



Fundamental Faith Required in Yoga

A Compilation from the works of
Sri Aurobindo & the Mother

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Sri Aurobindo and the Mother**



Sri Aurobindo Society

AUROPUBLICATIONS

POWERFUL THOUGHTS, INSPIRING VISION

Fundamental Faith Required in Yoga

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There is an effort made in the cover of the book to bring out what faith represents. Faith is a message from our supramental being, and that which receives the influence and answers to the call is the inner soul. The top of the cover portrays the supramental by its golden colour. The rain effect conveys the message from the supramental being received by pink, which is the colour of the inner soul.

Preface

In the series of comprehensive compilations we present fourteenth compilation 'Fundamental Faith Required in Yoga'. This book is the first book on topic 'Faith'.

The quotations in this compilation are taken from the volumes of The *Complete Works of Sri Aurobindo* (CWSA), and The *Collected Works of The Mother*, Second Edition (CWM). Each quotation is followed by the book title, volume number and the page number it has been taken from.

The section headings, and sub headings are given by the compiler to bring mental clarity on the selected subject. **To bring emphasis in the quotations, at few places, the compiler has made a few words in bold letters.**

I pray that this book may help the readers to understand the indispensable importance of Faith in Yoga and can bring fundamental faiths in their sadhana.

Jamshed M. Mavalwalla

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I—What Is *Śraddhā*, Faith?

1.

“This *śraddhā*—the English word faith is inadequate to express it—**is in reality an influence from the supreme Spirit and its light a message from our supramental being which is calling the lower nature to rise out of its petty present to a great self-becoming and self-exceeding. And that which receives the influence and answers to the call is not so much the intellect, the heart or the life mind, but the inner soul which better knows the truth of its own destiny and mission.**” (CWSA 24: 774)

2.

“**Faith is a general word = *śraddhā*—the soul’s belief in the Divine’s existence, wisdom, power, love and grace**—confidence and trust are aspects of faith and results of it.

Confidence is a feeling of sureness that the Divine will hear when sincerely called and help and that all the Divine does is for the best.

Trust is the mind’s and heart’s complete reliance on the Divine and its guidance and protection.” (CWSA 29: 88)

3.

“... and **faith is** not mental belief in outward facts, but **an intuition of the inner being about spiritual things.**” (CWSA 28: 344–345)

4.

“Another thing, it seems to me that you identify faith very much with mental belief—but **real faith is something spiritual, a knowledge of the soul.**” (CWSA 28: 432)

5.

“Faith is spontaneous knowledge in the psychic.” (CWM 14: 79)

6.

“... **faith is indeed knowledge giving the ignorance an intimation of itself** previous to its own manifestation, it is the gleam sent before by the yet unrisen Sun.” (CWSA 35: 191)

7.

“**Faith is a thing that precedes knowledge,** not comes after knowledge. **It is a glimpse of a truth which the mind has not yet seized as knowledge.**” (CWSA 29: 91)

8.

“Faith is the soul’s witness to something not yet manifested, achieved or realised, but which yet the Knower within us, even in the absence of all indications, feels to be true or supremely worth following or achieving. This thing within us can last even when there is no fixed belief in the mind, even when the vital struggles and revolts and refuses. Who is there that practises the Yoga and has not his periods, long periods of disappointment and failure and disbelief and darkness—but **there is something that sustains him and even goes on in spite of himself, because it feels that what it followed after was yet true and it more than feels, it knows.**” (CWSA 29: 93)

9.

“Faith is a spiritual certitude of the spiritual, the divine, the soul’s ideal, something that clings to that **even when it is not fulfilled in life,** even when the immediate facts or the persistent circumstances seem to deny it. This is a common experience in the life of the human being; if it were not so, man would be the plaything of a changing mind or a sport of circumstance.” (CWSA 29: 89–90)

10.

“Faith is a certitude in the soul which does not depend on reasoning, on this or that mental idea, on circumstances, on this or that passing condition of the mind or the vital or the body. It may be hidden, eclipsed, may even seem to be quenched, but it reappears again after the storm or the eclipse; **it is seen burning still in the soul when one has thought that it was extinguished for ever.** The mind may be a shifting sea of doubts and yet that faith may be there within and, if so, it **will keep even the doubt-racked mind in the way so that it goes on in spite of itself towards its destined goal.**” (CWSA 29: 89)

11.

“It seems to me that you mean by faith a mental belief in an alleged fact put before the mind and senses in the doubtful form of an unsupported asseveration. **I mean by it a dynamic intuitive conviction in the inner being of the truth of supersensible things which cannot be proved by any physical evidence** but which are a subject of experience. My point is that this faith is a most desirable preliminary (if not absolutely indispensable—for there can be cases of experience not preceded by faith) to the desired experience.” (CWSA 28: 347)

12.

“The faith is there, not in your mind, not in your vital, **but in your psychic being.** It was this faith that flung you out of the world and brought you to Pondicherry; it is this faith that keeps you to what the soul wills and refuses to go back on what it has decided.” (CWSA 28: 349–350)

13.

“Faith is a feeling in the whole being, belief is mental; confidence means trust in a person or in the Divine or a feeling of surety about the result of one’s seeking or endeavour.” (CWSA 29: 88)

14.

“Faith—a dynamic entire belief and acceptance.

Belief—intellectual acceptance only.

Conviction—intellectual belief held on what seem to be good reasons.

Reliance—dependence on another for something, based on trust.

Trust—the feeling of sure expectation of another’s help and reliance on his word, character etc.

Confidence—the sense of security that goes with trust.” (CWSA 29: 88)

15.

“For me [Sri Aurobindo] **faith** is not intellectual belief but **a function of the soul**; when my belief has faltered, failed, gone out the soul has remained steadfast, obstinately insisting, ‘This path and no other; the Truth I have felt is the Truth whatever the mind may believe or not believe.’ On the other hand experiences do not necessarily lead to faith. One sadhak writes to me, ‘I feel the grace of the Mother descending into me, but I cannot believe it because it may be a vital imagination.’ Another has experiences for years together, then falls down because he has, he says, ‘lost faith’. All these things are not my imagination, they are facts and tell their own tale.” (CWSA 29: 95)

16.

“It is by faith and surrender and the joy of pure self-giving—**the psychic attitude**—that one grows into the Truth and becomes united with the Divine.” (CWSA 32: 465)

17.

“... **faith is only a will aiming at greater truth ...**”
(CWSA 24: 733)

18.

“Faith—confidence in the Divine and the unshakable certitude of the Divine’s Victory.” (CWM 14: 79)

19.

“Faith in its essence is a light in the soul which turns towards the truth even when the mind doubts or the vital revolts or the physical consciousness denies it. When this extends itself to the instruments, it becomes a fixed belief in the mind, a sort of inner knowledge which resists all apparent denial by circumstances or appearances, a complete confidence, trust, adhesion in the vital and in the physical consciousness, an invariable clinging to the truth in which one has faith even when all is dark around and no cause of hope seems to be there.” (CWSA 29: 89)

20.

“... although imposed in a way on the religious idea by the imperative and absolute character of the inspirations and illuminations which are its warrant and justification and **by the necessity of faith as an occult light and power from the soul** amidst the mind’s ignorance, doubts, weakness, incertitudes.” (CWSA 22: 896)

21.

“**Faith is sufficient to start with** ... realisation can come only as a result of sadhana, not as its preliminary.” (CWSA 29: 77–78)

22.

“Artificial paths are like canals hewn by the intelligence of man; you travel easily, safely, surely, but from one given place to another. **This path is the broad and trackless ocean** by which you can travel widely to all parts of the world and are admitted to the freedom of the infinite. All that you need are the ship, the steering-wheel, the compass, the motive-power and a skilful captain. Your ship is the Brahmavidya, **faith is your steering-wheel**, self-surrender your compass, the motive-power is she who makes, directs and destroys the worlds at God’s command and God himself is your captain.” (CWSA 13: 87–88)

II—What Is Not Faith

1.

“For me [Sri Aurobindo] **faith is not intellectual belief** but a function of the soul; ...” (CWSA 29: 95)

“That, I have said, is a question not of faith but of mental belief—and **faith is not mental belief in outward facts**, but an intuition of the inner being about spiritual things.” (CWSA 28: 344–345)

2.

“He [Sri Aurobindo] says that **belief is something that occurs in the head, that is purely mental; ...**” (CWM 6: 120)

3.

“**Faith in the spiritual sense is not a mental belief which can waver and change.** It can wear that form in the mind, but that belief is not the faith itself, **it is only its external form.** Just as the body, the external form, can change but the spirit remains the same, so it is here.” (CWSA 29: 89)

4.

“An indiscriminateness of mental belief is not the teaching of spirituality or of Yoga; **the faith of which it speaks**

is not a crude mental belief but the fidelity of the soul to the guiding light within it, a fidelity which has to remain firm till the light leads it into knowledge.” (CWSA 28: 342)

5.

“Faith can be tamasic and ineffective, e.g. ‘I believe the Mother will do everything, so I will do nothing. When she wants, she will transform me.’ That is not a dynamic but a static and inert faith.” (CWSA 29: 99)

6.

“The phrase [*blind faith*] has no real meaning. I suppose they mean they will not believe without proof—but **the conclusion formed after proof is not faith, it is knowledge or it is a mental opinion.** Faith is something which one has before proof or knowledge and it helps you to arrive at knowledge or experience. **There is no proof that God exists, but if I have faith in God, then I can arrive at the experience of the Divine.**” (CWSA 29: 91–92)

“A faith based on material proofs is not faith—it is a bargaining.” (CWM 14: 79)

7.

“To walk through life armoured against all fear, peril and disaster, only two things are needed, two that go always together—the Grace of the Divine Mother and on your side an inner state made up of faith, sincerity and surrender. Let your faith be pure, candid and perfect. **An egoistic faith in the mental and vital being tainted by ambition, pride, vanity, mental arrogance, vital self-will, personal demand, desire for the petty satisfactions of the lower nature is a low and smoke-obscured flame that cannot burn upwards to heaven.**” (CWSA 32: 8)

“How can there be ‘an egoistic faith in the mental being’?”

He has described it very well: **‘tainted by ambition’**, etc. I find that if you put it differently, it is much more true. Is there any faith which doesn’t have a little of all that? For it is said, it has been repeated that faith, if it is pure, is capable of... nothing can resist it.” (CWM 15: 319–320)

“Q: Mother, what does ‘an egoistic faith... tainted by ambition’ mean?”

A: Yes, for instance, if one wants to become somebody very important, to have a high position or attract the

admiration of people around him, to become a great sadhak, a great sannyasi, a great yogi, etc., somebody quite important, that is called having a faith full of ambition. You have the faith that this may happen, you have faith in the Divine, but it is for your own small personal vainglory; and **this is no longer something pure, sincere and true.** It is something that's entirely for personal profit. Naturally, there is no question in this of any self-giving; it is a hoarding of forces as much as it is possible for you to hoard them, that is to say, the very opposite of the true movement. This happens much oftener than one would think.... This movement of ambition is often hidden right in the depths of the being and it pushes you, like this, from behind.... It whips you so that you get on. **It is a kind of veiled pride.**" (CWM 6: 237–238)

8.

"Faith is sufficient to start with—**the idea that one must first understand and realise before one can seek is a mental error and if it were true would make all sadhana impossible**—realisation can come only as a result of sadhana, not as its preliminary." (CWSA 29: 77–78)

9.

“Ramakrishna even went so far as to say, when asked whether blind faith was not wrong, that blind faith was the only kind to have, **for faith is either blind or it is not faith** but something else—reasoned inference, proved conviction or ascertained knowledge.” (CWSA 29: 93)

10.

“As for the epithet ‘**blind**’ used by Ramakrishna, it **means as I said, not ignorantly credulous, but untroubled by the questionings of the intellect and unshaken by outward appearances of fact.**” ((CWSA 28: 345)

11.

“If his faith depends on the perfection of the sadhaks, obviously it must be a rather shaky thing! Sadhaks and sadhikas are not supposed to be perfect. It is only siddhas for whom one can claim perfection and even then not according to a mental standard.” (CWSA 29: 101)

12.

