recognize the attack of lust.

When the desire for sex is strong and predominant in a sadhak, and if he does not have a firm determination to be free from it and to transform it, and if there is any insincerity in his will to surrender at the feet of The Mother, then an undesirable relationship between opposite sexes will develop. In the beginning stages this friendship does not appear to be wrong. The individual thinks that it is a pure relationship. If there is a longing to meet and talk again and again, and if without this the person feels sad and restless, then it is not at all a pure relationship. This, clearly and undoubtedly, is a deceptive relationship of vital sexuality. If the sadhak is not cautious, it opens the path for a fall. This is the trick of lust, which comes from within.

If it is a pure psychic relation, an individual wishes for the welfare of the other and extends help when need arises, but he does not get anxious or restless when he does not meet or talk with the other person.

Whether a relation between opposite sexes is pure or not, a sadhak should always remain cautious right from the beginning. Whatever is needed for the work, only that contact should be kept and only that much talking should be done. If the sadhak is not careful from the beginning, in many cases the relationship becomes eventually impure.

Those who once sincerely take refuge in The Mother are protected by Her at every step. She does not allow the sadhak to slip from the path easily. Indications, obstacles and hindrances come repeatedly from The Mother to make the sadhak conscious, but if he fails to become conscious, then he falls into the clutches of desires. Yet even in that state, The Mother's Power helps him to become conscious. If the sadhak consciously calls to The Mother, remembering Her name with much sincerity from the core of his heart, The Mother will certainly protect him; but this is quite difficult. If the sadhak does not care for The Mother's protection and does not have a strong central conviction for the spiritual path, then he may return to the ordinary life. But if a sadhak has once sincerely taken refuge in the Divine and accepted this path of spirituality, if he returns to the worldly life, the Divine does not completely forsake him. The sadhak will suffer much in his family life from sorrow and difficulties, then either in this life or in the next life, he will again come to the spiritual path. The spiritual sadhana which has been achieved in this life will not be lost.

Those sadhaks who have a strong central conviction, free from desires and attachments and who have taken refuge in The Mother like a small child they also will be attacked by lust and anger and other enemies of the lower nature because until the body is transformed, all these enemies like lust, anger, ego and selfishness remain inside the sadhak. Besides this, when the Divine Power starts the work of transformation, She touches the lower nature for this transformation. As soon as these enemies of the lower nature are touched by the Divine Power, they immediately come to the front to obstruct Her work. To the extent the

sadhak is able to bear, the Divine Power allows the lower nature to come to the front for transformation. In fact, the obstacles and hindrances caused by the adverse forces help the sadhak to advance. If the sadhak remains conscious and does not encourage the attacks of the adverse forces, but surrenders them at the feet of The Mother, repeating Her name, then The Mother will certainly protect him. The Mother is always waiting to save the sadhak. As soon as the sadhak's surrender becomes candid, straight-forward, without desire and attachment, The Mother's Power protects him.

EGO AND SELFISHNESS

Ego and selfishness are both very close friends because one cannot remain without the other. Ego is one with the body. An individual with name and form is 'ego'. As long as the body is not transformed, ego will remain there. Those yogis and saints who remain in the *Brahma-Consciousness* (Divine Consciousness) having separated body, mind and vital, if they come to the physical consciousness then ego, selfishness, lust and anger, all these enemies, may attack them if they get the opportunity.

Generally, all these enemies such as lust, anger, greediness, attachment, ego, selfishness, are not equally strong in everybody. Usually one of the enemies is predominant in a person: in some lust is stronger, in some anger, and in some others greediness and attachment are stronger. In the person in whom ego and

selfishness are strong, lust and anger may be less or, in some cases, even inactive. But this is not a general rule; in some, all the enemies may be strong.

Generally, persons who do charitable work for the upliftment of the country, powerful and influential leaders, skillful, dedicated and competent doctors, famous physical scientists, and expert engineers, all may have a strong ego but lust, anger and other enemies of the lower nature may not be active. None of these persons become aware of their ego. The individual can become conscious of his ego if he lives in the inner spiritual consciousness. Otherwise, the ego is so deceptive that it is not possible to understand its tricky actions with the help of the mind.

It is inevitable for the sadhaks of Sri Aurobindo's yoga of transformation to become conscious of the ego so that it can be transformed. Unless the sadhak is conscious of the ego he cannot surrender. Hostile forces create various types of obstacles and hindrances on our path. Without surrender, the *Divine Supramental Power* will not be able to start the work of transformation. In other words, if the sadhak is not conscious of his ego, he cannot progress in sadhana. The easiest way for a sadhak to recognize the ego is to completely surrender himself at the feet of The Mother and remember Her name, *Ma*, as soon as he enters the path of this yoga. This indicates the central resolve for surrender.

