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I Am That

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[Excerpts Compiled by Avery V9]

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Do Your Part: Effort and No Effort

M: Find your timeless being and your action will bear it testimony. Did you find it?

Q: No, I did not.

M: Then what else have you to do? Surely, this is the most urgent task. Ch 95 4

Trust me. ... You are the pure awareness that illumines consciousness and its infinite content. Realize this, and live accordingly. Or go within inquiring “what am I” or focus your mind on “I am” which is pure and simple being. Ch 10 7

You either let yourself be carried by the river of life and love represented by your Guru, or you make your own efforts, guided by your inner star. ... Most take the hard way, the way of intelligence and understanding; of discrimination and detachment (*viveka-vairagya*). Ch 66 10

Q: Little can be said in words, much more conveyed in silence.

M: First words, then silence. One must be ripe for silence.

...There is no other way out of misery, which you have created for yourself through blind acceptance, without investigation. Suffering is a call for inquiry, all pain needs investigation. Don't be lazy to think. Ch 45 11

Deliberate daily exercise in discrimination between the true and the false and renunciation of the false is meditation. There are many kinds of meditation to begin with, but they all merge finally into one.

Q: Please tell me which road to self-realisation is the shortest.

M: No way is short or long, but some people are more in earnest and some are less. Ch 16 188

M: Meditation will help you to find your bonds, loosen them, untie them and cast your moorings. When you are no longer attached to anything, you have done your share. The rest will be done for you.

Q: By whom?

M: By the same power that brought you so far, that prompted your heart to desire truth and your mind to seek it. It is the same power that keeps you alive. You may call it Life or the Supreme. Ch17 CH 16? 3

Q: Is the search for it worth the trouble?

M: Without it all is trouble. If you want to live sanely, creatively and happily and have infinite riches to share, search for what you are. 48

Q: Are you not making realisation the result of practice? Practice operates within the limitations of physical existence. How can it give birth to the unlimited?

M: Of course, there can be no causal connection between practice and wisdom. But the obstacles to wisdom are deeply affected by practice. Ch 76 5

Q: In the beginning we may have to pray and meditate for some time before we are ready for self-enquiry.

M: If you believe so, go on. To me, all delay is a waste of time. You can skip all the preparation and go directly for the ultimate search within. Of all the Yogas it is the simplest and the shortest. 71 138

You cannot see yourself as independent of everything unless you drop everything and remain unsupported and undefined. Once you know yourself, it is immaterial what you do, but to realise your independence, you must test it by letting go all you were dependent on. Ch 95

Q: At what point does one experience reality?

M: ... Reality is not an event, it cannot be experienced. It is not perceivable in the same way as an event is perceivable. If you wait for an event to take place, for the coming of reality, you will wait for ever, for reality neither comes nor goes.

But the very longing and search for reality is the movement, operation, action of reality. All you can do is to grasp the central point, that reality is not an event and does not happen and whatever happens, whatever comes and goes, is not reality. See the event as event only, the transient as transient, experience as mere experience and you have done all you can. Then you are vulnerable to reality, no longer armoured against it, as you were when you gave reality to events and experiences. Ch 42 141

Q: What is the right use of mind?

M: Fear and greed cause the misuse of the mind. The right use of mind is in the service of love, of life, of truth, of beauty.

Clarify your mind, purify your heart, sanctify your life -- this is the quickest way to a change of your world. Ch 32 77

Q: Is there no need of effort then?

M: When effort is needed, effort will appear. When effortlessness becomes essential, it will assert itself. You need not push life about. Just flow with it and give yourself completely to the task of the present moment, which is the dying now to the now. For living is dying. Without death life cannot be.

Get hold of the main thing that the world and the self are one and perfect. Only your attitude is faulty and needs readjustment. 65

This process or readjustment is what you call sadhana. You come to it by putting an end to indolence and using all your energy to clear the way for clarity and charity. But in reality, these all are signs of inevitable growth. Don't be afraid, don't resist, don't delay. Be what you are. There is nothing to be afraid of. Trust and try. Experiment honestly. Give your real being a chance to shape your life. You will not regret. Ch 33 32

Spiritual practice is will asserted and re-asserted. Who has not the daring will not accept the real even when offered. Unwillingness born out of fear is the only obstacle. Ch 38 70

Realize that no ideas are your own; they all come to you from outside. You must think it all out for yourself; become yourself the object of your meditation.

The effort to understand yourself is Yoga. Be a yogi, give your life to it: brood, wonder, search, till you come to the root of error and to the truth beyond the error.

Save all your energies and time for breaking the wall your mind has built around you.

Believe me, you will not regret it. Ch 81 66

Unless you make tremendous efforts, you will not be convinced that effort will take you nowhere. The self is so self confident, that unless it is totally discouraged, it will not give up. Mere verbal conviction is not enough. Hard facts alone can show the absolute nothingness of the self-image. Ch 100 180

Earnestness

After all, it is earnestness that is indispensable, the crucial factor. Sadhana is only a vessel and it must be filled to the brim with earnestness, which is but love in action. For nothing can be done without love. Ch 93

You need both clarity and earnestness for self-knowledge. You need maturity of heart and mind, which comes through earnest application in daily life of whatever little you have understood. There is no such thing as compromise in yoga. Nothing can block you so effectively as compromise, for it shows lack of earnestness, without which nothing can be done. Ch 31 121

It is neither difficult, nor a protracted process; earnestness is the only condition of success. Ch 16

Q: It seems too good to be true.

M: Don't be misled by the simplicity of the advice. Very few are those who have the courage to trust the innocent and the simple.

To know that you are a prisoner of your own mind, that you live in an imaginary world of your own creation, is the dawn of wisdom. To want nothing of it, to be ready to abandon it entirely, is earnestness. Only such earnestness, born of true despair, will make you trust. Ch 83 74

Q: What arouses interest?

M: Earnestness, the sign of maturity.

Q: And how does maturity come about?

M: By keeping your mind clear and clean, by living your life in full awareness of every moment as it happens, by examining and dissolving one's desires and fears as soon as they arise. Ch 101 191

M: The real world is beyond the mind's ken; we see it through the net of our desires, divided into pleasure and pain, right and wrong, inner and outer. To see the universe as it is, you must step beyond the net. It is not hard to do so, for the net is full of holes. 78
... Look at the net and its many contradictions. You do and undo at every step. You want peace, love, happiness and work hard to create pain, hatred and war. You want longevity and overeat, you want friendship and exploit. See your net as made of such contradictions and remove them -- your very seeing them will make them go. Ch 4

Meditation; I Am

Q: What is the Sadhana for achieving the natural state?