“**True faith does *not* depend on circumstances.**” (CWM 14: 79)

II—What Is Not Faith

“Faith in spiritual power must not depend on circumstances.” (CWM 14: 79)

III—The Fundamental Faith Required in Yoga

i.

“I [Sri Aurobindo] do not ask ‘undiscriminating faith’ from anyone, **all I ask is fundamental faith ... because it is these that are proper to the consciousness of a spiritual seeker** and it is these that I have myself used and found that they removed all necessity for the quite gratuitous dilemma of ‘either you must doubt everything supraphysical or be entirely credulous’, which is the stock-in-trade of the materialist argument.” (CWSA 28: 348)

ii.

“**The faith in spiritual things that is asked of the sadhak is not an ignorant but a luminous faith, a faith in light and not in darkness.**” (CWSA 28: 349)

iii.

“**Yoga can only be done on a basis of faith and confidence in the Divine.**” (CWSA 31: 278)

- 1. The fundamental faith in Yoga is that the Divine exists and the Divine is the one thing to be followed after—nothing else in life is worth having in comparison with that**

“The fundamental faith in Yoga is this, inherent in the soul, that the Divine exists and the Divine is the one thing to be followed after—nothing else in life is worth having in comparison with that. It was this faith growing in you that made you come for Yoga and this faith has not died or diminished—to judge from what you say in your letters, it has become more insistent and abiding. **So long as a man has that, he is marked for the spiritual life** and I will say that, even if his nature is full of obstacles and crammed with denials and difficulties, and even if he has many years of struggle, he is marked out for success in the spiritual life.” (CWSA 29: 93)

- 2. Faith demanded as indispensable by the Integral Yoga is Faith in God and the Shakti**
- 3. Faith in the presence and power of the Divine in us and the world**
- 4. A faith that all in the world is the working of one Divine Shakti**
- 5. That all the steps of the Yoga are utilities and necessities of Divine Shakti’s workings**
- 6. And that by a firm and strong dependence on and a total self-surrender to the Divine and to his Shakti in us we can attain to oneness, freedom, victory and perfection**

“There is one kind of **faith demanded as indispensable by the integral Yoga and that may be described as faith in God and the Shakti**, faith in the presence and power of the Divine in us and the world, a faith that all in the world is the working of one divine Shakti, that all the steps of the Yoga, its strivings and sufferings and failures as well as its successes and satisfactions and victories are utilities and necessities of her workings and that by a firm and strong dependence on and a total self-surrender to the Divine and to his Shakti in us we can attain to oneness and freedom and victory and perfection.” (CWSA 24: 771)

“Śraddhā is necessary in two things:

Shaktyam Bhagawati cha, iti śraddhā. [Faith in the Lord and his Shakti]” (CWSA 10: 12)

7. Faith in the Divine Grace

8. Faith in the truth of the sadhana

“I [Sri Aurobindo] ask you to have faith in the Divine, in the Divine Grace, in the truth of the sadhana, in the eventual triumph of the spirit over its mental and vital and physical difficulties, in the Path and the Guru, in the existence of things other than are written in the philosophy of Haeckel or Huxley or Bertrand Russell,

because if these things are not true, there is no meaning in the Yoga.” (CWSA 29: 100)

9. Faith in the Path even when the goal is very far off and the way covered by mist and cloud and smitten repeatedly by the thunderbolt

“... one has faith in the Divine even though the fact seems to be that the world here or at least the human world is driven by undivine forces. One has faith in the Guru even when he uses methods that your intellect cannot grasp or approves things as true of which you have yet no experience (for if his knowledge and experience are not greater than yours, why did you choose him as a Guru?). One has faith in the Path leading to the goal even when the goal is very far off and the way covered by mist and cloud and smitten repeatedly by the thunderbolt.” (CWSA 28: 345)

10. Faith in one’s spiritual destiny—since my heart and soul seek for the Divine, I cannot fail and will reach Him one day

“Humility before the Divine is also a *sine qua non* [*indispensable condition*] of the spiritual life, and spiritual pride, arrogance, or vanity and self- assurance press always downward. **But confidence in the Divine and a**

faith in one's spiritual destiny (i.e. since my heart and soul seek for the Divine, I cannot fail one day to reach Him) are much needed in view of the difficulties of the Path." (CWSA 29: 42–43)

"Keep faith in your spiritual destiny, draw back from error and open more the psychic being to the direct guidance of the Mother's light and power. If the central will is sincere, each recognition of a mistake can become a stepping stone to a truer movement and a higher progress." (CWSA 31: 501–502)

"Accept this divine possibility in you; have faith in your inner being and its spiritual destiny." (CWSA 31: 652)

11. Faith that Divine Will is leading us, through every circumstance, towards the final realisation

"We have to have the faith that in spite of our ignorance and errors and weaknesses and in spite of the attacks of hostile forces and in spite of any immediate appearance of failure **the Divine Will is leading us, through every circumstance, towards the final realisation.**" (CWSA 29: 91)

“Of one thing we must be convinced—**all that happens is exactly what must happen in order to lead us and the world as quickly as possible to the goal**—the union with the Divine and ultimately the manifestation of the Divine.

And this faith—sincere and constant—is at once our help and protection.” (CWM 14: 97)

- 12. The Divine’s own hand will be there secretly leading me to him by his own way and at his own time**
- 13. He who desires only the Divine shall reach the Divine is a certitude much more certain than that two and two make four**

“If you desire only the Divine, there is an absolute certitude that you will reach the Divine. But all these questionings and repinings at each moment because you have not yet reached, only delay and keep an impeding curtain before the heart and the eyes. For at every step when one makes an advance, the opposite forces will throw this doubt like a rope between the legs and stop one short with a stumble—it is their metier to do that. One must not give them that advantage. Instead of saying, ‘I want only the Divine, why is the Divine not already here?’, **one must say, ‘Since I want only the Divine, my success is sure, I have only to walk**

forward in all confidence and his own hand will be there secretly leading me to him by his own way and at his own time.’ That is what you must keep as your constant mantra and it is besides the only logical and reasonable thing to do—for anything else is an irrational self-contradiction of the most glaring kind. Anything else one may doubt—whether the supermind will come down, whether this world can ever be anything but a field of struggle for the mass of men,—these can be rational doubts—**but that he who desires only the Divine shall reach the Divine is a certitude much more certain than that two and two make four. That is the faith every sadhak must have in the bottom of his heart, supporting him through every stumble and blow and ordeal.** It is only false ideas still casting their shadow on your mind that prevent you from having it. Push them aside for good and see this simple inner truth in a simple and straightforward way—the back of the difficulty will be broken.” (CWSA 29: 97)

14. Faith that the Mother is always present with us and her protection is always there, whether we feel it or not

“In your letters you say always that the Mother has withdrawn from you and you think she does it deliberately because of some fault or defect in your

nature. This is an error. The Mother is always present with you; she does not withdraw. But if you believe otherwise, if you always expect her to withdraw, it will cloud your perception and prevent you from realising her presence. On the contrary, **have the faith that, whether you feel it or not, her presence and her protection are always there.**" (CWSA 32: 177)

15. Faith that the Divine Influence is above us and we have to call it down into us as Peace, Light or Force

"In this Yoga the whole principle is to open oneself to the Divine Influence. It is there above you and, if you can once become conscious of it, you have then to call it down into you. It descends into the mind and into the body as Peace, as a Light, as a Force that works, as the Presence of the Divine with or without form, as Ananda. **Before one has this consciousness, one has to have faith and aspire for the opening.**" (CWSA 29: 106)

"If they begin to trickle at first, that is sufficient to justify the faith in a future downpour. You admit that you once or twice felt 'a force coming down and delivering a poem out of me' (your opinion about its worth or worthlessness is not worth a cent, that is for others to pronounce). ... it proves that the force was and is there and at work and it

is only your sweating Herculean labour that prevents you feeling it. Also it is the trickle that gives assurance of the possibility of the downpour.” (CWSA 29: 184–185)

16. Faith in the Divine protection and the call for that protection in moments of trial

17. Faith that what the Divine wills is the best

“In moments of trial faith in the Divine protection and the call for that protection; at all times the faith that what the Divine wills is the best.

It is what turns you towards the Divine that must be accepted as good for you—all is bad for you that turns you away from the Divine.” (CWSA 29: 101)

“The best protection is an unshakable faith in the Divine Grace.” (CWM 15: 47)

“Protection is active and can be effective only with *faith* on your side, absolute and constant.” (CWM 15: 47)

18. I will go on till I succeed and I will succeed—all difficulties notwithstanding

“What you really have not yet a fixed faith in is the guidance of the Divine, his will to manifest to you or your

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capacity to receive him. It is this that the adverse attacks which began when you were on the threshold of the inner experience—as so often happens in the Yoga—try constantly to fix in your brain. They want to have a fixed mental formation there, so that whenever you make the attempt there will be in the physical mind an expectation of difficulty, a dwelling on the idea of difficulty and unsuccess and incapacity, if not always in the front of the mind, yet at the back and by that they hope to prevent the experience from coming. It is these mental formations that you must reject, for they are a much greater obstacle than the vital failings to which you give such an exaggerated importance. It is not a fact that you have not had experiences—you had them but you did not give them their full value, because you were expecting something else. Otherwise the sense of the Divine Guidance and the faith in attainment would have formed in spite of difficulties and relapses such as everyone has in the Yoga. **It is this faith that you need to develop,**—a faith which is in accordance with reason and common sense—**that if the Divine exists and has called you to the Path, as is evident, then there must be a Divine Guidance behind and that through and in spite of all difficulties you will arrive.** Not to listen to the hostile voices that suggest failure or to the voices of impatient vital haste that echo them, not to believe that because great difficulties are

there, there can be no success or that because the Divine has not yet shown himself he will never show himself, but to take the position that everyone takes when he fixes his mind on a great and difficult goal, 'I will go on till I succeed and I will succeed—all difficulties notwithstanding.' To which the believer in the Divine adds, 'The Divine exists, he is there, and since he exists, my following after the Divine cannot fail. I will go on through everything till I find him.' " (CWSA 29: 93–94)

19. Faith that however the lower nature may rise or hostile forces attack, the transformation is sure

"You must keep the faith always that however the lower nature may rise or hostile forces attack, victory will be yours and the transformation is sure." (CWSA 29: 102)

"Keep firm faith in the victory of the Light and face with calm equanimity the resistances of Matter and human personality to their own transformation." (CWSA 29: 102)

20. Faith and courage needed to trust ourselves into the hands of the Lord

"It is not possible to enter utterly into the spiritual truth of the Eternal and Infinite if we have not the faith and

courage to trust ourselves into the hands of the Lord of all things and the Friend of all creatures and leave utterly behind us our mental limits and measures.” (CWSA 23: 208)

Other faiths

“The road of Yoga is long, every inch of ground has to be won against much resistance and no quality is more needed by the sadhak than patience and single-minded perseverance with a **faith that remains firm through all difficulties, delays and apparent failures.**” (CWSA 29: 110)

“It is true that a great patience and steadfastness is needed. Be then firm and patient and fixed on the aims of the sadhana, but not over-eager to have them at once. **A work has to be done in you and is being done; help it to be done by keeping an attitude of firm faith and confidence.** Doubts rise in all, they are natural to the human physical mind—reject them. Impatience and over eagerness for the result at once are natural to the human vital; it is **by firm confidence in the Mother that they will disappear.** The love, the belief in her as the Divine to whom your life is given,—oppose with that every contrary feeling and then those contrary feelings

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will after a time no longer be able to come to you.”
(CWSA 29: 111)

“This Eternal will be at once personal and impersonal in his self revelation and touch upon the soul. ... In the impersonality this actuating Power is a self-illuminated Force that contains all results and calmly works until it accomplishes, in the personality an all-wise and omnipotent Master of the Yoga whom nothing can prevent from leading it to its goal. This is the faith with which the seeker has to begin his seeking and endeavour; for in all his effort here, but most of all in his effort towards the Unseen, mental man must perforce proceed by faith. When the realisation comes, the faith divinely fulfilled and completed will be transformed into an eternal flame of knowledge.” (CWSA 23: 82–83)

“Even if there is much darkness—and this world is full of it and the physical nature of man also—yet **a ray of the true Light can prevail eventually against a tenfold darkness. Believe that and cleave to it always.**”
(CWSA 29: 102)

IV—Intellectual and Emotional Beliefs Need to Be Purified and Transformed

1.