If the *Psychic Being* (the immanent Divine in the individual) of the sadhak awakens, he will feel inclined to start sadhana for the realization of the Divine. Depending upon the choice of the *Psychic Being*, the sadhak will either do sadhana remaining in the family or he will renounce

family life. But without the awakening of the *Psychic Being*, one cannot have a firm determination for the realization of the Divine. The *Psychic Being* awakens in the individual either in the course of evolution, or by the Grace of the Divine, or by coming into contact with spiritual sadhaks and organizations, or after reading spiritual scriptures. The *Psychic Being* is a spark of the Divine and Truth and Eternal Being. It has all Divine Qualities such as Supreme Bliss, Supreme Peace, Supreme Knowledge, Supreme Kindness and Compassion and Equanimity. *The Psychic Being* exists in man in order to manifest the Divine in the physical body, the mind and the vital. As soon as it awakens, the individual makes a central resolve to realize the Divine and begins to do sadhana. But the *Psychic Being* does not always remain in front. Until the sadhak reaches the goal, ego, selfishness, desire and attachment of the mind and vital come into the path of sadhana for transformation and repeatedly cover the *Psychic Being*. Some sadhaks who have consciously taken the central resolve to realize the Divine, also simultaneously make the central resolve to surrender their being completely at the feet of The Mother. Other sadhaks make a central resolve to realize the Divine and start sadhana, but they are not conscious about surrendering their entire being. After progressing a little in sadhana they become conscious and make the central resolve to surrender, offer, consecrate, and sacrifice their mind, vital and body at the feet of the Divine. At that time, ego, selfishness, lust, anger, greed, desire, pride, envy, passion, etc. remain in the mind, vital and body. The will, not to put one's

desires and passions into actions and the resolve to surrender them at the feet of The Mother, is called central surrender.

In some sadhaks the Psychic Being awakens and they accept the spiritual path for the realization of the Divine, but since they are not so sincere to realize the Divine, they cannot remain conscious of their central resolve and surrender. When these sadhaks progress on the path of sadhana, they too, after more or less time, will become conscious of the central resolve and will surrender for the realization of the Divine.

In all types of sadhaks the lower nature remains, regardless of whether the sadhak is conscious of the central resolve or central surrender from the beginning or after some time. Those sadhaks who have not mixed any desires and passions with their central conviction and central surrender can be sure from the beginning to reach the goal. Those sadhaks whose central resolve and central surrender are mixed up with the passions and desires of becoming a great sadhak, of earning name and fame and acquiring power, may have to face such obstacles and hindrances in sadhana, which will purify their central resolve and surrender; or else, by nourishing their passions and desires, these sadhaks may forsake the aim of realizing the Divine and return to the ordinary life for some or many years. In ordinary life these sadhaks undergo much suffering, restlessness, and all types of struggles. Life becomes unbearable. It becomes miserable with sorrow and suffering like the life of a moth which burns itself in the flame of a lamp. Though they suffer terribly from all these pains, there is no way to be free from them. If at that time they call The

Mother intensely from the core of their heart, asking Her to save them, and surrender themselves completely, relying on The Mother with faith, then they will be saved from their condition and return to the path of spirituality. Otherwise the present life of the sadhak will end in pain and sorrow.

Those whose central aim and central surrender are not mixed up with their desires and passions will also face all these obstacles and hindrances at the time of transformation of the mind, vital and body; but since they remain conscious, they surrender everything at the feet of The Mother and the Divine Shakti always helps them on the way towards their goal by protecting them from all sorts of obstacles and hindrances.

III

HARMONY IN COLLECTIVE WORK

Previously it has been said that by surrendering, the *Supramental Force* will transform the sadhak's mind, life and body into the Divine Truth; then the sadhak will be completely free from sorrow and suffering, ignorance, old age, sickness and death. He will be guided by the *Supramental Power*. When some individuals have been transformed in this way, then they will be called Superman. During the process of evolution, at the time when the human race came into existence upon earth, animals continued to exist; similarly *Superman* will come into existence with the human race being on earth at the same time.

Since the *Supramental Consciousness* and the *Supramental Race* will be established on earth by this yoga, the transformation of the nature of the universe becomes inevitable. Since the transformation of the universal nature is bound to take place, the sadhana of this yoga is not personal but collective. For this reason, the goal of transformation is not possible by the sadhana of one individual. A large number of sadhaks are needed: study circles, ladies' study circles, student-societies, relic centers and integral schools will be the media for spreading this yoga. Sadhaks will come together in these places to do work as sadhana and surrender it at the feet of The Mother. In this yoga, the establishment of all these organizations

and their collective works is the inevitable sadhana in order to reach the goal. Despite the fact that sadhaks have different natures, harmony should be kept in collective works. This becomes the strong foundation or base for every individual sadhak in this yoga. If a sadhak can do this from the beginning of his sadhana, then he can easily hook his “elephantine ego” with just the help of a small iron instrument. [In India, the rider of an elephant controls this big animal only with a small iron hook.] By the Grace of the Divine Mother the arduous sadhana of transformation will be very easy for them. But since we have not understood the secret of this, we clash with each other and create mountain-like obstacles on the way of progress in our sadhana. If a sadhak, as soon as he enters the path of sadhana, makes a firm resolve to surrender himself at the feet of The Mother and repeats Her name, then by Her Grace he can understand the secret of it, and under any type of adverse circumstances, he will remain calm and quiet being busy with his sadhana.