M: Hold on to the sense “I am” to the exclusion of everything else. When thus the mind becomes completely silent, it shines with a new light and vibrates with new knowledge. It all comes spontaneously, you need only hold on to the “I Am”

... You will recognize that you have returned to your natural state by a complete absence of all desire and fear. After all, at the root of all desire and fear is the feeling of not being what you are. Ch 69 33

Disregard the pointers and be aware of what they are pointing to.

Let go your attachment to the unreal and the real will swiftly and smoothly step into its own

you have done your share. The rest will be done for you.

It all comes spontaneously, you need only hold on to the “I Am” 33

There is nothing to seek and find, for there is nothing lost. Relax and watch the “I am.” Reality is just behind it. Keep quiet, keep silent; it will emerge, or, rather, it will take you in. Ch 99 41

M: All I can say truly is: 'I am', all else is inference. But the inference has become a habit. Destroy all habits of thinking and seeing. The sense 'I am' is the manifestation of a deeper cause, which you may call self, God, reality or by any other name. The 'I am' is in the world; but it is the key which can open the door out of the world. The moon dancing on the water is seen in the water, but it is caused by the moon in the sky and not by the water. Ch 44

M: If you want to know your true nature, you must have yourself in mind all the time, until the secret of your being stands revealed.

Q: Why should self-remembrance bring one to self-realisation?

M: Because they are but two aspects of the same state. Self remembrance is in the mind, self-realisation is beyond the mind. The image in the mirror is of the face beyond the mirror. Ch 32 39

Just disregard. Look through. Remember to remember: 'whatever happens -- happens because I am'. All reminds you that you are. Take full advantage of the fact that to experience you must be. You need not stop thinking. Just cease being interested. It is disinterestedness that liberates. Don't hold on, that is all. C51

Therefore find yourself, for in finding that you find all. Everybody is glad to be. But few know the fullness of it. You come to know by dwelling in your mind on 'I am', 'I know', 'I love' -- with the will of reaching the deepest meaning of these words. Ch 51

Q: Who is the conscious living being?

M: Your questions contains its answer: a conscious living being is a conscious living being. The words are most appropriate, but you do not grasp their full import. Go deep into the meaning of the words: being, living, conscious. Ch 87 38

Q: Your words “beyond the mind: give me no clue.

M: While looking with the mind, you cannot go beyond it. To go beyond, you must look away from the mind and its contents.

Q: In what direction am I to look?

M: All directions are within the mind! I am not asking you to look in any particular direction. Just look away from all that happens in your mind and bring it to the feeling “I Am.” The “I am” is not a direction. It is the negation of all direction. Ultimately even the 'I am' will have to go, for you need not keep on asserting what is obvious. Bringing the mind to the feeling 'I am' merely helps in turning the mind away from everything else. Ch 65 15

M: Best is the simple feeling 'I am'. Dwell on it patiently. Here patience is wisdom; don't think of failure. There can be no failure in this undertaking.

Q: My thoughts will not let me.

M: Pay no attention. Don't fight them. Just do nothing about them, let them be, whatever they are. Your very fighting them gives them life. 37

When the 'I am myself' goes, the 'I am all' comes. When the 'I am all' goes, 'I am' comes. When even 'I am' goes, reality alone is and in it every 'I am' is preserved and glorified. Diversity without separateness is the Ultimate that the mind can touch. Beyond that all activity ceases, because in it all goals are reached and all purposes fulfilled. 49 57

All you need is to be aware of being, not as a verbal statement, but as an ever present fact. The awareness that you *are* will open your eyes to *what* you are. It is all very simple. First of all, establish a constant contact with yourself, be with yourself all the time. Into self-awareness all blessings will flow. Ch 98 22

Meditation; Just Be

Q: So far I have been following you. Now what am I expected to do?

M: There is nothing to do. Just BE. No climbing mountains and sitting in caves. I do not even say: “be yourself,” since you do not know yourself. Just be. Ch 69 18

Be like that infant, instead of trying to be this or that, be happy to be. You will be a fully awakened witness of the field of consciousness. But there should be no feelings and ideas to stand between you and the field. Ch 47 18

Q: But what can I do here and now?

M: You can be aware of your being -- here and now.

Q: That is all?

M: That is all. There is nothing more to it. Ch 30 23

M: The Self is near and the way to it is easy. All you need doing is doing nothing.

Q: Yet I found my sadhana very difficult.

M: Your sadhana is to be. The doing happens. Just be watchful. Where is the difficulty in remembering that you are? You are all the time. Ch 51 19

Q: To know myself must I practise awareness?

M: There is nothing to practise. To know yourself, be yourself. To be yourself, stop imagining yourself to be this or that. Just be. Let your true nature emerge. Don't disturb your mind with seeking. Ch 55 20

Keep steadily in the focus of consciousness the only clue you have: your certainty of being. Be with it, play with it, ponder over it, delve deeply into it, till the shell of ignorance breaks open and you emerge into the realm of reality.

Q: Is there any causal link between my focussing the 'I am' and the breaking of the shell?

M: The urge to find oneself is a sign that you are getting ready. The impulse always comes from within. Ch 58 124

Q: How can I just be? Changes are inevitable.

M: Changes are inevitable in the changeful, but you are not subject to them. You are the changeless background, against which changes are perceived.. Ch 69 144

It is a matter of actual experience that the self has being independent of mind and body. It is being -- awareness -- bliss. Awareness of being is bliss. Ch 46

Meditation; Quiet Mind

Q: To know perfectly I need a perfect mind.

M: A quiet mind is all you need. All else will happen rightly, once your mind is quiet. As the sun on rising makes the world active, so does self-awareness affect changes in the mind. In the light of calm and steady self-awareness inner energies wake up and work miracles without any effort on your part. 65 43

M: When the mind is kept away from its preoccupations, it becomes quiet. If you do not disturb this quiet and stay in it, you find that it is permeated with a light and a love you have never known; and yet you recognise it at once as your own nature. Once you have passed through this experience, you will never be the same man again; the unruly mind may break its peace and obliterate its vision; but it is bound to return, provided the effort is sustained; until the day when all bonds are broken, delusions and attachments end and life becomes supremely concentrated in the present. 129

Q: What difference does it make?