“... we carry with us a number of intellectual beliefs and ideas which are by no means all of them correct and perfect ... which it would be fatal to seize on and always cling to in the shape in which they come without regard to their possible error, limitation or imperfection. And indeed at one stage in the Yoga it becomes necessary to refuse to accept as definite and final any kind of intellectual idea or opinion whatever in its intellectual form and to hold it in a questioning suspension until it is given its right place and luminous shape of truth in a spiritual experience enlightened by supramental knowledge.” (CWSA 24: 772)

2.

“The heart’s faith, emotional beliefs, assents are also needed upon the way, but cannot be always sure guides until they too are taken up, purified, transformed and are eventually replaced by the luminous assents of a divine Ananda which is at one with the divine will and knowledge. In nothing in the lower nature from the reason to the vital will can the seeker of the Yoga put a complete and permanent faith,

IV—Intellectual and Emotional Beliefs Need to Be Purified and Transformed

but only at last in the spiritual truth, power, Ananda which become in the spiritual reason his sole guides and luminaries and masters of action.” (CWSA 24: 772–773)

3.

“Religion in fact is not knowledge, but a faith and aspiration; it is justified indeed both by an imprecise intuitive knowledge of large spiritual truths and by the subjective experience of souls that have risen beyond the ordinary life, but in itself it only gives us the hope and faith by which we may be induced to aspire to the intimate possession of the hidden tracts and larger realities of the Spirit. **That we turn always the few distinct truths and the symbols or the particular discipline of a religion into hard and fast dogmas, is a sign that as yet we are only infants in the spiritual knowledge and are yet far from the science of the Infinite.**” (CWSA 23: 459–460)

“Yet behind every great religion, behind, that is to say, its exoteric [intended to be understood by general public] side of faith, hope, symbols, scattered truths and limiting dogmas, there is an esoteric side of inner spiritual training and illumination by which the hidden truths may be known, worked out, possessed. **Behind every exoteric religion there is an esoteric** [understood by only a small number of people with specialised

knowledge] **Yoga, an intuitive knowledge to which its faith is the first step**, inexpressible realities of which its symbols are the figured expression, a deeper sense for its scattered truths, mysteries of the higher planes of existence of which even its dogmas and superstitions are crude hints and indications.” (CWSA 23: 460)

4.

“On the other hand ignorance and blindness in the faith are obstacles to a large success, invite much disappointment and disillusionment, fasten on false finalities and prevent advance to greater formulations of truth and perfection. The Shakti in her workings will strike ruthlessly at all forms of ignorance and blindness and all even that trusts wrongly and superstitiously in her, and **we must be prepared to abandon a too persistent attachment to forms of faith and cling to the saving reality alone. A great and wide spiritual and intelligent faith, intelligent with the intelligence of that larger reason which assents to high possibilities, is the character of the śraddhā needed for the integral Yoga.**” (CWSA 24: 774)

5.

“Moreover not only a faith in the fundamental principle, ideas, way of the Yoga is needed, but a day to day

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working faith in the power in us to achieve, in the steps we have taken on the way, in the spiritual experiences that come to us, in the intuitions, the guiding movements of will and impulsion, the moved intensities of the heart and aspirations and fulfilments of the life that are the aids, the circumstances and the stages of the enlarging of the nature and the stimuli or the steps of the soul's evolution. At the same time it has always to be remembered that **we are moving from imperfection and ignorance towards light and perfection, and the faith in us must be free from attachment to the forms of our endeavour and the successive stages of our realisation.**" (CWSA 24: 775)

6.

"His progress is an ascent from level to level and each new height brings in other vistas and revelations of the much that has still to be done, *bhūri kartvam*, till the divine Shakti has at last taken up all his endeavour and he has only to assent and participate gladly by a consenting oneness in her luminous workings. **That which will support him through these changes, struggles, transformations which might otherwise dishearten and baffle, ... is a firm faith in the Shakti that is at work** and reliance on the guidance of the Master of the Yoga whose wisdom is not in haste and whose steps through all the perplexities of the mind are

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assured and just and sound, because they are founded on a perfectly comprehending transaction with the necessities of our nature.” (CWSA 24: 776)

7.

“The motions of the mind in its progress must necessarily be mixed with a greater or lesser proportion of error, and **we should not allow our faith to be disconcerted by the discovery of its errors** or imagine that because the beliefs of the intellect which aided us were too hasty and positive, **therefore the fundamental faith in the soul was invalid.** ... As our self experience increases, we shall find that our errors even were necessary movements, brought with them and left their element or suggestion of truth and helped towards discovery or supported a necessary effort and that the certitudes we have now to abandon had yet their temporary validity in the progress of our knowledge. The intellect cannot be a sufficient guide in the search for spiritual truth and realisation and yet it has to be utilised in the integral movement of our nature. And while, therefore, we have to reject paralysing doubt or mere intellectual scepticism, **the seeking intelligence has to be trained to admit a certain large questioning, an intellectual rectitude not satisfied with half-truths, mixtures of error** or approximations and, most positive and helpful, **a perfect readiness always to move forward from**

truths already held and accepted to the greater corrective, completing or transcending truths which at first it was unable or, it may be, disinclined to envisage. A working faith of the intellect is indispensable, not a superstitious, dogmatic or limiting credence attached to every temporary support or formula, but a large assent to the successive suggestions and steps of the Shakti, a faith fixed on realities, moving from the lesser to the completer realities and ready to throw down all scaffolding and keep only the large and growing structure.” (CWSA 24: 776–777)

8.

“The faith of the heart and the life mind, like that of the intelligence, must be capable of a constant correction, enlarging and transformation.

This faith is essentially the secret *śraddhā* of the soul, and it is brought more and more to the surface and there satisfied, sustained and increased by an increasing assurance and certainty of spiritual experience. Here too **the faith in us must be unattached, a faith that waits upon Truth and is prepared to change and enlarge its understanding of spiritual experiences, to correct mistaken or half-true ideas about them and receive more enlightening interpretations, to replace insufficient by more sufficient intuitions, and to merge experiences that seemed at the time to be final**

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and satisfying in more satisfying combinations with new experience and greater largenesses and transcendences.” (CWSA 24: 778)

9.

“Here too **our faith must be an assent that receives all spiritual experience, but with a wide openness and readiness for always more light and truth**, an absence of limiting attachment and no such clinging to forms as would interfere with the forward movement of the Shakti towards the integrality of the spiritual being, consciousness, knowledge, power, action and the wholeness of the one and the multiple Ananda.” (CWSA 24: 779)

10.

“**The faith demanded of us** both in its general principle and its constant particular application **amounts to a large and ever increasing** and a constantly purer, fuller and stronger **assent of the whole being** and all its parts **to the presence and guidance of God and the Shakti. The faith in the Shakti, as long as we are not aware of and filled with her presence, must necessarily be preceded or at least accompanied by a firm and virile faith in our own spiritual will and energy and our power to move successfully towards unity and freedom and perfection. Man is**

given faith in himself, his ideas and his powers that he may work and create and rise to greater things and in the end bring his strength as a worthy offering to the altar of the Spirit. This spirit, says the Scripture, is not to be won by the weak, *nāyam ātmā balahīnena labhyaḥ*. All paralysing self-distrust has to be discouraged, all doubt of our strength to accomplish, for that is a false assent to impotence, an imagination of weakness and a denial of the omnipotence of the spirit. **A present incapacity, however heavy may seem its pressure, is only a trial of faith** and a temporary difficulty and to yield to the sense of inability is for the seeker of the integral Yoga a non-sense, for his object is a development of a perfection that is there already, latent in the being, because man carries the seed of the divine life in himself, in his own spirit, the possibility of success is involved and implied in the effort and victory is assured because behind is the call and guidance of an omnipotent power. **At the same time this faith in oneself must be purified from all touch of rajasic egoism and spiritual pride.**" (CWSA 24: 779–780)

11.

"The sadhaka should keep as much as possible in his mind the idea that his strength is not his own in the egoistic sense but that of the divine

universal Shakti and whatever is egoistic in his use of it must be a cause of limitation and in the end an obstacle. **The power of the divine universal Shakti which is behind our aspiration is illimitable, and when it is rightly called upon it cannot fail to pour itself into us and to remove whatever incapacity and obstacle,** now or later; for the times and durations of our struggle while they depend at first, instrumentally and in part, on the strength of our faith and our endeavour, are yet eventually in the hands of the wisely determining secret Spirit, alone the Master of the Yoga, the Ishwara.” (CWSA 24: 780)

12.

“The faith in the divine Shakti must be always at the back of our strength and when she becomes manifest, it must be or grow implicit and complete. There is nothing that is impossible to her who is the conscious Power and universal Goddess all creative from eternity and armed with the Spirit’s omnipotence. All knowledge, all strengths, all triumph and victory, all skill and works are in her hands and they are full of the treasures of the Spirit and of all perfections and siddhis. ... **The intimate feeling of her presence and her powers and the satisfied assent of all our being to her workings in and around it is the last perfection of faith in the Shakti.**” (CWSA 24: 780–781)

13.

“And behind her is the Ishwara and faith in him is the most central thing in the *śraddhā* of the integral Yoga. **This faith we must have and develop to perfection that all things are the workings under the universal conditions of a supreme self-knowledge and wisdom, that nothing done in us or around us is in vain or without its appointed place and just significance, that all things are possible when the Ishwara as our supreme Self and Spirit takes up the action and that all that has been done before and all that he will do hereafter was and will be part of his infallible and foreseeing guidance and intended towards the fruition of our Yoga and our perfection and our life work.** This faith will be more and more justified as the higher knowledge opens, we shall begin to see the great and small significances that escaped our limited mentality and faith will pass into knowledge. Then we shall see beyond the possibility of doubt that all happens within the working of the one Will and that that will was also wisdom because it develops always the true workings in life of the self and nature. The highest state of the assent, the *śraddhā* of the being will be when we feel the presence of the Ishwara and feel all our existence and consciousness and thought and will and action in his hand and consent in all things and with

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every part of our self and nature to the direct and immanent and occupying will of the Spirit. And that highest perfection of the śraddhā will also be the opportunity and perfect foundation of a divine strength: it will base, when complete, the development and manifestation and the works of the luminous supramental Shakti.” (CWSA 24: 781–782)

V—In Yoga Faith Is Necessary and Indispensable

“**Faith**, reliance upon God, surrender and self-giving to the Divine Power **are necessary and indispensable**. But reliance upon God must not be made an excuse for indolence, weakness and surrender to the impulses of the lower nature; it must go along with untiring aspiration and a persistent rejection of all that comes in the way of the Divine Truth.” (CWSA 29: 87)

1.

“... if they have faith, they may get what they ask for ... **If they do not get what they want and still come to the Divine and trust in Him, well, that shows they are getting ready.**” (CWSA 29: 8)

2.

“The best way **to prepare oneself for the spiritual life** when one has to live in the ordinary occupations and surroundings is to **cultivate** an entire equality and detachment and the *samatā* of the Gita with **the faith that the Divine is there and the Divine Will at work in all things** even though at present under the conditions of a world of Ignorance.” (CWSA 31: 344)

“**Two things especially are needed for the life-realisation to take form, an entire faith and**

equality of mind—not disturbed by anything that may happen, knowing that all happens for the best by the inscrutable Will—and the instrumentation of the Divine Force in the adhara.” (CWSA 36: 419)

“If he wants to practise this Yoga, he must do it with a quiet spirit, demanding nothing but the calm, peace and light and strength of the divine consciousness and the presence of the Divine. And **he must face all that comes to him in life, in a spirit of quiet faith and equality and endurance.**” (CWSA 35: 567)

3.

“The power of experience is not gone—but what is most important now is to develop the psychic condition of surrender, devotion, love and cheerful confidence in the Mother, **an unshaken faith** and a constant inner closeness, and also to bring down from above the peace, wideness, purity etc. of the higher Self which is that of the Mother’s consciousness. It is **these things that are the basis of the siddhi in this Yoga**—other experiences are only a help, not the basis.” (CWSA 29: 77)

4.