CAUSES OF DISHARMONY

When the sadhak begins the sadhana, the essence and the nature of the mind, vital and body such as ego, selfishness, lust, anger, greed, attachment, ignorance etc. are not transformed. Complete transformation will take many years and at the beginning of his sadhana, the sadhak remains in the mental consciousness which is full of imperfections and defects. The mental consciousness has only half-knowledge. Since it does not have complete and perfect knowledge, each

individual has a different nature and angle of vision. The same thing will be judged differently by each individual according to his own consciousness; and according to his own ideas and judgement, the person will believe that he is right and that the judgements of others are wrong. Because of these differences in opinions and judgements, we cannot maintain harmony with one another.

Another reason for disharmony is that a person who remains in the mental consciousness decides what is right or wrong, just or unjust according to the standards of morality. He cannot understand correctly what is true and what is false, what is just and what is unjust, from the view-point of Truth. He is neither able to deal with another individual according to that person's nature, nor is he able to keep up harmony. Such works which establish harmony and bring improvement to life are in reality true and just works, even if they be considered unjust from the social and moral point of view. Those actions and behavior that create divisions and become obstacles on the path of spiritual progress, are unjust. The sadhak cannot understand this secret without having the spiritual Truth-Consciousness.

For this reason controversies arise in the family, the society, the whole world and in spiritual organizations. Unless the sadhak has gone beyond the mental consciousness and judges every situation, thing or event from the spiritual viewpoint, until then, the way for controversy remains open in the spiritual path.

At the beginning of sadhana, the sadhak neither has spiritual vision, nor can he decide anything from the higher consciousness. The sadhak begins his sadhana and does collective work with all the imperfections and defects such

as ego, selfishness, lust, anger, greed, ignorance, jealousy and hostility. If from the beginning, the sadhak surrenders himself at the feet of The Mother like a small child and repeats Her name, *Ma*, with firm determination, then by the Grace of The Mother as well by the power of Her name, his mind will be illumined; he can then understand that to do the Mother's work is his sadhana. By working for The Mother, the *Supramental Force* and its influence will be spread in the world. In this way many more people will become conscious of the transforming *Supramental Force* and accept this yoga. By the working of the *Supramental Force* through the sadhaks, the dark adverse forces in the world will be transformed. This is because the mind, vital and body of the sadhak come from universal nature and remain linked with it. In proportion to the number of people who take refuge in the *Supramental Shakti*, the power of the adverse forces like ignorance, darkness and injustice will decline. The obstacles and hindrances on the sadhak's path of sadhana will be less, proportionate to the decrease of the power of the adverse forces in the world.

For this reason, it is absolutely necessary to open study circles, centers for sadhana, integral schools, install relics and spread The Mother's and Sri Aurobindo's Idealism. When the sadhak understands this secret, he will give top-most priority to all these works as his sadhana for the realization of the aim and regard himself as a servant or an instrument or a dependent of The Mother, and he will remain on guard against the activities of the ego and selfishness.

If the sadhak works with this mental attitude and surrenders his work at the feet of The Mother, he gets an opportunity to reach a higher consciousness, going beyond the mental consciousness; and instead of considering a situation, event or thing from the mental-moral stand-point, he considers it from a spiritual point of view.

The work of the higher consciousness and the spiritual approach are as follows: If a person speaks or does something unfavorable or is insulting in any manner, then if by opposing this person one gets inside oneself the reactions of anger, jealousy, envy and enmity, which will create hindrances or obstacles in Mother's organizations, then it is better to tolerate the person instead of opposing him.

In the same manner, if any situation or event or work is considered to be unjust or wrong according to the moral law, or if out of opposition, obstacles take place in Mother's work and give rise within to ego, selfishness, anger, envy, jealousy, enmity and resistance (the work of the dark forces), then in such a situation, opposition will not be able to bring about the right solution; therefore in this case the sadhak should not oppose.

A person who does good works in the world by which the country and society are benefited, will have to face besides fame also insults and blame, obstacles and hindrances for the work he is doing. But in this death-bound world, as the *Supramental Consciousness* and the race of *Superman* are going to be established and this world will be turned into a Divine Heaven and will become free from all sorts of pain, injustice and falsehood, those sadhaks who

take part in this great work and help to spread the Truth by working in Mother's organizations, cannot at all escape all sorts of obstacles, hindrances, honor as well as dishonor. By keeping the aim in front without caring for pain and sorrow, honor and dishonor, the sadhak will advance towards the goal by surrendering and remaining in the protection of The Mother. One's ego gets influenced by honor and dishonor, praise and blame. The ego is a great obstacle in sadhana or in the works for The Mother as a form of sadhana. To overcome honor, dishonor, praise, and blame means to overcome ego. If one can do this, one can make great progress in sadhana.

Those who do Mother's work under the influence of ego and selfishness for name and fame, will do such work which will bring name and fame, and they will oppose all insults. This creates hindrances in Mother's work. They do not get name and fame. Just as one cannot catch one's shadow, similarly if one desires name and fame, one will not be able to get it; but if one does not want it, it follows one like a shadow.