M: The mind is no more. There is only love in action.

Q: How shall I recognise this state when I reach it?

M: There will be no fear. Ch 65 15

When I say: remember 'I am' all the time, I mean: 'come back to it repeatedly'. No particular thought can be mind's natural state, only silence. Not the idea of silence, but silence itself. When the mind is in its natural state, it reverts to silence spontaneously after every experience, or rather, every experience happens against the background of silence. Ch 51 44

M: Whatever you may have to do, watch your mind. Also you must have moments of complete inner peace and quiet, when your mind is absolutely still. If you miss it, you miss the entire thing. If you do not, the silence of the mind will dissolve and absorb all else. Ch 47 42

Meditation: Allow Everything To Be;

Q: What is meditation and what are its uses?

M: As long as you are a beginner certain formalised meditations, or prayers may be good for you. But for a seeker for reality there is only one meditation -- the rigorous refusal to harbour thoughts. To be free from thoughts is itself meditation.

Q: How is it done?

M: You begin by letting thoughts flow and watching them. The very observation slows down the mind till it stops altogether. Once the mind is quiet, keep it quiet. Don't get bored with peace, be in it, go deeper into it. 12

Q: I heard of holding on to one thought in order to keep other thoughts away. But how to keep all thoughts away? The very idea is also a thought.

M: Experiment anew, don't go by past experience. Watch your thoughts and watch yourself watching the thoughts. The state of freedom from all thoughts will happen suddenly and by the bliss of it you shall recognise it. Ch 48

Q: I seem to have a clear idea of what needs be done, but I find myself getting tired and depressed and seeking human company ...

M: Do what you feel like doing. Don't bully yourself. Violence will make you hard and rigid. Do not fight with what you take to be obstacles on your way. Just be interested in them, watch them, observe, enquire. Let anything happen -- good or bad. But don't let yourself be submerged by what happens. Ch 48

Q: How do I get at it?

M: You need not get at it, for you are it. It will get at you, if you give it a chance. Let go your attachment to the unreal and the real will swiftly and smoothly step into its own. Stop imagining yourself being or doing this or that and the realisation that you are the source and heart of all will dawn upon you. With this will come great love which is not choice or predilection, nor attachment, but a power which makes all things love-worthy and lovable. Ch 1 45

You are always seeking pleasure, avoiding pain, always after happiness and peace. Don't you see that it is your very search for happiness that makes you feel miserable? Try the other way: indifferent to pain and pleasure, neither asking, nor refusing, give all your attention to the level on which 'I am' is timelessly present. Soon you will realise that peace and happiness are in your very nature and it is only seeking them through some particular channels, that disturbs. Ch 51 17

Turn Away

M: The main thing is to be free of negative emotions -- desire, fear etc., the 'six enemies' of the mind. Once the mind is free of them, the rest will come easily. Just as cloth kept in soap water will become clean, so will the mind get purified in the stream of pure feeling. When you sit quiet and watch yourself, all kinds of things may come to the surface. Do nothing about them, don't react to them; as they have come so will they go, by themselves. All that matters is mindfulness, total awareness of oneself or rather, of one's mind. Ch 48
16

Q: How do I go about it in practice?

M: Whenever a thought or emotion of desire or fear comes to your mind, just turn away from it.

Q: must I not use effort?

M: It has nothing to do with effort. Just turn away, look between the thoughts, rather than at the thoughts. Ch 72 13

Turn away from your desires and fears and from the thoughts they create and you are at once in your natural state.

Q: No question of reconditioning, eliminating mind, changing?

M: Absolutely none. Leave your mind alone, that is all. Don't go along with it. After all, there is no such thing as mind apart from thoughts which come and go obeying their own laws, not yours. They dominate you only because you are interested in them. It is exactly as Christ said: "Resist not evil." By resisting evil you merely strengthen it. Ch 72
14

M: Watch your thoughts as you watch the street traffic. People come and go; you register without response.

Do not struggle with your memories and thoughts; try only to include in your field of attention the other, more important questions, like 'Who am I?' 'How did I happen to be born?' 'Whence this universe around me?'. 'What is real and what is momentary?' No memory will persist, if you lose interest in it, it is the emotional link that perpetuates the bondage. Ch 51

At present your being is mixed up with experiencing. All you need is to unravel being from the tangle of experiences. Once you have known pure being, without being this or that, you will discern it among experiences and you will no longer be misled by names and forms. Ch 46 29

Even the sense of “I am” is composed of the pure light and the sense of being. The “I” is there even without the “am”. So is the pure light there whether you say “I” or not. Become aware of that pure light and you will never lose it. The being-ness in being, the awareness in consciousness, the interest in every experience—that is not describable, yet perfectly accessible, for there is nothing else. Ch 44 31

Try to be, only to be... Allot enough time daily for sitting quietly and trying, just trying, to go beyond the personality, with its addictions and obsessions. Don't ask how, it cannot be explained. Ch 98 21

The world is made of rings. The hooks are all yours. Make straight your hooks and nothing can hold you. Give up your addictions. There is nothing else to give up. Stop your routine of acquisitiveness, your habit of looking for results and the freedom of the universe is yours. Be effortless....

Rely entirely on your clarity of thought, purity of motive and integrity of action. You cannot possibly go wrong. Go beyond and leave all behind. Ch 51 109

Instead of searching for what you do not have, find out what is it that you have never lost. Ask: 'who desires?' Let each desire bring you back to yourself. Ch 34

Use every opportunity to remind yourself that you are in bondage, that whatever happens to you is due to the fact of your bodily existence. Desire, fear, trouble, joy, they cannot appear unless you are there to appear to. Yet, whatever happens, points to your existence as a perceiving centre. Disregard the pointers and be aware of what they are pointing to. It is quite simple, but it needs be done. What matters is the persistence with which you keep on returning to yourself. Ch 48 28

Look within diligently; remember to remember that the perceived cannot be the perceiver. Whatever you see, hear or think of, remember—you are not what happens, you are the one to whom it happens. Ch 9 34

Meditation: Inquiry

Look at yourself in total silence, do not describe yourself. Look at the being you believe you are and remember—you are not what you see. “This I am not—what am I” is the movement of self-inquiry. Resolutely reject what you are not, till the real Self emerges in its glorious nothingness. Ch 100 **8**

Q: I can only investigate the mind with the mind.