“Any activity can be taken as part of the sadhana if it is offered to the Divine or **done with** the

consciousness or **faith that it is done by the Divine Power**. That is the important point.” (CWSA 29: 290)

5.

“Impatience is always a mistake, it does not help but hinders. **A quiet happy faith and confidence is the best foundation for sadhana**; for the rest a constant opening wide of oneself to receive with an aspiration which may be intense, but must always be calm and steady. Full Yogic realisation does not come all at once, it comes after a long preparation of the Adhara which may take a long time.” (CWSA 29: 111–112)

6.

“It is the fact that people who are grateful and cheerful and ready to go step by step, even by slow steps, if need be, do actually march faster and more surely than those who are impatient and in haste and at each step despair or murmur. It is what I have always seen—there may be instances to the contrary and I have no objection to your being one,—none at all. I only say that **if you could maintain ‘hope and fervour and faith’, there would be a much bigger chance**—that is all.” (CWSA 29: 112)

7.

“When you come to the Yoga, you must be ready to have all your mental buildings and all your vital scaffoldings

shattered to pieces. You must be prepared to be suspended in the air with nothing to support you **except your faith**. You will have to forget your past self and its clingings altogether, to pluck it out of your consciousness and be born anew, free from every kind of bondage. **Think** not of what you were, but **of what you aspire to be**; be altogether in what you want to realise. Turn from your dead past and look straight towards the future. Your religion, country, family lie there; it is the Divine.” (CWM 3: 83–84)

8.

“Such qualities as faith, sincerity, aspiration, devotion etc. make up the perfection indicated in our language of the flowers. In ordinary language it would mean something else such as purity, love, benevolence, fidelity and a host of other virtues.

The Mother named the Plumeria flower ‘Psychological perfection’ and said that its five elements were faith, sincerity, aspiration, devotion and surrender.” —Ed. (CWSA 29: 43)

9.

“Whatever adverse things present themselves you must meet them with courage and they will disappear and the help come. **Faith and courage are the true attitude**

to keep in life and work always and in the spiritual experience also.” (CWSA 29: 101)

“It is a difficult Yoga and faith, a steady and quiet will, courage and strength are necessary if one is to follow it.”(CWSA 35: 546)

“It must be remembered however that **this Yoga is not easy** and cannot be done without the rising of many obstacles and much lapse of time—**so if you take it up it must be with a firm resolve to carry it through to the end with** a whole-hearted sincerity, **faith**, patience **and courage.**” (CWSA 35: 547)

10.

“That is the true resolution. Keep it firm inside you even if waves of other consciousness cover on the surface. **If one plants a faith** or resolution like that **firmly in oneself, then it remains and even if the mind for a time gets clouded** or the resolution dimmed, yet one finds it reemerging automatically like a ship out of a covering wave, and goes invincibly on with the journey through all vicissitudes till it reaches the harbour.” (CWSA 29: 101–102)

11.

“I may say that the idea of a joyless God is an absurdity which only the ignorance of the mind could engender; the Radha love is not based upon any such thing, but means simply that whatever comes on the way to the Divine, pain or joy, milana or viraha, and however long the sufferings may last, **the Radha love is unshaken and keeps its faith and certitude pointing fixedly like a star to the supreme object of Love.**” (CWSA 29: 13–14)

12.

“These forms are after all a certain kind of manifestation through which the imperfect human intelligence can touch him, these desires are first means by which our souls turn towards him: nor is any devotion worthless or ineffective, whatever its limitations. **It has the one grand necessity, faith.** ‘Whatever form of me any devotee with **faith** desires to worship, I make that **faith** of his firm and undeviating.’ **By the force of that faith in his cult and worship he gets his desire and the spiritual realisation for which he is at the moment fitted.**” (CWSA 19: 286–287)

“But even among Yogins the greatest is the Bhakta. ‘Of all Yogins he who with all his inner self given up to Me, for Me has love and faith, *śraddhāvān bhajate*, [the one who

has faith has love for me] him I hold to be the most united with Me in Yoga.’ It is this that is the closing word of these first six chapters and contains in itself the seed of the rest, ...” (CWSA 19: 246)

“Selflessness, self-giving, entire **faith** and confidence, absence of demand and desire, surrender to the Divine Will, love concentrated on the Divine—**are some of the main signs [of true love and bhakti].**” (CWSA 29: 356)

13.

“They [***faith, surrender and samatā***] **have to be put into every part and atom of the being** so that there may be no possibility of a contrary vibration anywhere.” (CWSA 29: 102)

“At the same time he has **one thing which can carry him through if he keeps it steadily,— the persistent faith and self-surrender.**” (CWSA 36: 358)

14.

“You can tell him that **the only way of getting out of trouble is to have *faith*, a true, sincere, *unfaltering faith*, and a faith that makes *no demands*.** All the rest is sheer *bargaining*.

Blessings.” (CWM 17: 396)

“One should be satisfied with what one gets and still aspire quietly, without struggle, for more—till all has come. No desire, no struggle—aspiration, faith, openness—and the grace.” (CWSA 29: 60)

15.

“Surrender everything, reject all other desires or interests, **call on the divine Shakti to open the vital nature and bring down calm, peace, light, Ananda into all the centres. Aspire, await with faith** and patience the result. All depends on a complete sincerity and an integral consecration and aspiration.” (CWSA 29: 76)

16.

“**Keep this firm faith in your mind that the thing needed is being done and will be done fully.** There can be no doubt about that.” (CWSA 29: 110)

17.

“**Things that have long acted on the nature take some time to go altogether,** but they are bound to go since you have the sincere desire and your psychic being is growing in your nature. Our help is there always with you. **You have to persist in faith** and quietude and let

the psychic grow more and more, then all will come right and you will no longer have this trouble.” (CWSA 29: 114)

18.

“The sadhak has **to keep his quietude and faith** and equanimity in all conditions—**even when the higher consciousness and experience are not there.**” (CWSA 29: 135)

19.

“There are ... conditions for a disciple for profiting fully from his relation to a spiritual guide.

1st: He must accept him entirely and him alone without submitting himself to any contrary or second influence.

2nd: He must accept the indications given by the Guru and follow them firmly and with full faith and perseverance to the best of his own spiritual capacity.” (CWSA 29: 190)

20.

“It is altogether unprofitable to enquire who or what class will arrive first or last at the goal. The spiritual path is not a field of competition or a race that this should matter. What matters is one’s own aspiration for the Divine, one’s own faith, surrender, selfless self-giving.” (CWSA 29: 213)

21.

“Q: *Until success [in Yoga] actually comes, there is always the chance that it will not come at all.*”

A: The mind can argue like that about anything not yet actually realised and established beyond dispute and without flaw. But **what one has to lean on in Yoga is not the reasonings of the physical mind, but faith in the soul and the secret certitude of the Spirit.**”
(CWSA 35: 635)

22.

“You can explain to X that the death of his nephew had nothing to do with their [*his family members*] obscurities and imperfections—it was part of his own Karma—each person has his own destiny and follows its line; to be in a certain family and with certain relations is only a temporary incident in its course. The sadhak should be free from these attachments and **regard these happenings as ordeals to be passed through with equality and faith in the Divine**—doing his best for those who are in his charge but not disturbed by results.”
(CWSA 28: 526–527)

23.

“There is no reason why he should not succeed in the *yoga* if he keeps the right attitude and faith and

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perseverance. He will necessarily have difficulties with his vital nature and his physical mind which have a strong earth element, but that is the case also with several others." (CWSA 36: 353)

VI—Why Faith Is Necessary in Yoga

1.

“Faith is a necessary means for arriving at realisation **because we are ignorant and do not yet know that which we are seeking to realise;** faith is indeed knowledge giving the ignorance an intimation of itself previous to its own manifestation, it is the gleam sent before by the yet unrisen Sun.” (CWSA 35: 191)

2.

“X upbraids you for losing your reason in blind faith, but what is his view of things except a reasoned faith; you believe according to your faith, which is quite natural, he believes according to his opinion, which is natural also but no better so far as the likelihood of getting at the true truth of things is in question. ... Each reasons according to his view of things, his opinion, that is, his mental constitution and mental preference. **So what’s the use of running down faith which after all gives something to hold on to amidst the contradictions of an enigmatic universe?** If one can get at a knowledge that knows, it is another matter; **but so long as we have only an ignorance that argues, well, there is a place still left for faith**—even, faith may be a glint from the knowledge that knows, however far off, and meanwhile there is not the slightest doubt that it

helps to get things done. There's a bit of reasoning for you! just like all other reasoning too, convincing to the convinced, but not to the unconvincible, i.e., who don't agree with the ground upon which the reasoning dances. Logic after all is only a measured dance of the mind, nothing else." (CWSA 28: 348)

3.

"Every nature, then, is a step towards some super-nature,—towards something natural to itself, but supernatural to that which is below. Life is supernatural to Matter, Mind supernatural to Life, Ideal Being supernatural to Mind, the Infinite Spirit supernatural to ideal being. We must, therefore, accept the supernatural as our goal; for the tendency of our nature to the super-nature just above it is a command of the World Power to be obeyed and not rebelled against & distrusted. It is here that Faith has its importance & Religion, when uncorrupted, its incalculable utility; for our natural mind seeks to dwell in its nature & is sceptical of supernature. **Faith & religion were provisions of the All Wise Energy to accustom the natural & merely mental man to the promptings of the ideal soul in him which seeks even now to escape out of twilight into light, out of groping into truth, out of the senses & reasoning into vision & direct experience.**" (CWSA 12: 111)

4.

“To understand divine movements one must enter into the divine consciousness; till then faith and surrender are the only right attitude. How can the mind judge what is beyond all its measures?” (CWSA 31: 5)

5.

“But all this only means that Science has not any adequate means to deal precisely with the supraphysical nor can it collect and handle all the necessary data; it can deal only with the physical and with the physical side of the supraphysical; and that is not enough. **Faith and knowledge are themselves supraphysical things with which Science cannot deal;** for psychology at present is not a science; it is only a dispute between different bundles of inferences and guesses.” (CWSA 12: 232)

6.

“Faith is our first need; **for without faith in the Divine,** in the existence and the all-importance of the Divine Being **there can be no reason to aspire or to consecrate,** there can be no power in the aspiration or force behind the consecration.” (CWSA 12: 347)

7.

“It is difficult to acquire or to practise this faith and steadfastness on the rough and narrow path of Yoga because of the impatience of both heart and mind and the eager but soon faltering will of our rajasic nature. The vital nature of man hungers always for the fruit of its labour and, if the fruit appears to be denied or long delayed, he loses faith in the ideal and in the guidance. For his mind judges always by the appearance of things, since that is the first ingrained habit of the intellectual reason in which he so inordinately trusts.”(CWSA 23: 244)

8.

“In all Yoga the first requisites are faith and patience. The ardours of the heart and the violences of the eager will that seek to take the kingdom of heaven by storm can have miserable reactions if they disdain to support their vehemence on these humbler and quieter auxiliaries. **And in the long and difficult integral Yoga there must be an integral faith and an unshakable patience.**” (CWSA 23: 244)

9.

“It is quite true that, left to yourself, you can do nothing; that is why you have to be in contact with the [Divine] Force which is there to do for you what you cannot do for yourself. The only thing *you* have to do is to allow the

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Force to act and put yourself on its side, which means to have faith in it, to rely upon it, not to trouble and harass yourself, to remember it quietly, to call upon it quietly, to let it act quietly. If you do that, all else will be done for you—not all at once, because there is much to clear away, but still it will be done steadily and more and more.” (CWSA 29: 188)

10.

“However, to help at the beginning, one can take as a guiding rule that **all that brings with it** or creates peace, **faith**, joy, harmony, wideness, unity and ascending growth **comes from the Truth**; while all that carries with it restlessness, doubt, scepticism, sorrow, discord, selfish narrowness, inertia, discouragement and despair comes straight from the falsehood.” (CWM 12: 302)

11.

“And yet faith is necessary throughout and at every step because it is a needed assent of the soul and without this assent there can be no progress.” (CWSA 24: 773)

12.