In some sadhaks, the desire for name and fame is hidden in them at the beginning of sadhana. But if they have firm faith and dependence on The Mother, they can recognize the deception of ego and selfishness, and in spite of having the desire for name and fame and power within them, they do not put it into action. This means that they do not adopt any pretense or deceptive ways to acquire name, fame, power and position.

THE MOTHER'S INSPIRATION FROM WITHIN

Those persons who have not joined The Mother's organizations sincerely or who have remained outside the centers and have not given top-most priority in their lives to The Mother's work as their sadhana, may apply various clever ways and tricks to bring the organization into their control in order to satisfy their own ego, power and convenience. If they cannot satisfy their self-interest and ego through this work, they do not hesitate to destroy the organization. One has to deal with such persons according to the situation. The best method is to receive The Mother's inspiration from within and act accordingly. In spite of his ego, selfishness, lust, anger and other defects, if the sadhak does not put these into action and aspires to surrender them at the feet of The Mother and if in complicated situations he aspires with deep faith and confidence in The Mother to get inspiration from within, then he will certainly get inspiration and certain indications from Her. The more intense the aspiration and call, the sooner one will get inspiration from within. Even if the intensity of the aspiration is not so strong, if one wants and waits for The Mother's inspiration, one will sooner or later receive it. Sadhaks should act according to this inspiration. At that time one should not encourage any thoughts or any other sources of help. If you are guided by your mind and take the help of others, to be successful in your work then The Mother's inspiration from within will be obstructed. The inspiration which comes from within is true and free from all doubt. One does not doubt whether it has come from some other force.

If ego and selfishness are active in a person, he can

get inspiration from within from an adverse force in disguise of The Mother; but if the sadhak like a small child takes refuge at the feet of The Mother and repeats Her name, Ma, the inspiration of the adverse forces cannot come. If they come, they will be clearly recognized.

The safest and most harmless way to practice this arduous integral yoga, is to surrender completely at the feet of The Mother. We have to do Her work most sincerely with complete dependence on Her. We have to do Nama-Japa always. If you do this much, The Mother will always save Her organizations. She helps the sadhak to reach his goal protecting him from all sorts of obstacles, hindrances and attacks of adverse forces.

ATTACKS IN THE PROCESS OF TRANSFORMATION

The aspiration of some sadhaks is intense right from the beginning of sadhana. Their *Psychic Being* awakens. The sadhak gets much joy in sadhana. When some time has passed in this condition, the Divine Power descends into the *adhara* (mind-vital-body), and it touches the latent, impure parts of the sadhak's mind and vital for transformation. As soon as they get the touches of the Divine Power, then jealousy, envy, hatred, hostility, lust, anger, greed, attachment, depression, hopelessness, inertia, *tamas*, etc. come forward one by one to prevent the transformation and stand as a veil between the *Psychic Being* and the mind and vital. The adverse force uses

them as instruments. At times, all these attack the sadhak from within, at other times through other persons or various events. If the sadhak is not conscious, he cannot recognize these attacks and he makes the other person or event the subject of his opposition and blame. In other words, he wants to resolve the matter by applying external means, convinced that the other person or event are the cause of all this. Or he thinks, "Such and such a person has done injustice to me." He wants to oppose this by external means, and he may think: "It will be safer if I leave this place where such things are happening." As long as the sadhak has such types of ideas and takes the help of such external means, the attack of the adverse force will continue to increase. If the sadhak does not become conscious, the adverse force may drag him away from the path of sadhana, at least for a certain length of time.

If the sadhak's mind is enlightened by the Divine Power or the Psychic Being, he will not think that the place or person are the cause for the obstruction which he faces. He can clearly understand that: "as my own mind, vital and body are weak, I am encouraging all these outer attacks." In other words, if someone speaks to the sadhak badly or roughly, justifiably or unjustifiably, then if his vital is strong and pure, it will not create turmoil within him. He realizes that: "these outer attacks have taken place to transform my weak parts, therefore the Divine Power did not prevent them" and thus remaining calm and quiet, he will try to prevent reactions from taking place within him and surrender the imperfect parts at the feet of The Mother. If one acts in this manner, the force of the attack of the enemies will decrease quickly, the sadhak's faith in and

dependence on The Mother's Power will increase greatly, and he will surrender with enthusiasm. Such awakening in sadhana takes a long time to develop; but if the name, *Ma*, is always repeated, the sadhak's mind, vital and body become pure in a comparatively shorter time and the *Psychic Being* awakens. Then The Mother's Power descends and starts the work of transformation in the sadhak's *adhara* (mind-vital-body). If the sadhak's mind is enlightened by the *Psychic Being* and the Divine Power, he can easily understand the tricks of the anti-divine forces, and he can overcome the mental consciousness and ascend to the level of the higher consciousness.