M: By all means use your mind to know your mind. It is perfectly legitimate and also the best preparation for going beyond the mind. Being, knowing and enjoying is your own. First realise your own being. This is easy because the sense 'I am' is always with you. Then meet yourself as the knower, apart from the known. Once you know yourself as pure being, the ecstasy of freedom is your own. Ch 99 **145**

Keep very quiet and watch what comes to the surface of the mind. Reject the known, welcome the so far unknown and reject it in its turn. Thus you come to a state in which there is no knowledge, only being, in which being itself is knowledge. To know by being is direct knowledge. It is based on the identity of the seer and seen. Ch 94 **155**

To be, just be, is important. You need not ask anything, nor do anything. ... It means that for the time being you are free from the obsession with 'what next'. When you are not in a hurry and the mind is free from anxieties, it becomes quiet and in the silence something may be heard which is ordinarily too fine and subtle for perception. The mind must be open and quiet to see. What we are trying to do here is to bring our minds into the right state for understanding what is real. Ch 98 **148**

Awareness and Consciousness

M: There is such a way, open to all, on every level, in every walk of life. Everybody is aware of themselves. The deepening and broadening of self-awareness is the royal way. Call it mindfulness, or witnessing, or just attention—it is for all. None is unripe for it and none can fail. Ch 67 24

Q: You use the words 'aware' and 'conscious'. Are they not the same?

M: Awareness is primordial; it is the original state, beginningless, endless, uncaused, unsupported, without parts, without change. Consciousness is on contact, a reflection against a surface, a state of duality. ... Awareness is absolute, consciousness is relative to its content; consciousness is always of something. Consciousness is partial and changeful, awareness is total, changeless, calm and silent. And it is the common matrix of every experience. Ch 11 46

Q: how does one go beyond consciousness into awareness?

M: since it is awareness that makes consciousness possible, there is awareness in every state of consciousness. Therefore, the very consciousness of being conscious is already a movement in awareness. Interest in your stream of consciousness takes you to awareness. It is not a new state. It is at once recognized as the original, basic existence, which is life itself and also love and joy. Ch 11 25

Q: Are there levels of awareness?

M: There are levels in consciousness, but not in awareness.

Awareness' reflection in the mind is love and understanding.

There are levels of clarity in understanding and intensity in love, but not in Awareness.

The source is simple and single, but its gifts are infinite.

Only do not take the gifts for the source.

Realise yourself as the source and not as the reflections. Ch 80 56

Both mind and body are intermittent states. The sum total of these flashes creates the illusion of existence. Enquire what is permanent in the transient, real in the unreal. This is Sadhana. Ch 33 9

Q: What is the purpose in reminding oneself all the time that one is the watcher?

M: The mind must learn that beyond the moving mind there is the background of awareness, which does not change. The mind must come to know the true self and respect it and cease covering it up, like the moon which obscures the sun during solar eclipse. Just realise that nothing observable, or experienceable is you, or binds you. Take no notice of what is not yourself. 52

Q: To do what you tell me I must be ceaselessly aware.

M: To be aware is to be awake. Unaware means asleep. You are aware anyhow, you need not try to be. What you need is to be aware of being aware. Be aware deliberately and consciously, broaden and deepen the field of awareness. You are always conscious of the mind, but you are not aware of yourself as being conscious. Ch 48 27

Q: As I can make out, you give distinct meanings to the words 'mind', 'consciousness', and 'awareness'.

M: Look at it this way. The mind produces thoughts ceaselessly, even when you do not look at them. When you know what is going on in your mind, you call it consciousness. This is your waking state -- your consciousness shifts from sensation to sensation, from perception to perception, from idea to idea, in endless succession. Then comes awareness, the direct insight into the whole of consciousness, the totality of the mind. The mind is like a river, flowing ceaselessly in the bed of the body; you identify yourself for a moment with some particular ripple and call it: 'my thought'. All you are conscious of is your mind; awareness is the cognisance of consciousness as a whole. Ch 48 51

Q: Everybody is conscious, but not everybody is aware.

M: Don't say: 'everybody is conscious'. Say: 'there is consciousness', in which everything appears and disappears. Our minds are just waves on the ocean of consciousness. As waves they come and go. As ocean they are infinite and eternal. Know yourself as the ocean of being, the womb of all existence. These are all metaphors of course; the reality is beyond description. You can know it only by being it. Ch 48 27, 139

Witnessing

M: You can start only from where you are. You are here and now, you cannot get out of here and now.

Q: But what can I do here and now?

M: You can be aware of your being -- here and now.

Q: That is all?

M: That is all. There is nothing more to it.

Q: All my waking and dreaming I am conscious of myself. It does not help me much.

M: You were aware of thinking, feeling, doing. You were not aware of your being.

Q: What is the new factor you want me to bring in?

M: The attitude of pure witnessing, of watching the events without taking part in them.

Ch 30 23

The person is never the subject. You can see a person, but you are not the person. You are always the Supreme which appears at a given point of time and space as the witness, a bridge between the pure awareness of the Supreme and the manifold consciousness of the person.

The source of consciousness cannot be an object to consciousness. To know the source is to *be* the source. When you realize that you are not the person, but the pure and calm witness, and that fearless awareness is your very being, you *are* the being. Ch 20 161

Q: Can there be awareness without an object of awareness?

M: Awareness with an object we call witnessing. When there is also self-identification with the object, caused by desire or fear, such a state is called a person. In reality there is only one state; when distorted by self-identification it is called a person, when colored with the sense of being it is the witness; when colorless and limitless, it is called the Supreme. Ch 79 48

Q: Can the witness be without the things to witness?