“The laws of this world as it is are the laws of the Ignorance and the Divine in the world maintains them so long as there is the Ignorance—if He did not, the universe

would crumble to pieces, *utsīdeyur ime lokāḥ*, as the Gita puts it. There are also, very naturally, conditions for getting out of the Ignorance into the Light. One of them is that the mind of the sadhak should cooperate with the Truth and that his will should cooperate with the Divine Power which, however slow its action may seem to the vital or to the physical mind, is uplifting the nature towards the Light. When that cooperation is complete, then the progress can be rapid enough ...

All the call for faith, sincerity, surrender is only an invitation to make that cooperation more easily possible.”
(CWSA 31: 32)

13.

“How to conciliate these two notions:

(1) that the Divine’s Will is behind all movements and happenings,

(2) that the Divine Will is distorted in the manifestation.

There are two kinds of faith:

The faith that calls down the equanimity and the faith that calls down the realisation.

These two faiths correspond to two different aspects of the Divine.

There is the Transcendent Divine and there is the Cosmic Divine.

The Will of realisation is that of the Transcendent Divine.

The Cosmic Divine is what is concerned with the actual working out of things under the present circumstances. It is the Will of that Cosmic Divine which is manifested in each circumstance, each movement of this world.

The Cosmic Will is not, to our ordinary consciousness, something that acts as an independent power doing whatever it chooses; it works through all these beings, through the forces at play in the world and the law of these forces and their results. It is only when we open ourselves and get out of the ordinary consciousness that we can feel it intervening as an independent power and overriding the ordinary play of the forces.

Then too we can see that even in the play of the forces and in spite of their distortions the Cosmic Will is working towards the eventual realisation of the Will of the Transcendent Divine.

The supramental realisation is the Will of the Transcendent Divine which we have to work out. The circumstances under which we have to work it out are those of an inferior consciousness in which things can be distorted by our own ignorance, weaknesses and mistakes, and by the clash of

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conflicting forces. That is why faith and equanimity are indispensable.” (CWSA 29: 90)

VII—Whatever Is Man's Faith, That He Becomes

1.

"... a faith that is the reflex in the lower consciousness of a Truth or real Idea yet unrealised in the manifestation. It is this self-certainty of the Idea which is meant by the Gita when it says, *yo yac-chraddhaḥ sa eva saḥ*, 'whatever is a man's faith or the sure Idea in him, that he becomes'." (CWSA 23: 44)

2.

"*Yo yacchraddhaḥ sa eva saḥ*. According as is a man's fixed and complete belief, that he is,—not immediately always but sooner or later, by the law that makes the psychical tend inevitably to express itself in the material. The will is the agent by which all these changes are made and old *samiskāras* replaced by new, and the will cannot act without faith." (CWSA 13: 26)

3.

"But this new movement is of the nature of a powerful adventure into the unknown [yoga] or partly known, a daring development and a new conquest, and what then is the clue to be followed, the guiding light on which it can depend or its strong basis in our being? The answer is that the clue and support is to be found in man's

śraddhā, his faith, his will to believe, to live what he sees or thinks to be the truth of himself and of existence. In other words this movement is man’s appeal to himself or to something potent and compelling in himself or in universal existence for the discovery of his truth, his law of living, his way to fullness and perfection. And everything depends on the nature of his faith, the thing in himself or in the universal soul—of which he is a portion or manifestation—to which he directs it and on how near he gets by it to his real self and the Self or true being of the universe.” (CWSA 19: 480–481)

4.

“Now we have to see how the Gita deals with this question on its own line of spiritual teaching and self-discipline. For Arjuna puts immediately a suggestive query from which the problem or one aspect of it arises. When men, he says, sacrifice to God or the gods with faith, *śraddhā*, but abandon the rule of the Shastra, what is that concentrated will of devotion in them, *niṣṭhā*, which gives them this faith and moves them to this kind of action? Is it sattwa, rajas or tamas? to which strand of our nature does it belong? The answer of the Gita first states the principle that the faith in us is of a triple kind like all things in Nature and varies according to the dominating quality of our nature. The faith of each man takes the shape, hue, quality given to it by his stuff of

being, his constituting temperament, his innate power of existence, *sattvānurūpā sarvasya śraddhā* [the faith of each man takes the shape given to it by his stuff of being. (Gita Ch.17:V.3)]. And then there comes a remarkable line in which the Gita tells us that this Purusha, this soul in man, is, as it were, made of *śraddhā*, a faith, a will to be, a belief in itself and existence, and whatever is that will, faith or constituting belief in him, he is that and that is he. *Śraddhāmayo 'yam puruṣo yo yac-chraddhaḥ sa eva saḥ* [This *puruṣa* is made of *śraddhā*, whatever the *śraddhā* in him, he is that and that is he]. If we look into this pregnant saying a little closely, we shall find that this single line contains implied in its few forceful words almost the whole theory of the modern gospel of pragmatism. For if a man or the soul in a man consists of the faith which is in him, taken in this deeper sense, then it follows that the truth which he sees and wills to live is for him the truth of his being, the truth of himself that he has created or is creating and there can be for him no other real truth. This truth is a thing of his inner and outer action, a thing of his becoming, of the soul's dynamics, not of that in him which never changes. He is what he is today by some past will of his nature sustained and continued by a present will to know, to believe and to be in his intelligence and vital force, and whatever new turn is taken by this will and faith active in his very substance,

that he will tend to become in the future. We create our own truth of existence in our own action of mind and life, which is another way of saying that we create our own selves, are our own makers." (CWSA 19: 481–482)

5.

"Thought is not essential to existence nor its cause, but it is an instrument for becoming; I become what I see in myself. All that thought suggests to me, I can do; all that thought reveals in me, I can become. This should be man's unshakable faith in himself, because God dwells in him." Aphorisms (CWSA 13: 200)

6.

"And this assent of the being, its conscious acceptance and will to believe and realise, may be called by the name which the Gita gives to it, his faith, *śraddhā*. The religion, the philosophy, the ethical law, the social idea, the cultural idea in which I put my faith, gives me a law for my nature and its works, an idea of relative right or an idea of relative or absolute perfection and in proportion as I have a sincerity and completeness of faith in it and an intensity of will to live according to that faith, I can become what it proposes to me, I can shape myself into an image of that right or an exemplar of that perfection."(CWSA 19: 478)

7.

“It is what we see and believe with our whole active nature ourselves to be and our relations with the world to mean, it is our faith, our *śraddhā*, that makes us what we are. But the consciousness of man is of a double kind and corresponds to a double truth of existence; for there is a truth of the inner reality and a truth of the outer appearance. According as he lives in one or the other, he will be a mind dwelling in human ignorance or a soul founded in divine knowledge.” (CWSA 19: 573)

8.

“The perfect faith is an assent of the whole being to the truth seen by it or offered to its acceptance, and its central working is a faith of the soul in its own will to be and attain and become and its idea of self and things and its knowledge, of which the belief of the intellect, the heart’s consent and the desire of the life mind to possess and realise are the outward figures. This soul faith, in some form of itself, is indispensable to the action of the being and without it man cannot move a single pace in life, much less take any step forward to a yet unrealised perfection. It is so central and essential a thing that the Gita can justly say of it that whatever is a man’s *śraddhā*, that he is, *yo yacchraddhaḥ sa eva saḥ*, and, it may be added, whatever he has the faith to see as possible in

himself and strive for, that he can create and become.”
(CWSA 24: 771)

9.

“What it believes itself to be by the whole active will of its consciousness in its instruments, that it is or tends to become, *yo yacchraddhaḥ sa eva saḥ*: what it believes it can be and has full faith in becoming, that it changes to in nature, evolves or discovers.

This power of the soul over its nature is of the utmost importance in the Yoga of self-perfection; if it did not exist, we could never get by conscious endeavour and aspiration out of the fixed groove of our present imperfect human being; ...” (CWSA 24: 628)

VIII—Faith Is to Carry Us Through Difficulties

“When the difficulties come, you should call back the **faith; that is the use of faith, to carry you through the difficulties and help to dissipate them.**” (CWSA 31: 207)

“Whatever difficulties or troubles arise, the one thing is to go on quietly with full faith in the Divine Power and the guidance, opening steadily and progressively the whole being to the workings of the sadhana till all becomes conscious and consenting to the needed change.” (CWSA 31: 123)

1.

“It is this play of forces that is trying to bring about your removal to Burdwan and, if it succeeds, you have not to be troubled or shaken or disappointed, but to accept and make use of all that happens for your sadhana and progress. For the play of cosmic forces, the will in the cosmos—as one might say—does not always work apparently in favour of a smooth and direct line for the work or the sadhana, it often brings in what seem to be upheavals, sudden turns which break or deflect the line, opposing or upsetting circumstances or perplexing departures from what had been temporarily settled and established. The one thing is to preserve equanimity and

make an opportunity and means of progress out of all that happens in the course of the life and the sadhana. There is a higher secret Will transcendent behind the play and will of the cosmic forces—a play which is always a mixture of things favourable and things adverse—and it is that Will which one must wait upon and have faith in; but you must not expect to be able always to understand its workings.” (CWSA 28: 564)

2.

“Faith that what happens is always for the best. We may for the moment not consider it as the best because we are ignorant and also blind, because we do not see the consequences of things and what will happen later. But we must keep the faith that if it is like that, **if we rely on the Divine, if we give Him the full charge of ourselves, if we let Him decide everything for us, well, we must know that it is always what is best for us which happens.** This is an absolute fact. To the extent to which you surrender, the best happens to you. This may not be in conformity with what you would like, your preference or desire, because these things are blind: **it is the best from the spiritual point of view, the best for your progress, your development, your spiritual growth, your *true* life.** It is always that. **And you must keep this faith, because faith is the expression of a trust in the Divine** and the full self-

VIII—Faith Is to Carry Us Through Difficulties

giving you make to the Divine. And when you make it, it is something absolutely marvellous. That's a fact, these are not just words, you understand, it is a fact. When you look back, all kinds of things which you did not understand when they happened to you, you realise as just the thing which was necessary in order to compel you to make the needed progress. *Always*, without exception. It is our blindness which prevents us from seeing it." (CWM 6: 349)

3.

"As for Krishna, why not approach simply and straight? The simple approach means trust. If you pray, trust that he hears. If the reply takes long in coming, trust that he knows and loves and that he is wisest in the choice of the time. Meanwhile quietly clear the ground, so that he may not have to trip over stone and jungle when he comes. That is my suggestion and I know what I am saying—for whatever you may say, I know very well all human difficulties and struggles and I know of the cure. That is why I press always on the things that would minimise and shorten the struggles and difficulties,—the psychic turn, faith, perfect and simple confidence and reliance." (CWSA 29: 487–488)

4.

VIII—Faith Is to Carry Us Through Difficulties

“Faith is the surest guide in the darkest days.” (CWM 14: 80)

“The night always is full of promises and we must face it with full faith and confidence.” (CWM 14: 80)

5.

“In an unshakable faith lies all our hope.” (CWM 14: 80)

6.

“In fact, I insist that **the more difficult things are**, the more you must remain quiet, and **the more should you have an unshakable faith**. Of all things this is the most important.” (CWM 6: 453)

7.

“In any case the right spirit [the difficulty faced in the right spirit] means not to lose courage, **not to lose one’s faith**, not to be impatient, not to be depressed; to remain very quiet and peaceful with as much aspiration as one can have, and not worry about what is happening. To have the certitude that this will pass and all will be well. This indeed is the best thing.” (CWM 7: 9–10)

8.

“The joy one experiences in living for an ideal is the sure compensation for all the difficulties of the path.

Have faith in your destiny and your road will be lit.” (CWM 14: 225)

9.

“If you keep your faith unshaken and your heart always open to me, then all difficulties, however great, will contribute to the greater perfection of your being.” (CWM 14: 227)

10.

“All difficulties are there to test the endurance of the faith.” (CWM 14: 229)

“The only way to face them [difficulties, hardships and sufferings] properly is to endure and to put one’s interest, hope and faith in the inner life and consciousness turned towards the Divine, aspiring for the Divine and capable of receiving the Divine’s Force and Help.” (CWM 14: 230)

11.