On the path of sadhana, the adverse forces attack the sadhak in various ways. For example, many types of diseases may appear, or the sadhak may misunderstand the behavior of his friends as being that of enemies; sometimes this may also be true. At that time the sadhak finds darkness all around him, and for some time the sadhak may feel an aversion towards life and yoga. The sadhak then becomes confused because of depression, hopelessness, fear and restlessness; but if he has taken refuge in the name of The Mother, *Ma*, he can remain unshaken and remember Her name without being perturbed by the powerful attack. If one remembers The Mother's name with much sincerity and faith, then The Mother's Power will manifest itself within one minute. All kinds of darkness, depression and hopelessness disappear, and the sadhak's faith and reliance on the Divine and the love and eagerness for Nama-Japa become

more intense. He does not fear future attacks. Keeping faith and reliance on The Mother, the sadhak will joyfully march forward on the path of yoga despite the recurrence of obstacles and dangers. Surrender, and The Mother's Nama-Japa become a strong and impenetrable armor for the sadhak protecting him from all sorts of obstacles and dangers from the beginning of sadhana.

The lower nature of the mind, vital and body: laziness, sleep, tamas, lust, anger, greed, attachment, ego, selfishness, jealousy, hostility, all these become hindrances on the path for the realization of the Divine, - which is the sadhak's aim of life. From the beginning of creation, these forces have been working independently and continuously according to their own nature and quality. Due to the development of intelligence, man controls himself under certain circumstances to avoid being observed by others, but most people use their intelligence as instruments to secretly fulfill their undesirable actions without being seen by others. All these adverse forces do not want to change their nature and qualities and do not want to remain under the control of the higher Power. When the sadhak advances on the path of Divine Realization, these forces apply their full power to obstruct him and constantly try to pull the sadhak down using their strength, methods and tricks. When the asuric (demoniac) power gets an opportunity, it uses the lower nature of the sadhaks as its instrument and attacks the sadhak. Since these things are very powerful in human beings, all sadhaks of the old yoga separated the soul (jiva-atma) from the body, mind and vital and thus achieved Mukti (liberation), Nirvana (impersonal Divine),

or Divine Realization. Since they found it to be impossible to have victory over all these adverse forces, they left them as they were.

In Sri Aurobindo's yoga, the mind, vital and body and their nature and qualities will be transformed into Divine Principles, and as a result of this, this death-bound world will be turned into a Divine Heaven. Though up till now these powers were invincible, they cannot remain so before the *Supramental Shakti*. They will be transformed by the *Supramental Power* into Divine Light and Truth. None of these forces want to be transformed. Therefore they are always alert and active and try to continuously attack the sadhak in order to pull him down from the path which leads to his goal. They are much more powerful and tricky than the sadhak's own power. It is impossible for the sadhak to confront them in this fight with his own strength. That is why the sadhaks of this yoga take refuge in The Mother's Power from the beginning of the sadhana to the end and always repeat The Mother's name, *Ma*, surrendering at Her feet. The sadhana for the sadhak is to surrender himself completely at The Mother's feet, remaining always conscious. The mind, vital and body will be transformed by the *Supramental*- that is The Mother's *Force*. Therefore the sadhak should always remain conscious and without consenting to the adverse impulses and their actions on the mind, vital and body, he should surrender them at the feet of the Divine Shakti; then the *Supramental Force* will start the work of transformation.

If the sadhak does not surrender willingly, the *Supramental Force* will not forcibly transform him, but if the sadhak aspires for The Mother's Power to help him to surrender, The Mother's Force will help him and even keeps waiting to give this help. Sri Aurobindo has stated in the second chapter of His book *The Mother*:

“In yoga also it is the Divine who is the Sadhaka and the Sadhana; it is his Shakti with her light, power, knowledge, consciousness, Ananda, acting upon the Adhara and, when it is opened to her, pouring into it with these divine forces that makes the Sadhana possible. But so long as the lower nature is active the personal effort of the Sadhaka remains necessary.”³¹

Question: Sri Aurobindo has stated in many places in his books that only the Divine Shakti or the *Supramental Mother's Power* can do the transformation of mind, vital and body of the sadhak. But the extract from the book *The Mother* which has been quoted above: “the Divine is the Sadhaka and the Sadhana” appears to be contradictory. What is the real meaning of it?

Answer: You can get the real meaning in the same chapter. If you read the whole chapter, you can clearly understand the meaning of it. It has been stated very clearly that “in this yoga the Divine is the Sadhaka and the Sadhana” because it is the Divine Shakti “with her light, power, knowledge, consciousness, Ananda, acting upon the Adhara and, when it is opened to her, pouring into it with these divine forces ...”

31 Sri Aurobindo, *The Mother*, Cent. Edn., Vol.25, p.6

All these Divine Forces make the sadhana possible. This work of sadhana is being done by the Divine Force. Therefore Sri Aurobindo has said that in this yoga the Divine is the sadhaka and the sadhana.

Question: In this yoga mind, vital and body will be transformed. Therefore if you surrender the actions of the mind, vital and body, the *Supramental Force* will start the transforming work. A developed mind becomes ready for transformation. Is it correct to think that sadhaks should study?

Answer: If your idea was true, Sri Aurobindo, the founder of the integral yoga, would have first of all established many schools for different types of studies when he started the Ashram. Although Sri Aurobindo came to Pondicherry in 1910, the Ashram was only established by The Mother in 1926 after She had come here for the second time. She started the Ashram school in 1943 to give education to small children. Up till now no school has been started for sadhaks.