M: There is always something to witness. If not a thing, then its absence. Witnessing is natural and no problem. The problem is excessive interest, leading to self-identification. Whatever you are engrossed in you take to be real. Ch 72 55

The main point to grasp is that you have projected onto yourself a world of your own imagination, based on memories, on desires and fears, and that you have imprisoned yourself in it. Break the spell and be free. Ch 44

Shift Identity

Give up the idea of being a person, that is all. You need not become what you are anyhow. There is the identity of what you are and there is the person superimposed on it. All you know is the person, the identity—which is not a person—you do not know, for you never doubted, never asked yourself the crucial question—“Who am I?” The identity is the witness of the person and Sadhana consists in shifting the emphasis from the superficial and changeful person to the immutable and ever-present witness. Ch 86 36

Being the source of both, the self is beyond both knowledge and power. The nature of the self is pure awareness, pure witnessing, unaffected by the presence or absence of knowledge or liking. Undeceive yourself and be free. You are not a person. Ch34 50

M: All you get by waiting is more waiting. Absolute perfection is here and now, not in some future, near or far. The secret is in action—here and now. It is your behavior that blinds you to yourself.

Disregard whatever you think yourself to be and act as if you were absolutely perfect—whatever your idea of perfection may be. All you need is courage. Ch 82 59

...You are the all-pervading, all transcending reality. Behave accordingly: think, feel and act in harmony with the whole and the actual experience of what I say will dawn upon you in no time. No effort is needed. Have faith and act on it. Ch 51 60

Once you realize that the road is the goal and that you are always on the road, not to reach a goal but to enjoy its beauty and its wisdom, life ceases to be a task and becomes natural and simple, in itself an ecstasy. Ch 83 61

Freedom

Q: Are there not good desires and bad.

M: All desires are bad, but some are worse than others.

Q: Even the desire to be free of desire?

M: Desiring a state of freedom from desire will not set you free. Nothing can set you free, because you are free. See yourself with desireless clarity, that is all. Ch 21 71

Freedom means letting go. People just do not care to let go everything. They do not know that the finite is the price of the infinite, as death is the price of immortality. Spiritual maturity lies in the readiness to let go everything. The giving up is the first step. But the real giving up is in the realizing that there is nothing to give up, for nothing is your own. Ch 73 72

Rebel against your slavery to your mind, see your bonds as self-created and break the chains of attachment and revulsion. Keep in mind your goal of freedom, until it dawns on you that you are already free, that freedom is not something in the distant future to be earned with painful efforts, but perennially one's own, to be used! Liberation is not an acquisition but a matter of courage, the courage to believe that you are free already and to act on it. Ch 99 67

Complete self-surrender by itself is liberation. Ch 84 73

Accept your destiny and fulfil it -- this is the shortest way to freedom from destiny, though not from love and its compulsions. 111

To act from desire and fear is bondage, to act from love is freedom. Ch.94 , 68

Q: What is right and what is wrong?

M: Relatively, what causes suffering is wrong, what alleviates it is right. Absolutely, what brings you back to reality is right, and what dims reality is wrong. Ch 68 92

Unless you have already considered these matters carefully, listening to me once will not do. 181

Forget your past experiences and achievements, stand naked, exposed to the winds and rains of life and you will have a chance. Ch35 179

Q: Do you advise shunning pleasure and pursuing pain?

M: No, nor pursuing pleasure and shunning pain. Accept both as they come, enjoy both while they last, let them go, as they must.

Q: How can I possibly enjoy pain? Physical pain calls for action.

M: Of course. And so does Mental. The bliss is in the awareness of it, in not shrinking, or in any way turning away from it. All happiness comes from awareness. The more we are conscious, the deeper the joy. Acceptance of pain, non-resistance, courage and endurance -- these open deep and perennial sources of real happiness, true bliss.

Q: Why should pain be more effective than pleasure?

M: Pleasure is readily accepted, while all the powers of the self reject pain. As the acceptance of pain is the denial of the self, and the self stands in the way of true happiness, the wholehearted acceptance of pain releases the springs of happiness.

Q: Does the acceptance of suffering act the same way?

M: The fact of pain is easily brought within the focus of awareness. With suffering it is not that simple. To focus suffering is not enough, for mental life, as we know it, is one continuous stream of suffering.

To reach the deeper layers of suffering you must go to its roots and uncover their vast underground network, where fear and desire are closely interwoven and the currents of life's energy oppose, obstruct and destroy each other. 49

Q: How can I set right a tangle which is entirely below the level of my consciousness?

M: By being with yourself, the 'I am'; by watching yourself in your daily life with alert interest, with the intention to understand rather than to judge, in full acceptance of whatever may emerge, because it is there, you encourage the deep to come to the surface and enrich your life and consciousness with its captive energies.

This is the great work of awareness; it removes obstacles and releases energies by understanding the nature of life and mind. Intelligence is the door to freedom and alert attention is the mother of intelligence. Ch 59 49

Once you have understood that nothing perceivable, or conceivable can be yourself, you are free of your imaginations. To see everything as imagination, born of desire, is necessary for self-realisation. We miss the real by lack of attention and create the unreal by excess of imagination.

You have to give your heart and mind to these things and brood over them repeatedly. It is like cooking food. You must keep it on the fire for some time before it is ready.

Ch 94 203

CONVICTION / COURAGE 95

Q: Is not gradualness the law of life?

M: Oh, no. The preparation alone is gradual, the change itself is sudden and complete. Gradual change does not take you to a new level of conscious being. You need courage to let go.

Q: I admit it is courage that I lack.

M: It is because you are not fully convinced. Complete conviction generates both desire and courage. And meditation is the art of achieving faith through understanding. In meditation you consider the teaching received, in all its aspects and repeatedly, until out of clarity confidence is born and, with confidence, action. **Conviction and action are inseparable. If action does not follow conviction, examine your convictions, don't accuse yourself of lack of courage. Self-depreciation will take you nowhere. Without clarity and emotional assent of what use is will?**

Q: What do you mean by emotional assent? Am I not to act against my desires?

M: You will not act against your desires. Clarity is not enough. Energy comes from love -- you must love to act -- whatever the shape and object of your love. Without clarity and charity courage is destructive. People at war are often wonderfully courageous, but what of it?

The realised man lives on the level of the absolutes; his wisdom, love and courage are complete, there is nothing relative about him.

Happiness

M: Nothing can make you happier than you are. All search for happiness is misery and leads to more misery. The only happiness worth the name is the natural happiness of conscious being. Ch 66 26

You need no more experiences. The past ones are sufficient. And if you feel you need more, look into the hearts of people around you. You will find a variety of experiences which you would not be able to go through in a thousand years. Learn from the sorrows of others and save yourself your own. It is not experience that you need, but the freedom from all experience. Don't be greedy for experience; you need none. Ch 66 151

Desire by itself is not wrong. It is life itself, the urge to grow in knowledge and experience.