“There is no law of Nature that cannot be overcome and changed, **if we have the faith that all is ruled by the Lord and that it is possible for us to come into direct contact with Him**, if we know how to escape from the prison-house of age-old habits and give ourselves unreservedly to His will.” (CWM 10: 241)

IX—The Attitude of Faith That the Sadhak Has to Take

1.

“Finding himself in a world which is apparently a chaos of battling powers, a clash of vast and obscure forces, a life which subsists only by constant change and death, menaced from every side by pain, suffering, evil and destruction, **he has to see the omnipresent Deity in it all and conscious that of this enigma there must be a solution and beyond this Ignorance** in which he dwells a Knowledge that reconciles, **he has to take his stand upon this faith, ‘Though Thou slay me, yet will I trust in Thee.’** All human thought or faith that is active and affirmative, whether it be theistic, pantheistic or atheistic, does in fact involve more or less explicitly and completely such an attitude. It admits and it believes: admits the discords of the world, **believes in some highest principle of God, universal Being** or Nature **which shall enable us to transcend, overcome or harmonise these discords**, perhaps even to do all three at once, to harmonise by overcoming and transcending.” (CWSA 19: 47–48)

2.

“The supreme faith is that which sees God in all and to its eye the manifestation and the non-

manifestation are one Godhead. The perfect union is that which meets the Divine at every moment, in every action and with all the integrality of the nature.” (CWSA 19: 400)

3.

“Certain psychological conditions or attitudes of the consciousness tend to increase the receptivity—e.g., humility towards the Guru, devotion, obedience, trust, a certain receptive passivity to his influence.” (CWSA 29: 191)

X—Together with Faith Have Complete Trust in the Divine

1.

"Mother shows the white Champak flower she is holding in her hand. She has named the flower "Psychological Perfection".

Who remembers this?

(Counting the petals) One, two, three, four, five psychological perfections. What are the five psychological perfections?

...

... the first among them all is sincerity.

There is a second, which is obviously, as **indispensable if you want to go forward; it is to have faith**. Or another word, which seems more limited but is for me more important, because (it is a question of experience) **if your faith is not made of a complete trust in the Divine, well, you may very easily remain under the impression that you have faith and yet be losing all trust in the divine Power** or divine Goodness, or the Trust the Divine has in you. These are the three stumbling-blocks:

Those who have what they call an unshakable faith in the Divine, and say, 'It is the Divine who is doing

X—Together with Faith Have Complete Trust in the Divine

everything, who can do everything; all that happens in me, in others, everywhere, is the work of the Divine and the Divine alone', if they follow this with some kind of logic, after some time they will blame the Divine for all the most terrible wrongs which take place in the world and make of Him a real demon, cruel and frightful—if they have no trust.

Or again, they do have faith, but tell themselves, 'Well, I have faith in the Divine, but this world, I see quite well what it's like! First of all, I suffer so much, don't I? I am very unhappy, far more unhappy than all my neighbours'—for one is always far more unhappy than all one's neighbours—'I am very unhappy and, truly, life is cruel to me. But then the Divine is divine, He is All-Goodness, All-Generosity, All-Harmony, so how is it that I am so unhappy? He must be powerless; otherwise being so good how could He let me suffer so much?'

That is the second stumbling-block.

And the third: there are people who have what may be called a warped and excessive modesty or humility and who tell themselves, 'Surely the Divine has thrown me out, I am good for nothing, He can do nothing with me, the only thing for me is to give up the game, for He finds me unworthy of Him!'

So, unless one adds to faith a total and complete trust in the Divine Grace, there will be

X—Together with Faith Have Complete Trust in the Divine

difficulties. So both are necessary....” (CWM 8: 36–39)

“So here’s my proposal: we put surrender first, at the top of the list, that is, we accept what Sri Aurobindo has said—that to do the integral yoga one must first resolve to surrender entirely to the Divine, there is no other way, this is *the* way. But after that one must have the five psychological virtues, five psychological perfections, and we say that these perfections are:

Sincerity or Transparency

Faith or Trust (Trust in the Divine, naturally)

Devotion or Gratitude

Courage or Aspiration

Endurance or Perseverance.” (CWM 8: 42)

XI—Faith and Prayer

1.

“There is a kind of prayer at once spontaneous and unselfish which is like a great call, usually not for one’s own self personally, but like something that may be called an intercession with the Divine. It is extremely powerful. I have had countless instances of things which have been realised almost instantaneously due to prayers of this kind. It implies a great faith, a great ardour, a great sincerity, and a great simplicity of heart also, something that does not calculate, does not plan, does not bargain, does not give with the idea of receiving in exchange.”
(CWM 5: 141–142)

2.

“Prayer and aspiration are a part of the spiritual life and do not conflict with surrender, provided one is not disturbed in either way by the fulfilment or unfulfilment of the prayer and keeps one’s faith and quietude all the same. In the ordinary life prayer is one of the chief elements of human relation with the Divine and is often but not always answered; when it is not answered the religious man keeps his faith in the Divine and either understands that to answer was not the Divine Will or else he prays more fervently till his prayer is heard—that

depends on the man and the circumstances.” (CWSA 29: 365–366)

3.

“Aspiration necessarily implies a faith but not necessarily faith in a divine being; whilst prayer cannot exist if it is not addressed to a divine being. And pray to what? One does not pray to something that has no personality! One prays to someone who can hear us. If there is nobody to hear us, how could one pray? Hence, if one prays, this means that, even when one doesn’t acknowledge it, one has faith in somebody infinitely higher than us, infinitely more powerful, who can change our destiny and change us also, if one prays so as to be heard. That is the essential difference.” (CWM 5: 142–143)

4.

“**Prayer is only a particular form given to** that will, aspiration and **faith**. Its forms are very often crude and not only childlike, which is in itself no defect, but childish; but still it has a real power and significance. **Its power and sense is to put** the will, aspiration and **faith of man into touch with the divine Will** as that of a conscious Being with whom we can enter into conscious and living relations.” (CWSA 24: 567)

5.

“Even the Godward prayer is not always heard—at once, even as faith is not always justified at once. **Both prayer and faith are powers towards realisation which have been given to man to aid him in his struggle**—without them, without aspiration and will and faith (for aspiration is a prayer) it would be difficult for him to get anywhere. But all these things are merely means for setting the Divine Force in action—and it sometimes takes long, very long even, before the forces come into action or at least before they are seen to be in action or bear their result.” (CWSA 29: 366)

XII—Types of Faith

1. Mental, Vital, Physical and Psychic Faith

“Mental faith combats doubt and helps to open to the true knowledge; vital faith prevents the attacks of the hostile forces or defeats them and helps to open to the true spiritual will and action; physical faith keeps one firm through all physical obscurity, inertia or suffering and helps to open to the foundation of the true consciousness; psychic faith opens to the direct touch of the Divine and helps to bring union and surrender.”
(CWSA 29: 99)

“Mental **faith** is very helpful, but it is a thing that can always be temporarily shaken or quite clouded—until the higher consciousness and experience get fixed for good. What endures even if concealed is the inner being’s aspiration or need for something higher which is the soul’s **faith**. That too may be concealed for a time but it reasserts itself—it undergoes eclipse but not extinction.”
(CWSA 29: 98)

“... and **it is only the psychic that gives faith** and devotion.” (CWSA 30: 464)

“The experience of faith, love or aspiration come from the psychic being.” (CWSA 30: 464)

“Q: To which plane does faith belong—mental or psychic?”

A: Faith is an exclusively psychic phenomenon.” (CWM 10: 288)

“Faith and devotion **come from the soul** and it is only when the vital has entirely submitted to the soul that one can truly lead the spiritual life.” (CWSA 31: 136)

“Mental theories are of no fundamental importance, for the mind forms or accepts the theories that support the turn of the being. What is important is that turn and the call within you.

The knowledge that there is a Supreme Existence, Consciousness and Bliss which is not merely a negative Nirvana or a static and featureless Absolute, but dynamic, the perception that this Divine Consciousness can be realised not only beyond but here, and the consequent acceptance of a divine life as the aim of Yoga, do not belong to the mind. It is not a question of mental theory—even though mentally this outlook can be as well supported as any other, if not better,—but of experience and, before the experience comes, of the soul’s faith bringing with it the mind’s and the life’s adhesion. One who is in contact with the higher Light and has the

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experience can follow this way, however difficult it may be for the lower members to follow; one who is touched by it, without having the experience, but having the call, the conviction, the compulsion of the soul's adherence, can also follow it." (CWSA 29: 92)

"... the mental being has a faith and the vital being too can have its faith as well as the physical being. **As for the psychic being, its faith is natural and spontaneous—faith is the very essence of the psychic being.**"(CWM 17: 123)

"The psychic is always turned towards the Divine in faith, joy and confidence—whatever aspiration it has is full of trust and hope." (CWSA 29: 359–360)

"You have seized the right principle again, **to be all for the Mother and to have full confidence that one has only to go on quietly in that confidence and all will come that needs to come and all be done that the Divine wills to be done.** The workings of the world are too subtle and strange and complex for the human mind to understand it—it is only when the knowledge comes from above and one is taken into the higher consciousness that the understanding can come. Meanwhile what one has to follow is the dictates of the deeper psychic heart within **based on that faith** and

love which is the only sure guiding star.” (CWSA 29: 88–89)

“There is only one faith, but it manifests in different parts of the being. I suppose that what the person you refer to calls ‘blind faith’ is the faith in the heart, which needs no *reasons* to exist; but there is also the faith in the mind, which may be based on some kind of reasoning. To be sure of having an unshakable faith, one must have it in every part of the being.”(CWM 17: 124)

“What is the origin of the faith that manifests in the various parts of the being?”

Faith is the expression of a spiritual virtue.” (CWM 17: 124)

2. Ignorant faith, rajasic faith and sattwic faith

“And everything depends on the nature of his faith, the thing in himself or in the universal soul—of which he is a portion or manifestation—to which he directs it and on how near he gets by it to his real self and the Self or true being of the universe. If he is tamasic, obscure, clouded, if he has an ignorant faith, an inept will, he will reach nothing true and will fall away to his lower nature. If he is lured by false rajasic lights, he can be carried away by

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self-will into bypaths that may lead to morass or precipice. In either case his only chance of salvation lies in a return of sattwa upon him to impose a new enlightened order and rule upon his members which will liberate him from the violent error of his self-will or the dull error of his clouded ignorance. If on the other hand he has the sattwic nature and a sattwic faith and direction for his steps, he will arrive in sight of a higher yet unachieved ideal rule which may lead him even in rare instances beyond the sattwic light some way at least towards a highest divine illumination and divine way of being and living. For if the sattwic light is so strong in him as to bring him to its own culminating point, then he will be able advancing from that point to make out his gate of entrance into some first ray of that which is divine, transcendent and absolute. In all effort at self-finding these possibilities are there; they are the conditions of this spiritual adventure.” (CWSA 19: 481)

“All creation indeed since it proceeds from the conscious substance of the Eternal, is a manifestation of him and proceeds by a faith, acceptance, will to be in the originating consciousness, Chit-Shakti.

We are concerned at present, however, not with the metaphysical issue, but with the relation of this will or faith in our being to our possibility of growth into the perfection of the divine nature. This power, this *śraddhā*

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is in any case our basis. When we live, when we are and do according to our desires, that is a persistent act of *śraddhā* belonging mostly to our vital and physical, our tamasic and rajasic nature. And when we try to be, to live and to do according to the Shastra, we proceed by a persistent act of *śraddhā* which belongs, supposing it to be not a routine faith, to a sattwic tendency that is constantly labouring to impose itself on our rajasic and tamasic parts. When we leave both these things and try to be, to live and to do according to some ideal or novel conception of truth of our own finding or our own individual acceptance, that too is a persistent act of *śraddhā* which may be dominated by any one of these three qualities that constantly govern our every thought, will, feeling and act. And again when we try to be, to live and to do according to the divine nature, then too we must proceed by a persistent act of *śraddhā*, which must be according to the Gita the faith of the sattwic nature when it culminates and is preparing to exceed its own clear-cut limits." (CWSA 19: 483–484)

"Sattwic tapasya is that which is done with a highest enlightened faith, as a duty deeply accepted or for some ethical or spiritual or other higher reason and with no desire for any external or narrowly personal fruit in the action. It is of the character of self-discipline and asks for

self-control and a harmonising of one's nature." (CWSA 19: 489)

3. Some have faith spontaneously, others need to make a great effort to have it

"Q: Mother, on what does faith depend?"