According to your words, if study is necessary for the development of the mind, then music, dance, art, architecture, painting, sculpture etc. must be required for the development of the vital. If the sadhak has to learn all these things, then he will take thousands of lives to reach his goal. This happens in the process of evolution. But in yoga we do not have to sprinkle water on each leaf of a tree, we pour the water at the root of the tree so that the whole tree remains alive; in the same way, if we surrender the mind, vital and body, they will be transformed into the principles of Truth and Light by the

Supramental Power. Through transformation, the person will be united with the Divine Consciousness, and no deficiency or imperfection will remain in him. For this reason Sri Krishna has said in the Gita: "I am the Supreme Knowledge amongst all knowledge." Nothing remains to be known if one has this Supreme Knowledge; therefore study is not essential for transformation. Only by Nama-Japa and surrender, the *Supramental Force* starts working. For this reason we have to aspire, do Nama-Japa and surrender in this yoga.

Question: It is said that the work should be surrendered; studying is also work. If we surrender our study, will this enable the *Supramental Force* to start the work of transformation?

Answer: If you think that studying means work, which should be surrendered to the Divine, then why do you not surrender the work which has been given to you. [This refers to sadhaks who live in the Ashram or in a center]. If you prefer to study, leaving or neglecting the work which you were given, then you are not keeping an equal attitude of sadhana for both these works. You have got your own liking and preference for studying, this personal interest is attachment and desire. It is clear that desire and Divine can never co-exist. If you have more interest in studying, neglect, slackness, dislike and disinterest will certainly come into your allotted work as obstacles. Disinterest in the Divine Work means that the sadhak will not have interest and intensity in Nama-Japa, aspiration and surrender for the realization of the Divine. One cannot have an equally strong interest in two things. If the organization suffers, it means that The Mother's work

is neglected since The Mother's work is done through the organization. For this reason, to leave or neglect the work which has been given by the organization, in order to study, is certainly against sadhana.

If you do not neglect the allotted work in any way and also do not have the least attachment for studying and do not give much importance to it, then if one reads only some books as sadhana to realize the goal and surrenders this to The Mother, it is correct.

IV

It has been said before that at the beginning of sadhana of Sri Aurobindo's integral yoga, one can always repeat The Mother's name, *Ma*, with the help of the tongue. By this, it becomes very easy for the sadhak to aspire and surrender his whole being at the feet of The Mother. The sadhak can recognize the inner resistances of his own being and the obstacles and disguised forms of attacks of the adverse forces, and he surrenders them at the feet of The Mother. So the sadhak should repeat The Mother's name consciously, constantly, carefully and sincerely. He should not stop Nama-Japa for a moment.

THE METHODS OF NAMA-JAPA

One should do Nama-Japa until one goes to sleep and also immediately after getting up in the morning. One has to do Nama-Japa constantly at all times, when you wash your face, clean your teeth, go to the bathroom, take bath, wash you clothes, when you eat, drink or talk with others. For this, one has to remain always careful, conscious and firmly determined. One has to remain alert before washing one's mouth, at that time the tongue cannot do Japa, so one has to do it silently in the mind. One has to be conscious not to stop Nama-Japa until the moment when one drinks some water or takes some food. At the time of drinking water or taking food, one will not be able to repeat The Mother's name with the help of the lips and tongue,

but Nama-Japa will still continue. One will also have to remain conscious before talking to anybody. When one listens to others, one has to continue Nama-Japa. If one has to say anything, speak only what is necessary. As soon as one stops talking one has to start again doing Nama-Japa. Only through Nama-Japa can the sadhaks of all levels be conscious right from the beginning of sadhana. A sadhak doing Nama-Japa constantly with the help of the tongue, with aspiration, can save himself from the clutch of the most powerful and invincible enemy – mechanical thoughts. Nama-Japa should be done constantly. Japa is very essential in all types of yogas and has been given a very high place in all types of sadhana. But in the integral yoga of Sri Aurobindo, no other process of sadhana can help you except Nama-Japa of *Ma*, aspiration and surrender; because in this yoga The Mother is the sadhak and the sadhana. The transformation of the sadhak's mind, vital and body into Light and Truth is entirely impossible without The Mother's Power. The clear proof for this is that up till now, the mind, vital and body of a sadhak have not been transformed into Divine Truth and Light by any yoga or any sadhana, nor has a sadhak become completely free from death, disease and old age. The ignorance, falsehood and wrong doings which exist in the world are still gradually increasing, but when the mind, vital and body of the sadhaks will be transformed, then falsehood, injustice and wrong doings will disappear from the world. This death-bound world will turn into celestial Heaven.

THE EFFECT OF MA-NAMA-JAPA

Sri Aurobindo has said: “As a rule the only *mantra* used in this sadhana is that of the Mother or of my name and the Mother’s.”

The Mother has said: “Only Japa has a direct action on the body.” Mother has also said that by Japa only, She has done ten years of sadhana in a few months.

The meaning of mantra is: The key of sadhana, the realization in sadhana, or the realization of the *Istha* (form of ones chosen Deity) in its outer form through sadhana.