It is the choices you make that are wrong. To imagine that some little thing -- food, sex, power, fame -- will make you happy is to deceive yourself. Only something as vast and deep as your real self can make you truly and lastingly happy. Ch 46 108

M: True happiness cannot be found in things that change and pass away. Pleasure and pain alternate inexorably. Happiness comes from the self and can be found in the self only. Find your real self (swarupa) and all else will come with it. Ch 8

Usually you have to be sad to know gladness and glad to know sadness. True happiness is uncaused and this cannot disappear for lack of stimulation. It is not the opposite of sorrow, it includes all sorrow and suffering. Ch 94

. We seek the real because we are unhappy with the unreal. Happiness is our real nature and we shall never rest until we find it. But rarely we know where to seek it. Once you have understood that the world is but a mistaken view of reality, and is not what it appears to be, you are free of its obsessions. Only what is compatible with your real being can make you happy and the world, as you perceive it, is its outright denial. Ch 94

Compassion

M: You cannot manufacture a crisis. It must be genuine.

Q: How does a genuine crisis happen?

M: It happens every moment, but you are not alert enough. ... the immense and all pervading sorrow of existence is a constant factor in your life, but you refuse to take notice. You suffer and see others suffer, but you don't respond. Ch 86 63

M; Change the current of your desire from taking to giving. The passion for giving, for sharing, will naturally wash the idea of an external world out of your mind, and of giving as well. Only the pure radiance of love will remain, beyond giving and receiving. 79

Q: In love there must be duality, the lover and the beloved.

M: In love there is not the one even, how can there be two? Love is the refusal to separate, to make distinctions. Ch 72 211

Have patience with yourself for you are your only obstacle. The way leads through yourself beyond yourself. Ch37

M: Accept life as it comes and you will find it a blessing.

Q: I can accept my own life. How can I accept the sort of life others are compelled to live?

M: You are accepting it anyhow. The sorrows of others do not interfere with your pleasures. If you were really compassionate, you would have abandoned long ago all self-concern and entered the state from which alone you can really help. Ch 95 64

That which you are, your true self, you love it, and whatever you do, you do for your own happiness. To find it, to know it, to cherish it is your basic urge. Since time immemorial you loved yourself, but never wisely. Use your body and mind wisely in the service of the self, that is all. Be true to your own self, love your self absolutely. Do not pretend that you love others as yourself. Unless you have realised them as one with yourself, you cannot love them. Ch 46 204

My heart wants you to wake up and end your woes. But in your dream I am not interested. Enough for me to know that you must wake up. You need not bring your dream to a definite conclusion, or make it noble or beautiful; all you need is to realize you are dreaming. Ch 55

Inside out;

NM: You cannot live without action, and behind each action there is some fear or desire. Ultimately, all you do is based on your conviction that the world is real and independent of yourself. Were you convinced of the contrary, your behaviour would have been quite different. 82

Q: There is nothing wrong with my convictions; my actions are shaped by circumstances.

NM: In other words, *you are convinced of the reality of your circumstances*, of the world in which you live. Trace the world to its source and you will find that before the world was, you were and when the world is no longer, you remain. Ch 95 4

M: Your expectation of something unique and dramatic, of some wonderful explosion, is merely hindering and delaying your self-realisation. You are not to expect an explosion, for the explosion has already happened -- at the moment when you were born, when you realised yourself as being-knowingfeeling. There is only one mistake you are making: you take the inner for the outer and the outer for the inner. What is in you, you take to be outside you and what is outside, you take to be in you. The mind and feelings are external, but you take them to be intimate. You believe the world to be objective, while it is entirely a projection of your psyche. This is the basic confusion and no new explosion will set it right. You have to think yourself out of it. There is no other way. Ch 51 86

The body appears in your mind, your mind is the content of your consciousness; you are the motionless witness of the river of consciousness which changes eternally without changing you in any way. Your own changelessness is so obvious that you do not notice it. Have a good look at yourself and all these misconceptions will dissolve. Ch 44 54

Q: How difficult it is to see the world as purely mental! The tangible reality of it seems so very convincing.

M: This is the mystery of imagination, that it seems to be so real. You may be celibate or married, a monk or a family man; that is not the point. Are you a slave of your imagination, or are you not? Whatever decision you take, whatever work you do, it will be invariably based on imagination, on assumptions parading as facts.

Q: Here I am sitting in front of you. What part of it is imagination?

M: The whole of it. Even space and time are imagined. Ch 25 192

Q: I can see that my world is subjective. Does it make it also illusory?

M: It is illusory as long as it is subjective and to that extent only. Reality lies in objectivity.

Q: What does objectivity mean? You said the world is subjective and now you talk of objectivity. Is not everything subjective?

M: Everything is subjective, but the real is objective.

Q: In what sense?

M: It does not depend on memories and expectations, desires and fears, likes and dislikes. All is seen as it is. ... It is solid, steady, changeless, beginningless and endless, ever new, ever fresh.

Q: How is it reached?

M: Desirelessness and fearlessness will take you there. Ch 19 193

Of course the self based on memory is momentary. But such self demands unbroken continuity behind it. You know from experience that there are gaps when your self is forgotten. What brings it back to life? What wakes you up in the morning? There must be some constant factor bridging the gaps in consciousness. If you watch carefully you will find that even your daily consciousness is in flashes, with gaps intervening all the time. What is in the gaps? What can there be but your real being that is timeless: mind and mindlessness are one to it. Ch 6 40

Q: Between the spirit and the body, is it love that provides the bridge?

M: What else? Mind creates the abyss, the heart crosses it. Ch 3

Karma, causality

Q: Am I not under the sway of destiny, of my karma? What can I do against it? What I am and what I do is pre-determined. Even my so-called free choice is predetermined; only I am not aware of it and imagine myself to be free.