A: Probably on Divine Grace. Some people have it spontaneously. There are others who need to make a great effort to have it." (CWM 6: 120–121)

4. Kalyana śraddhā

"Another necessary element is a faith in the heart, a belief in and will to the universal good, an openness to the universal Ananda. The pure psychic being is of the essence of Ananda, it comes from the delight-soul in the universe; but the superficial heart of emotion is overborne by the conflicting appearances of the world and suffers many reactions of grief, fear, depression, passion, short-lived and partial joy. **An equal heart is needed for perfection**, but not only a passive equality; **there must be the sense of a divine power making for good behind all experiences, a faith and will which can turn the poisons of the world to nectar, see the happier spiritual intention behind**

adversity, the mystery of love behind suffering, the flower of divine strength and joy in the seed of pain. **This faith, *kalyana śraddhā*, is needed in order that the heart and the whole overt psychic being may respond to the secret divine Ananda and change itself into this true original essence.** This faith and will must be accompanied by and open into an illimitable widest and intensest capacity for love. For the main business of the heart, its true function is love. It is our destined instrument of complete union and oneness; for to see oneness in the world by the understanding is not enough unless we also feel it with the heart and in the psychic being, and this means a delight in the One and in all existences in the world in him, a love of God and all beings. The heart's faith and will in good are founded on a perception of the one Divine immanent in all things and leading the world." (CWSA 24: 737)

XIII—Example of How Absolute Faith Helps

1. Example how absolute faith in one's destiny saved one from accident

“My brother was at that time governor of the Congo, and he wanted to get back quickly to his post. He asked to be allowed as a passenger on the plane (it was one of those planes for professional tours, to show what these planes could do). Many people wanted to dissuade my brother from going by it; they told him, ‘No, these trips are always dangerous, you must not go on them.’ But finally he went all the same. They had a breakdown and stopped in the middle of the Sahara, a situation not very pleasant. Yet everything was arranged as by a miracle, the plane started again and put down my brother in the Congo, exactly where he wanted to go, then it went farther south. And soon after, half-way the plane crashed—and the other man was killed.... It was obvious that this had to happen. But **my brother had an absolute faith in his destiny, a certitude that nothing would happen. And it was translated in this way:** the mixture of the two atmospheres made the dislocation unavoidable, for there was a breakdown in the Sahara and the plane was obliged to land, but finally everything was in order and there was no real accident. But once he was no longer there, the other man had all the force of

XIII—Example of How Absolute Faith Helps

his “ill- luck” (if you like), and the accident was complete and he was killed.” (CWM 5: 406–407)

XIV—Do Not Demand Miracles to Have Faith

“As in the world, so in ourselves, we cannot see God because of his workings and, especially, because he works in us through our nature and not by a succession of arbitrary miracles. Man demands miracles that he may have faith; he wishes to be dazzled in order that he may see. And this impatience, this ignorance may turn into a great danger and disaster if, in our revolt against the divine leading, we call in another distorting Force more satisfying to our impulses and desires and ask it to guide us and give it the Divine Name.” (CWSA 23: 64)

XV—Short Summary

[This section contains the overall summary of each chapter.]

I—What Is *Śraddhā*, Faith?

1. The English word faith is inadequate to express what *śraddhā* is
2. *Śraddhā* is an influence from the supreme Spirit and its light
3. *Śraddhā* is a message from our supramental being which is calling the lower nature to rise out of its petty present to a great self-becoming and self-exceeding
4. That which receives the influence and answers to the call is the inner soul which knows the truth of its own destiny and mission
5. *Śraddhā*, Faith is the soul's belief in the Divine's existence, wisdom, power, love and grace
6. Confidence and trust are aspects of faith and results of faith
7. Faith is an intuition of the inner being about spiritual things
8. Faith is not mental belief in outward facts
9. Real faith is something spiritual, a knowledge of the soul
10. Faith is spontaneous knowledge in the psychic

11. Faith is knowledge giving the ignorance an intimation of itself
12. Faith is a thing that precedes knowledge, not comes after knowledge
13. Faith is a glimpse of a truth which the mind has not yet seized as knowledge
14. Faith is the soul's witness to something not yet manifested, achieved or realised, but which yet the Knower within us feels to be true or supremely worth following or achieving
15. In Yoga in spite of disappointment and failure there is something that sustains and feels and knows that what it followed after was yet true
16. Faith is a spiritual certitude of the spiritual, the divine, the soul's ideal even when it is not fulfilled in life
17. Faith is a certitude in the soul which does not depend on reasoning
18. The faith may be hidden, eclipsed or seem to be quenched, but it reappears again after the storm or the eclipse
19. Faith is seen burning in the soul
20. Faith may be present within in a doubt racked mind and leads it towards its destined goal
21. Faith is a dynamic intuitive conviction in the inner being of the truth of supersensible things which cannot be proved by any physical evidence but which are a subject of experience

22. Faith is a most desirable preliminary to the desired experience
23. The faith is there in your psychic being
24. Faith is a feeling in the whole being, belief is mental
25. Faith is a dynamic entire belief and acceptance
26. Faith a function of the soul
27. Experience do not necessary lead to faith
28. Having Faith is a psychic attitude by which one can unite with the Divine
29. Faith is only a will aiming at greater truth
30. Faith is confidence in the Divine and the unshakable certitude of the Divine's Victory
31. Faith in its essence is a light in the soul which turns towards the truth even when the mind doubts or the vital revolts or the physical consciousness denies it
32. Faith is an occult light and power from the soul
33. In Yoga Faith is sufficient to start with
34. Integral Yoga is a broad and trackless ocean where faith is your steering-wheel in sadhana

II—What Is Not Faith

1. Faith is not intellectual belief
2. Belief is purely mental
3. Faith in the spiritual sense is not a mental belief
4. Mental belief can waver and change

5. A mental belief is only external form of faith in the mind
6. Faith is not a crude mental belief but the fidelity of the soul to the guiding light within it
7. Tamasic or static and inert faith is not Faith
8. The conclusion formed after proof is not faith, it is knowledge or it is a mental opinion
9. There is no proof that God exists, but if I have faith in God, then I can arrive at the experience of the Divine
10. An egoistic faith in the mental and vital being is not pure faith
11. An egoistic faith is tainted by ambition, pride, vanity, mental arrogance, vital self-will, personal demand, desire for the petty satisfactions of the lower nature
12. The idea that one must first understand and realise before one can seek is a mental error and if it were true would make all sadhana impossible
13. Faith is either blind or it is not faith
14. Reasoned inference, proved conviction or ascertained knowledge is not Faith
15. Blind faith means not ignorantly credulous, but untroubled by the questionings of the intellect and unshaken by outward appearances of fact
16. Faith does not depend on perfection of the sadhak
17. True faith does not depend on circumstances

III—The Fundamental Faith Required in Yoga

- i. All that Sri Aurobindo ask is fundamental faith because these are proper to the consciousness of a spiritual seeker
- ii. The faith that is asked of the sadhak is not an ignorant but a luminous faith, a faith in light and not in darkness
- iii. Yoga can only be done on a basis of faith and confidence in the Divine

The fundamental faith in Yoga is that the Divine exists and the Divine is the one thing to be followed after—nothing else in life is worth having in comparison with that

- iv. So long as a man has faith he is marked for the spiritual life
- v. Even if the man who has faith is full of obstacles and has many years of struggle, he is marked out for success in the spiritual life

Faith demanded as indispensable by the Integral Yoga is Faith in God and the Shakti

Faith in the presence and power of the Divine in us and the world

A faith that all in the world is the working of one Divine Shakti

Faith that all the steps of the Yoga are utilities and necessities of Divine Shakti's workings

And that by a firm and strong dependence on and a total self-surrender to the Divine and to his Shakti in us we can attain to oneness, freedom, victory and perfection

Faith in the Divine Grace

Faith in the truth of the sadhana

- vi. Faith in the eventual triumph of the spirit over its mental and vital and physical difficulties
- vii. Faith in the Path and the Guru

Faith in the Path even when the goal is very far off and the way covered by mist and cloud and smitten repeatedly by the thunderbolt

Faith in one's spiritual destiny—since my heart and soul seek for the Divine, I cannot fail and will reach Him one day

Faith that Divine Will is leading us, through every circumstance, towards the final realisation

viii. Since I want only the Divine, my success is sure

The Divine's own hand will be there secretly leading me to him by his own way and at his own time

He who desires only the Divine shall reach the Divine is a certitude much more certain than that two and two make four

Faith that the Mother is always present with us and her protection is always there, whether we feel it or not

Faith that the Divine Influence is above us and we have to call it down into us as Peace, Light or Force

Faith in the Divine protection and the call for that protection in moments of trial

Faith that what the Divine wills is the best

ix. Faith that if the Divine exists and has called us to the Path

x. Then there must be a Divine Guidance behind and that through and in spite of all difficulties we will arrive

I will go on till I succeed and I will succeed—all difficulties notwithstanding

xi. The Divine exists and since he exists, my following after the Divine cannot fail

xii. I will go on through everything till I find him

Faith that however the lower nature may rise or hostile forces attack, the transformation is sure

Faith and courage needed to trust ourselves into the hands of the Lord

xiii. Faith that remains firm through all difficulties, delays and apparent failures, have patience and single-minded perseverance

xiv. Firm faith and confidence can help the work that is done in us

xv. Firm confidence in the Mother helps the impatience and over eagerness for the result to disappear

xvi. Faith that the Eternal can be Personal or Impersonal

xvii. If the Eternal is impersonal then the actuating Power is a self-illuminated Force that contains all results and calmly works until it accomplishes

xviii. If the Eternal is personal then this personality an all-wise and omnipotent Master of the Yoga whom nothing can prevent from leading us to its goal

xix. Believe that a ray of the true Light can prevail eventually against darkness of this world and the physical nature of man

IV—Intellectual and Emotional Beliefs Need to Be Purified and Transformed

1. We carry with us a number of intellectual beliefs which are not correct and perfect

2. In Yoga it is necessary to refuse to accept as definite and final any kind of intellectual idea or opinion

3. Until that belief is given its right place and luminous shape of truth in a spiritual experience

4. Our emotional beliefs cannot be always sure guides until they too are taken up, purified and transformed

5. Nothing in the lower nature can permanent faith be put

6. We turn always the few distinct truths and the symbols of a religion into hard and fast dogmas

7. Because we are only infants in the spiritual knowledge and are yet far from the science of the Infinite

8. The faith of religion can be justified by an imprecise intuitive knowledge of large spiritual truths and by the subjective experience of souls
9. The Shakti will strike ruthlessly at all that trusts wrongly
10. We must be prepared to abandon a too persistent attachment to forms of faith and cling to the saving reality alone
11. A great and wide spiritual and intelligent faith, which assents to high possibilities, is the character of the śraddhā needed for the integral Yoga
12. We are moving from imperfection towards perfection, and the faith in us must be free from attachment to the forms of our endeavour
13. That which will support him through these changes is a firm faith in the Shakti that is at work
14. We should not allow our faith to be disconcerted by the discovery of its errors, therefore the fundamental faith in the soul was invalid
15. The seeking intelligence has to be trained not to be satisfied with half-truths, mixtures of error
16. The seeking intelligence has to be ready to move forward from truths already held to the greater corrective, completing or transcending truths which at first it was unable

17. The faith of the heart and the life mind must be unattached, a faith that waits upon Truth and is prepared to change and enlarge
18. Our faith must be an assent that receives all spiritual experience with a wide openness and readiness for always more light and truth
19. The faith demanded of us amounts to a large and ever increasing assent of the whole being to the presence and guidance of God and the Shakti
20. The faith in the Shakti, as long as we are not aware of her presence, must be preceded by a firm and virile faith in our own spiritual will and energy
21. The sadhaka should keep the idea that his strength is not his own but that of the divine universal Shakti
22. The power of the divine universal Shakti which is behind our aspiration is illimitable
23. When the power of the divine universal Shakti is rightly called upon it cannot fail to pour itself into us and to remove incapacity and obstacle
24. The faith in the divine Shakti must be always at the back of our strength
25. The intimate feeling of Shakti's presence and her powers and the assent of all our being to her workings in and around it is the last perfection of faith in the Shakti
26. Behind Shakti is the Ishwara and faith in him is the most central thing in the śraddhā of the integral Yoga