Through the repetition of a particular name, the sadhak can realize the living form of the God whom he worships. For this reason the *Istha* (form) and the name are inseparable. One can certainly realize the *Istha* by Nama-Japa. In the outside world also, the name and form are inseparable. For example, if a warrant is issued in the name of a particular person, even without having seen him or without recognizing him, the person is compelled to appear. If one calls a person by his name even if one does not know him, the person is bound to respond. So also, in certain mantra-rituals, the God whose name is repeated, appears there.

In this yoga, transformation will be done by the *Supramental- Mother’s Force*. The Supreme Shakti is one and the same Truth. From the point of view of sadhana, the presence of The Mother is absolutely necessary from the beginning of sadhana. By doing *Ma-Nama-Japa*, The Mother’s Power will descend into the sadhak and start the

work of transformation. The action of transformation itself is the presence of The Mother. When the work of transformation starts, the *Psychic Being* will awaken more and more, surrender will increase and aspiration will become intense. From this point of view, The Mother's Nama-Japa is very essential and useful in sadhana.

By the Japa of *Ma*, the arduous path of transformation becomes easy. But there is another reason why this difficult sadhana becomes easy by Nama-Japa:

It has been stated in the scriptures, that the Sanskrit letter म (Ma) itself is *chandra-bija*. Chandram (the moon) contains amrita (nectar). It is the symbol of coolness, peace and ananda (bliss). If one repeats this letter, peace, ananda and devotion get established in the *adhara* (mind, vital, body) of the sadhak. All these enemies which are obstacles in the sadhak's life, such as depression, greed, attachment, lust and anger, cannot easily become active. The sadhak gets encouragement, happiness and interest in sadhana. Obstacles become comparatively less; and as the sadhak's *adhara* becomes purified, the Divine Power descends into his mind, vital and body and starts the work of transformation.

If one adds the Sanskrit letter अ (a) to the letter म (Ma) then it becomes मा (*Ma*); अ (a) itself is *agni-bija* (like fire). Since the letter अ of the word मा (Ma) has come from the agni-bija, by the Nama-Japa of *Ma*, the sadhak's *Sanchita* (the results of actions from previous lives), *Kriyama* (the results of actions from this life), *Prarabdha* (the present destiny), all these results of our unfavorable

actions will be burnt away. When results of wrong actions done by the sadhak in life after life from the beginning of the world get destroyed and the *Psychic Being* awakens, then the veil of ignorance, attachment and illusion is lifted from the mind, vital and body. The intellect becomes clear and pure by the influence of the *Psychic Being*. The sadhak can then recognize the disguised forms of the adverse forces which attract him and try to lure him away from the path of sadhana.

Along with the constant repetition of *Ma-Nama-Japa*, one should keep some regular fixed time for meditation. If at the time of meditation one's consciousness enters deep inside the heart, then the Divine Shakti starts working; at that time if the sadhak *does not feel* The Mother's working along with the *Ma-Nama-Japa* at the place where the Divine Shakti is working or at the place where the sadhak is concentrating, then one can stop Japa for some time. If The Mother's name is repeated at the place where the Divine Shakti is working, then the Divine Power can work quickly and no thoughts will be able to come.

MEDITATION

Mother and Sri Aurobindo have written in various books about meditation in Sri Aurobindo's integral yoga which is either above the head, or between the two eyebrows (*Ajna-Chakra*), or in the heart center. But it has been said that meditation above the head or in the heart center is more beneficial. If one meditates above the head,

the sadhak's consciousness opens and rises higher and higher. Then Peace, Power, Light, Knowledge and Ananda, all these Powers of The Mother, descend into the *adhara* (mind, vital, body of the sadhak) and the Divine Shakti starts the work of transformation in the *adhara*.

If one meditates in the heart center the *Psychic Being* awakens and prepares mind, vital and body and the whole being for the descent of the Divine Power, and it aspires for the surrender of the whole being at the feet of The Mother. The *Psychic Being* guides the sadhak to take the straight path towards the goal. For this reason it is essential to meditate in the heart.

In the book *Questions and Answers*, The Mother has stated about meditation:

“Concentrate in the heart. Enter into it; go within and deep and far, as far as you can. Gather all the strings of your consciousness that are spread abroad, roll them up and take a plunge and sink down.”

“A fire is burning there, in the deep quietude of the heart. It is the divinity in you – your true being. Hear its voice, follow its dictates.”³²

There are other centers of concentration; for example, one above the crown of the head and another between the eye-brows. Each has its own utility and will give you a particular result. But the Central Being lies in the heart which is the source of all central movements, all the impulses and actions of transformation.