M: Again, it all depends how you look at it. Ignorance is like a fever -- it makes you see things which are not there. Karma is the divinely prescribed treatment. Welcome it and follow the instructions faithfully and you will get well. A patient will leave the hospital after he recovers. To insist on immediate freedom of choice and action will merely postpone recovery. Accept your destiny and fulfil it -- this is the shortest way to freedom from destiny... Ch 94 111

Once you realize that all happens by itself (call it destiny or the will of God or mere accident) you remain as witness only, understanding and enjoying, but not perturbed. Know yourself to be the cause of desire and fear, itself free from both. Ch 87 58

All that lives, works for protecting perpetuating and expanding consciousness. This is the world's sole meaning and purpose. It is the very essence of yoga. ... in that sense the entire universe becomes a school of Yoga (*yogaksetra*). Ch 58 118

For everything there are innumerable causal factors. But the source of all that is, is the Infinite Possibility, the Supreme Reality, which is in you and which throws its power and light and love on every experience. But this source is not a cause and no cause is a source. Because of that I say everything is uncaused. ... A thing is as it is because the universe is as it is. ch4

Q: Since all is preordained, is our self-realisation also preordained? Or are we free there at least?

M: Destiny refers only to name and shape. Since you are neither body nor mind, destiny has no control over you. You are completely free. The cup is conditioned by its shape, material, use and so on. But the space within the cup is free. It happens to be in the cup only when viewed in connection with the cup. Otherwise it is just space. As long as there is a body, you appear to be embodied. Without the body you are not disembodied -- you Just are. Ch 48 87

Body and Universal body

Q: How can I aspire to such heights, small and limited as I am?

M: Realize yourself as the ocean of consciousness in which all happens. This is not difficult. A little of attentiveness, of close observation of oneself, and you will see that no event is outside your consciousness.

Q: The world is full of events which do not appear in my consciousness.

M: Even your body is full of events which do not appear in your consciousness. This does not prevent you from claiming your body to be your own. You know the world exactly as you know your body -- through your senses. It is your mind that has separated the world outside your skin from the world inside and put them in opposition. This created fear and hatred and all the miseries of living. Ch 65 83

Q: The very words 'I' and 'universal' are contradictory. One excludes the other.

M: They don't. The sense of identity pervades the universal. Search and you shall discover the Universal Person, who is yourself and infinitely more.

Anyhow, begin by realising that the world is in you, not you in the world.

Q: How can it be? I am only a part of the world. How can the whole world be contained in the part, except by reflection, mirror like?

M: What you say is true. Your personal body is a part in which the whole is wonderfully reflected. But you have also a universal body. You cannot even say that you do not know it, because you see and experience it all the time. Only you call it 'the world' and are afraid of it.

Q: I feel I know my little body, while the other I do not know, except through science.

M: Your little body is full of mysteries and wonders which you do not know. There also science is your only guide. Both anatomy and astronomy describe you. Ch 65

You may say you have two bodies; the personal and the universal. The personal comes and goes, the universal is always with you. The entire creation is your universal body. You are so blinded by what is personal, that you do not see the universal. This blindness will not end by itself -- it must be undone skilfully and deliberately. When all illusions are understood and abandoned, you reach the error-free and perfect state in which all distinctions between the personal and the universal are no more.

Q: I am a person and therefore limited in space and time. I occupy little space and last but a few moments; I cannot even conceive myself to be eternal and all-pervading.

M: Nevertheless you are. As you dive deep into yourself in search of your true nature, you will discover that only your body is small and only your memory is short; while the vast ocean of life is yours. Ch 65

Q: Even If I accept your doctrine of the universal body as a working theory, in what way can I test it and of what use is it to me?

M: Knowing yourself as the dweller in both the bodies you will disown nothing. All the universe will be your concern; every living thing you will love and help most tenderly and wisely. There will be no clash of interests between you and others. All exploitation will cease absolutely. Your every action will be beneficial, every movement will be a blessing. Ch 65

Q: Surrounded by a world full of mysteries and dangers, how can I remain unafraid?

M: Your own little body too is full of mysteries and dangers, yet you are not afraid of it, for you take it as

your own. What you do not know is that the entire universe is your body and you need not be afraid of it. Ch 65

Reality

Q: God is an experience in time, but the experiencer is timeless.

M: Even the experiencer is secondary. Primary is the infinite expanse of consciousness, the eternal possibility, the immeasurable potential of all that was, is, and will be.

... When you look at anything, it is the ultimate you see, but you imagine you see a cloud or a tree.

Learn to look without imagination, to listen without distortion: Stop attributing names and shapes to the essentially nameless and formless, realise that every mode of perception is subjective, that what is seen or heard, touched or smelt, felt or thought, expected or imagined, is in the mind and not in reality, and you will experience peace and freedom from fear. Ch44

Q: Is there any difference between the experience of the Self (atman) and of the Absolute (brahman)?

M: There can be no experience of the Absolute as it is beyond all experience. On the other hand, the self is the experiencing factor in every experience and thus, in a way, validates the multiplicity of experiences. The world may be full of things of great value, but if there is nobody to buy them, they have no price. The Absolute contains everything experienceable, but without the experience they are as nothing. That which makes the experience possible is the Absolute. That which makes it actual is the Self. Ch 69

Q: If my real self is peace and love, why is it so restless?

M: It is not your real being that is restless, but its reflection in the mind appears restless because the mind is restless. It is just like the reflection of the moon in the water stirred by the wind... You are the Self, here and now. Leave the mind alone, stand aware and unconcerned and you will realize that to stand alert but detached, watching events come and go, is an aspect of your real nature.

Q: what are the others?

M: the aspects are infinite in number. Realize one, and you will realize all. Ch8

Q: why do you deny being to the world?

M: I do not negate the world. I see it as appearing in consciousness, which is the totality of the known in the immensity of the unknown. Ch 7

Within the immensity of space floats a tiny atom of consciousness and in it the entire universe is contained. Ch 55

Q: Without the world there is no place for love.

M: Quite so. All these attributes; being, consciousness, love and beauty are reflections of the real in the world. No real -- no reflection. Ch 72

Q: If the real is beyond words and mind, why do we talk so much about it?

M: For the joy of it, of course. The real is bliss supreme. Even to talk of it is happiness. Ch 85

Q: I want reality here and now. Can I have it?

M: Of course you can, provided you are really fed up with everything, including your sadhanas. When you demand nothing of the world, or of God, when you want nothing, seek nothing, expect nothing, then the Supreme State will come to you uninvited and unexpected! Ch 43

Q: As I listen to you, my mind is all in the now and I am astonished to find myself without questions.