27. The faith we must develop is that all things are the workings under the universal conditions of a supreme self-knowledge and wisdom
28. Faith that nothing done in us or around us is in vain or without its appointed place
29. Faith that all things are possible when the Ishwara as our supreme Self and Spirit takes up the action
30. Faith that what has been done before and all that Ishwara will do hereafter will be part of his infallible guidance and intended towards the fruition of our Yoga and our perfection and our life work
31. The highest state of the assent, the śraddhā of the being will be when we feel the presence of the Ishwara

V—In Yoga Faith Is Necessary and Indispensable

1. One is ready for the path when we trust the Divine even when we do not get what we want
2. To prepare for the spiritual life cultivate samata with the faith that the Divine is there and the Divine Will works in all things
3. An unshaken faith is one of the factor for the basis of the siddhi in this Yoga
4. If any activity is done with faith that activity is done by the Divine Power then it can be taken as part of the sadhana

5. A quiet happy faith and confidence is the best foundation for sadhana
6. If you could maintain hope and fervour and faith, there would be a much bigger chance of progressing faster
7. In Yoga let there be only support of Faith leaving your complete past
8. Faith is one of the element of Psychological perfection
9. Faith and courage are the true attitude to keep in the spiritual life
10. Plant a faith firmly in oneself
11. Even if the mind for a time gets clouded this faith reemerges automatically
12. The Radha's love is unshaken and keeps its faith and certitude pointing fixedly like a star to the supreme object of Love
13. Devotion has the one grand necessity, faith
14. By the force of faith a devotee gets his spiritual realisation for which he is at the moment fitted
15. Faith, surrender and samata have to be put into every part and atom of the being
16. The only way of getting out of trouble is to have a true, sincere, unfaltering faith,
17. Await with faith when you call the divine Shakti to open the vital nature and bring down calm, peace

XV—Short Summary

18. Keep this firm faith in your mind that the thing needed is being done
19. If you persist in faith your troubles will go altogether
20. Keep faith even when the higher consciousness and experience are not there
21. Follow indications given by spiritual guide with full faith
22. For spiritual path what matters is aspiration for the Divine, faith, surrender and selfless self-giving
23. In Yoga one has to lean on faith in the soul and the secret certitude of the Spirit
24. Regard the death of a relative as ordeal to be passed through with equality and faith in the Divine
25. One will succeed in the yoga if he keeps the faith and perseverance

VI—Why Faith Is Necessary in Yoga

1. Faith is a necessary because we are ignorant and do not yet know that which we are seeking to realise
2. So long as we have only ignorance there is a place still left for faith
3. Faith gives something to hold on to amidst the contradictions of an enigmatic universe
4. Every nature tends to some super-nature
5. So we must accept the supernatural as our goal

6. The tendency of our nature to the super-nature just above it is a command of the World Power to be obeyed
7. Here only Faith can help on the path to super-nature
8. Faith is a provision of the All Wise Energy to accustom mental man into truth
9. The mind cannot judge what is beyond all its measures
10. The faith is the right attitude till one enters into the divine consciousness
11. Faith is a supraphysical thing which Science cannot deal
12. Without faith in the Divine there can be no reason to aspire or to consecrate
13. It is difficult to practise faith on the rough path of Yoga because of the impatience of both heart and mind and the eager but and soon faltering will of our rajasic nature
14. If the fruit of its labour appears to be denied or long delayed, the vital nature of man loses faith
15. The man's mind judges always by the appearance of things, since that is the first ingrained habit of the intellectual reason
16. Faith and patience are the first requisite in all Yogas because heart and mind of man is impatient
17. The violences of the eager will seeks to take the kingdom of heaven by storm

18. In Yoga you on your own can do nothing, contact with the Divine Force will do for you what you cannot do for yourself
19. To allow the Force to act you must have faith in it, to call upon it to let it act quietly
20. All that brings with it or creates faith, comes from the Truth
21. Faith is a needed assent of the soul and without this assent there can be no progress
22. The call for faith is an invitation to make the cooperation possible to get out of the Ignorance into the Light
23. The circumstances under which we have to work it out the supramental realisation are of an inferior consciousness in which things can be distorted
24. That is why faith and equanimity are indispensable

VII—Whatever Is Man's Faith, That He Becomes

1. Whatever is a man's faith in him, that he becomes
2. Because a faith is the reflex in the lower consciousness of a Truth yet unrealised in the manifestation
3. As is a man's fixed and complete belief in himself that he is
4. By the law that makes the psychical tend inevitably to express itself in the material

5. The man may not become immediately what his faith is
6. The will is the agent by which all old samskaras are replaced by new
7. The will cannot act without faith
8. What is the guiding light on which it can depend in Yoga which is a powerful adventure, a daring development
9. The answer is found in man's śraddhā, his faith, his will to believe, to live what he sees or thinks to be the truth of himself and of existence
10. This faith is man's appeal to something potent and compelling in himself for the discovery of his truth
11. This depends on the nature of his faith, the thing in himself or in the universal soul
12. To which he directs and gets near to his real self or true being of the universe
13. The faith of each man takes the shape, hue, quality given to it by his stuff of being, his constituting temperament, his innate power of existence
14. The truth which he sees and wills to live is for him the truth of his being
15. This truth is a thing of his inner and outer action, a thing of his becoming, the thing that changes
16. He is what he is today by some past will of his nature

17. He will tend to become in the future whatever new turn is taken by this will and faith active in his very substance

18. We create our own truth of existence in our own action

19. I become what I see in myself because God dwells in me

20. Whatever religion, philosophy, ethical law, or the idea, I put my faith in, that gives me a law for my nature and its works

21. And in proportion to sincerity to live according to that faith I can become what it proposes to me

22. It is our faith, that makes us what we are

23. If one lives in the truth of the inner reality, he will be a soul founded in divine knowledge

24. If one lives in the truth of the outer appearance then he will be a mind dwelling in human ignorance

25. The perfect faith is an assent of the whole being to the truth

26. Central working is a faith of the soul in its own will and become of which the belief of the intellect, the heart's consent and the desire of the life mind to possess and realise are the outward figures

27. Whatever man has the faith to see as possible in himself and strive for, that he can create and become

28. The nature changes, evolves or discovers what it believes in

VIII—Faith Is to Carry Us Through Difficulties

1. The will in the cosmos does not always work apparently in favour of a smooth and direct line for the sadhana
2. Sadhana often brings upheavals, sudden turns which break or deflect the line, upsetting circumstances or perplexing departures from what had been temporarily settled and established
3. There is a higher secret Will transcendent behind the play and will of the cosmic forces
4. One must wait upon and have faith in that higher Will
5. Have Faith that whatever happens is always for the best
6. We may for the moment not consider whatever happens as the best because we are ignorant
7. We do not see the consequences of things and what will happen later
8. But if we rely on the Divine, if we give Him the full charge of ourselves
9. Then it is the best from the spiritual point of view, the best for your progress, your development
10. It is the best for your spiritual growth, your true life
11. This faith is the expression of a trust in the Divine and the full self-giving you make to the Divine

12. The psychic turn, faith, perfect and simple confidence and reliance would minimise and shorten the struggles and difficulties

13. Faith is the surest guide in the darkest days

14. In an unshakable faith lies all our hope

15. The more difficult things are, the more you must remain quiet, and the more should you have an unshakable faith

16. To face difficulty in the right spirit means not to lose courage, not to lose one's faith, not to be impatient, not to be depressed; to remain quiet and peaceful with aspiration and to have the certitude that this will pass and all will be well

17. Have faith in your destiny and your road will be lit

18. Keep your faith unshaken and your heart open to the Mother, then all difficulties will contribute to the greater perfection of your being

19. All difficulties are there to test the endurance of the faith

20. The only way to face difficulties properly is to endure and to put one's faith in the inner life

21. The law of Nature can be overcome and changed, if we have the faith that all is ruled by the Lord

IX—The Attitude of Faith That the Sadhak Has to Take

XV—Short Summary

1. To see the omnipresent Deity in all the chaos of the world and in pain, suffering, evil and destruction
2. Faith that there must be a solution beyond this Ignorance of this enigma
3. Faith in some highest principle of God, which shall enable us to transcend, overcome or harmonise these discords
4. The supreme faith sees God in all and to its eye the manifestation and the non-manifestation are one Godhead
5. The attitude of trust in the Divine tend to increase the receptivity

X—Together with Faith Have Complete Trust in the Divine

1. Faith is indispensable if you want to go forward
2. Faith must be made of a complete trust in the Divine
3. If there is no complete trust in the divine in your Faith then there are three stumbling-blocks

XI—Faith and Prayer

1. Things which have been realised instantaneously due to prayers implies a great faith

2. When prayers are not answered the religious man keeps his faith in the Divine
3. He either understands that to answer was not the Divine Will
4. Or else he prays more fervently till his prayer is heard
5. Prayer means one has faith in somebody infinitely higher than us, infinitely more powerful, who can change our destiny and change us also
6. Power of Prayer is to put the faith of man into touch with the divine Will
7. Prayer and faith are powers given to man to aid him in his struggle towards realisation
8. Prayer and faith are means for setting the Divine Force in action

XII—Types of Faith

1. Mental, Vital, Physical and Psychic Faith
 - a. Mental faith combats doubt and helps to open to the true knowledge
 - b. Vital faith prevents the attacks of the hostile forces or defeats them and helps to open to the true spiritual will and action

- c. Physical faith keeps one firm through all physical obscurity, inertia or suffering and helps to open to the foundation of the true consciousness
- d. Psychic faith opens to the direct touch of the Divine and helps to bring union and surrender
- e. Mental faith is very helpful
- f. Mental faith can temporarily be shaken or clouded
- g. Need for something higher is the soul's faith
- h. Soul's faith may be concealed for a time but it reasserts itself
- i. Soul's faith can undergo eclipse but not extinction
- j. Psychic gives faith
- k. Soul's Faith: There is a Supreme Existence, Consciousness and Bliss which is not merely a negative Nirvana, but dynamic
- l. Soul's Faith: The perception that this Divine Consciousness can be realised not only beyond but here
- m. Soul's Faith: The acceptance of a divine life is the aim of Yoga
- n. Faith is the very essence of the psychic being
- o. The dictates of the deeper psychic heart within based on faith is the sure guiding star
- p. To be sure of having an unshakable faith, one must have it in every part of the being

2. Ignorant faith, rajasic faith and sattvic faith

- a. When we live according to our desires, it is a persistent act of śraddhā belonging mostly to our vital and physical, our tamasic and rajasic nature
 - b. When we try to live according to the Shastra, we proceed by a persistent act of śraddhā which belongs to a sattwic tendency that is labouring to impose itself on our rajasic and tamasic parts
 - c. When we try to live according to the divine nature, then too we must proceed by a persistent act of śraddhā, which is the faith of sattwic nature when it culminates and is preparing to exceed its own clear-cut limits
 - d. Sattwic tapasya is that which is done with a highest enlightened faith
3. Some have faith spontaneously, others need to make a great effort to have it
 4. Kalyana śraddhā
 - a. Kalyana śraddhā is belief in and will to the universal good
 - b. This faith and will can turn the poisons of the world to nectar
 - c. This faith sees the happier spiritual intention behind adversity
 - d. This faith sees the mystery of love behind suffering

- e. This faith sees the flower of divine strength and joy in the seed of pain
- f. This faith, kalyana śraddhā, is needed in order that the heart and the whole overt psychic being may respond to the secret divine Ananda

XIII—Example of How Absolute Faith Helps

- 1. Example of how absolute faith in one's destiny saved one from accident

XIV—Do Not Demand Miracles to Have Faith

- 1. God works in us through our nature and not by a succession of arbitrary miracles
- 2. If man demands miracles that he may have faith then it may turn into a great danger and disaster
- 3. We then call in another distorting Force and not divine force
- 4. Demanding miracles is our revolt against the divine leading