If one cannot meditate according to the above method, then in the initial stage of meditation one can look with open eyes at a photograph of The Mother or a combined photo of The Mother and Sri Aurobindo; after some time close your eyes and try to see the photo with closed eyes. If you can see it clearly after closing your eyes, then imagine this picture in the heart, and imagine yourself sitting in front of it. Try to concentrate on it, and also be determined to go deeper. If you cannot go deeper, then remain there. If many thoughts come, do not allow them to enter inside, but keep them out. Do so for 5 minutes. If you can concentrate in this way easily, then you can try to meditate for a longer time. If thoughts come, along with the meditation on The Mother's photo, repeat Nama-Japa very quickly with the tongue. If you do this no thoughts will come. If you practice sincerely, then concentration will automatically come. At that time The Mother's photo will not remain, then the Divine Power such as Peace, Ananda and Knowledge will descend from above and the consciousness will come out of the heart and go to any limb or any other place in the body or act in any particular way as it likes. The sadhak should not obstruct it in the least in its action, but should allow it to work there with full consent and determination. Try not to create any obstacles in its movements. This is the work of transformation of the Divine Power. In this yoga, the descent of the Divine Power and the work of transformation cannot be done by meditation only. It has been said previously that the key and foundation of this yoga are surrender and aspiration. By repeating The Mother's name *Ma*, aspiration and surrender become easy, and the mind, vital and body slowly become pure. Then the Psychic Being awakens. When it awakens, it aspires. By its aspiration, the Divine

Shakti descends from above and begins the work of transformation in the being of the sadhak. In the initial stage, the work of transformation of the Divine Shakti is slow. At that time, thoughts from without enter the mind and obstruct the work of transformation of the Divine Power. Without being identified with the thoughts, if the sadhak at that time repeats The Mother's name, *Ma*, silently without moving the lips or tongue along with the action of the Divine Shakti wherever it is working, then the thoughts will not disturb the sadhak and the work of the Divine Shakti will be more intense.

Mother has said: "I have also come to realize that for this sadhana of the body, the Mantra is essential ... because only Japa has a direct action on the body."

Question: But for us who want an integral realization, are all these mantras and this daily Japa really a help, or do they shut us in?

The Mother's answer:

"It gives discipline. It's an almost subconscious discipline of the character more than of thought."

"Especially at the beginning, Sri Aurobindo used to shatter to pieces all moral ideas (you know, as in the *Aphorisms* for example). He shattered all those things, he shattered them, really shattered them to pieces. So there's a whole group of youngsters here who were brought up with this idea that 'we can do whatever we want, it doesn't matter in the least!' – that they need not bother

about all those concepts of ordinary morality. I've had a hard time making them understand that this morality can be abandoned only for a higher one ... So, one has to be careful not to give them the Power to soon.

“It's an almost physical discipline. Moreover, I have seen that the japa has an organizing effect on the subconscious, on the inconscient, on matter, on the body's cells – it takes time, but by persistently repeating it, in the long run it has an effect. It is the same principle as doing daily exercises on the piano, for example. You keep mechanically repeating them, and in the end your hands are filled with consciousness – it fills the body with consciousness.”³³

“The Mother and Sri Aurobindo are my refuge.”³⁴

“To the most stubborn goes the victory. When I started my Japa one year ago, I had to struggle with every possible difficulty, every contradiction, prejudice and opposition that fills the air. And even when this poor body began walking back and forth for Japa, it used to knock against things, it would start breathing all wrong, coughing, it was attacked from all sides until one day I caught the enemy and said, ‘Listen carefully, you can do whatever you want, but I'm going right to the end and nothing will stop me, even if I have to repeat this Mantra ten crore times.’ The result was really miraculous, like a cloud of bats flying up into the light all at once. From that moment on, things started going

33 Mother's Agenda, Vol.1, p.420-421

34 The Mother, White Roses, Jan. 1967

better.”³⁵

(one crore = 10 millions)

THE GREATNESS OF NAMA-JAPA

The Mother has given foremost place to Nama-Japa in the yoga of transformation. She said that for the transformation of the body surrender and aspiration are not adequate: ...”that the purely psychological method is inadequate and that a Japa is necessary, because only Japa has a direct action on the body...I have done ten years of work in a few months.”³⁶

Again The Mother has said:

“In fact you can immediately see the difference between those who have a mantra and those who don't. With those who have no mantra, even if they have a strong habit of meditation or concentration, something around them remains hazy and vague. Whereas the Japa imparts to those who practice it a kind of precision, a kind of solidity, an armature, they become galvanized as it were.”³⁷

Again The Mother has said:

“I have seen that the Japa has an organizing effect on the sub-conscious, on the inconscient, on matter, on the body's cells – it takes time, but by persistently repeating it, in the long run it has an effect. It is the same

35 Mother's Agenda, Vol.1, p.356

36 Mother's Agenda, 1951-60, Vol.1, p.301

37 *ibid*, p.301

principle as doing daily exercises on the piano, for example. You keep mechanically repeating them, and in the end your hands are filled with consciousness – it fills the body with consciousness.”³⁸

From the words of The Mother it is understood that She has given the most important and foremost place to Nama-Japa for the transformation of the body because by Nama-Japa a sadhak can easily remain always conscious, and the difficult surrender and aspiration become possible with little effort; concentration comes automatically, and with little effort and will, the sadhak can be free from the difficult, unavoidable mechanical thoughts. By the power of Nama-Japa the sadhak can happily advance with enthusiasm and interest on the path towards the realization of his goal, secure against all obstacles, difficulties, dangers, sorrow and pain, mental depression, etc. and attacks of the adverse forces. Therefore it is absolutely necessary for us to do Nama-Japa constantly.

38 Mother's Agenda, Vol.1, p.420-21