M: You can know reality only when you are astonished. 88

Q: Unless I am told what to do and how to do it, I feel lost.

M: By all means do feel lost! As long as you feel competent and confident, reality is beyond your reach. Unless you accept inner adventure as a way of life, discovery will not come to you. 96

Wonder is the dawn of wisdom. To be steadily and consistently wondering is sadhana. Ch 101

Truth

Q: I am full of desires and fears. Does it mean that I am not eligible for truth?

M: Truth is not a reward for good behavior, nor a prize for passing tests. It is the primary the unborn, the ancient source of all that is. You are eligible because you are. You need not merit truth. It is your own. Just stop running away by running after. Stand still, be quiet. Ch 74

Your daily life vibrates between desire and fear. Trace every action to its selfish motive and look at the motive intently till it dissolves.

Discard every self-seeking motive as soon as it is seen and you need not search for truth: truth will find you. Ch 66

To find reality you must be real in the smallest daily action; there can be no deceit in the search for truth. Ch 99

Q: I find it hard to grasp what exactly do you mean by saying that you are neither the object nor the subject. At this very moment, as we talk, am I not the object of your experience, and you the subject?

M: Look, my thumb touches my forefinger. Both touch and are touched. When my attention; is on the thumb, the thumb is the feeler and the forefinger -- the self. Shift the focus of attention and the relationship is reversed. I find that somehow, by shifting the focus of attention, I become the very thing I look at and experience the kind of consciousness it has; I become the inner witness of the thing. I call this capacity of entering other focal points of consciousness -- love; you may give it any name you like. Love says: 'I am everything'. Wisdom says: 'I am nothing' Between the two my life flows. Since at any point of time and space I can be both the subject and the object of experience, I express it by saying that I am both, and neither, and beyond both. Ch 57

Self remembrance is in the mind, self-realisation is beyond the mind. The image in the mirror is of the face beyond the mirror.

The moon dancing on the water is seen in the water, but it is caused by the moon in the sky *Ch 32*

Realization

Q: Once the Supreme State is reached, can it be shared with others?

M: The Supreme State is universal, here and now; everybody already shares in it. It is the state of being -- knowing and liking. Who does not like to be, or does not know his own existence? But we take no advantage of this joy of being conscious, we do not go into it and purify it of all that is foreign to it. Ch 49

Q: Surely, there are degrees of realisation

There are no steps to self-realization. There is nothing gradual about it. It happens suddenly and is irreversible. You rotate into a new dimension, seen from which the previous ones are mere abstractions. Just like on sunrise you see things as they are, so on self-realization you see everything as it is. The world of illusions is left behind. Ch69

First we must know ourselves as Witnesses only, dimensionless and timeless centers of observation, and then realize that immense ocean of pure awareness, which is both mind and matter and beyond both. Ch. 45

Q: Was your realisation sudden or gradual.

M: Neither. One is what one is timelessly. It is the mind that realises as and when it gets cleared of desires and fears.

Q: Even the desire for realisation?

M: The desire to put an end to all desires is a most peculiar desire, just like the fear of being afraid is a most peculiar fear. One stops you from grabbing and the other from running. You may use the same words, but the states are not the same. The person who seeks realisation is not addicted to desires; he is a seeker who goes against desire, not with it. A general longing for liberation is only the beginning; to find the proper means and use them is the next step. The seeker has only one goal in view: to find his own true being. Of all desires it is the most ambitious, for nothing and nobody can satisfy it; the seeker and the sought are one and the search alone matters. Ch 48

Don't pretend to be what you are not, don't refuse to be what you are. Your love of others is the result of self-knowledge, not its cause. Without self-realisation, no virtue is genuine. When you know beyond all doubting that the same life flows through all that is and you are that life, you will love all naturally and spontaneously... but when you look at anything as separate from you, you cannot love it for you are afraid of it. Alienation causes fear and fear deepens alienation. It is a vicious circle. Only self-realization can break it. Go for it resolutely. Ch 46 [204](#)

REALIZATION: SHIFT IDENTITY FROM PERSON 86 *Yellow also Above*

Q: I understand everybody is under the obligation to realise. Is it his duty, or his destiny?

M: Realisation is of the fact that you are not a person. Therefore, it cannot be the duty of the person whose destiny is to disappear. Its destiny is the duty of him who imagines himself to be the person. Find out who he is and the imagined person will dissolve.

Freedom is from something. What are you to be free from? Obviously, you must be free from the person you take yourself to be, for it is the idea you have of yourself that keeps you in bondage.

Q: How is the person removed?

M: By determination. Understand that it must go and wish it to go -- it shall go if you are earnest about it. Somebody, anybody, will tell you that you are pure consciousness, not a body-mind. Accept it as a possibility and investigate earnestly. You may discover that it is not so, that you are not a person bound in space and time. Think of the difference it would make!

Q: If I am not a person, then what am I?

M: Wet cloth looks, feels, smells differently as long as it is wet. When dry it is again the normal cloth. Water has left it and who can make out that it was wet? Your real nature is not like what you appear to be. Give up the idea of being a person, that is all. You need not become what you are anyhow. There is the identity of what you are and there is the person superimposed on it. All you know is the person, the identity -- which is not a person -- you do not know, for you never doubted, never asked yourself the crucial question -- 'Who am I'. The identity is the witness of the person and sadhana consists in shifting the emphasis from the superficial and changeful person to the immutable and ever-present witness. Ch 86

CRISIS 86

Q: How is it that the question 'Who am I' attracts me little? I prefer to spend my time in the sweet company of saints.

M: Abiding in your own being is also holy company. If you have no problem of suffering and release from suffering, you will not find the energy and persistence needed for self-enquiry. You cannot manufacture a crisis. It must be genuine.

Q: How does a genuine crisis happen?

M: It happens every moment, but you are not alert enough. A shadow on your neighbour's face, the immense and all-pervading sorrow of existence is a constant factor in your life, but you refuse to take notice. You suffer and see others suffer, but you don't respond.

Q: What you say is true, but what can I do about it? Such indeed is the situation. My helplessness and dullness are a part of it.

M: Good enough. Look at yourself steadily -- it is enough. The door that locks you in, is also the door that lets you out. The 'I am' is the door. Stay at it until it opens. As a matter of fact, it is open, only you are not at it. You are waiting at the non-existent painted doors, which will never open. Ch 86