

# Evolution

of the Divine living within people

# Transformation

of the physical body

# and the Perceptible Breath

**Experiences, Insights and Visions  
on the basis of the work of  
Sri Aurobindo, Mirra Alfassa  
and Ilse Middendorf**

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## Contents

<b>Foreword</b>	4
<b>1.0 Why this publication? – An Introduction</b>	5
<b>2.0 Introduction to the subject</b>	8
2.1 Sri Aurobindo and Mirra Alfassa About them – their aims – their teachings	9
2.2 Ilse Middendorf - as a Person - the Perceptible Breath	19
2.3 The most important books for this theme	22
2.4 Stages in my study of Yoga and Evolution	23
<b>3.0 Evolution, Transformation and the Perceptible Breath</b>	24
3.1 The most important stages of experiences up to now of the supramental consciousness and that of the Superman through The Mother	26
3.2 The question of the “how” of unifying the physical and subtle-physical body	33
3.3 Diverse Interconnections and Indications of the Experience of Breath regarding Mirra Alfassa’s Goals	37
3.3.1 Ilse Middendorf’s mission	37
3.3.2 My Experience of the Power of Kundalini	37
3.3.3 Cornelis Veenings Encounter with Mirra Alfassa	37
3.3.4 The new consciousness of body – “the new breathing” My peak experience from October 1972	38
3.3.5 The golden earth – my experience of the Divine which lives within matter (September 1975)	40
3.4 The work on the physical body – Reports of Mirra Alfassa about her experiences and discoveries in the years 1950 to 1973	41
3.4.1 The required abilities and characteristics of the body: Heightening of its ability to sense, receptiveness, ability to focus as well as its ability to surrender and attentiveness	48
3.4.2 The necessity of quietening the Mind and the Vital in the work on, with and through the physical body (in historical chronology)	50
3.5 Correspondence between the elements of work in the Methodology of The Mother (to transform the body) and the Experience of Breath after Ilse Middendorf	53
3.5.1. The abilities and characteristics of the body which can be developed: The ability to sense, receptiveness, ability to focus as well as the ability to surrender and attentiveness.	56
3.5.2 Further points in common in the methodology and the elements of work	58

3.6	The practical work required	60
3.6.1	The purging of the physical body	61
3.6.2	Recommended exercise for unity with the body of the transitional stage	64
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>67</b>
	Recommended literature	68
	Some information about the author	69

## Foreword

I have chosen the Internet as a suitable medium for this publication so that I can make an introduction to the theme available free of charge world-wide to all those who have an interest in it.

Another reason for me to publish this in the Internet was that I can as a result continually rework the text and expand it. So I shall include in the text motivating suggestions, amendments, reports of experiences etc. and by request add on entire contributions by other writers.

The Ilse-Middendorf-Institut in Beerfelden (Germany) distributes copies of the computer printout. The format: is in the size A4, 69 pages, spirally bound, and so always in the current version. Price: € 10,- incl. postage (within Germany).

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## 1.0 Why this publication? – An Introduction

At the outset a comment about the name Mirra Alfassa: Sri Aurobindo called Mirra Alfassa “The Mother” and everyone since then who has been close to her work likewise calls her that.

Human evolution has not yet been completed in the form that people are nowadays. Sri Aurobindo and The Mother had a conscious and complete view as to what the result would be of the next phase of evolution which would find its most salient expression in the transformation of the physical body. Sri Aurobindo called the consciousness which would achieve this transformation the “Supramental Consciousness”.

Whereas the goal was clearly recognized, for a long time there was complete uncertainty about what characteristics and abilities had to be developed in order to come into contact with the supramental consciousness. While Sri Aurobindo in his last book ‘The Manifestation of the Supramental’ (1948) still expressed the supposition that first of all the higher Mind needed to be trained and the psychic being developed, before the work on the transformation of the physical body could be begun, The Mother’s research in the years 1950 to 1973 (above all in the years 1967 to 1970) demonstrated without a doubt that it must be begun with the body. The Mother on the 17th of July 1968: ***“That’s just what the body’s transformation is about! It’s when the physical cells become not only conscious, but RECEPTIVE to the true Consciousness-Force, that is, when they allow the working of that higher Consciousness. That’s the work of transformation....Not so easy !”***

24th May 1969: ***“There’s the absolute CERTITUDE” (Mother clenches her two fists) “that there’s only ONE way out of all that, only ONE—only one, not two, there’s no choice, there aren’t a few possibilities, there’s only one: it’s ... the supreme Door. The Marvel of Marvels. All the rest ... all the rest is an impossibility.”***

30th October 1971: ***“It’s a hundred times more marvelous than we can possibly imagine. We need to find the plasticity of matter—so that matter can progress forever. That’s it.”***

Her experiences and discoveries in this field remained until 1973 completely unknown to all her students – with the exception of Satprem – and only through the publication of Mother’s 13 volume diary (through Satprem) did they gradually become known. It emerged too that Mother on a subtle-physical level had created a body of which she stated that it represented a necessary in-between step which now had to be connected with the physical bodies of people before their transformation itself could take place. This publication concerns itself therefore with the question of in what way practical work on, with and through the body might look in order to become conscious of this in-between step, and makes some proposals as to how in a practical sense to work on the dawning of consciousness of the physical body: that entails using exercises.

In doing so the question is raised as to whether the yogic methods practiced and proven over many centuries (and other paths of a spiritual type) could be transferred to the work with the body.

All higher mind/spiritual paths (including the Integral Yoga of Sri Aurobindo) are based on a purging of the external being, that is of the Mind and Vital. The conditions and course taken of these cathartic processes are very well known. As I explain below, they are however not suitable for the path which The Mother proposed.

Before the work by The mother the attempt had not been made to unite the physical body – and its cells – with the Divine consciousness. The body was always perceived as a vessel for spirit and soul. The attention which the body experiences in Hatha Yoga concerns not its transformation but rather the wish, to attain mastery over it, to control its functions so as to be able to open oneself spiritually without being disturbed by it and its desires.

After the 29th February 1956 when the so-called “supramental consciousness” came down to Earth and took its effect (chapter 3.1), the time has come to create for the physical body in the trinity “body – soul – spirit” a place equal to that accorded to the spirit and the soul so the body itself awakes to a consciousness of the divine which could bring about its transformation.

On the basis of Mother’s research and her experiences above all from the year 1967, we are able nowadays to state the basis and pre-conditions which are required for the work on the physical body:

***Heightening of its ability to sense, receptiveness, ability to focus as well as its ability to surrender and attentiveness.***

These abilities and characteristics are exactly those which are situated at the center of the work with the **Perceptible Breath (after Ilse Middendorf)**, and

which constitute its fundamentals. Along with this remarkable fact, numerous experiences and visions of Ilse Middendorf, likewise those of the present author, have demonstrated that the Perceptible Breath plays a significant role in the preparation of the body, the ability to perceive the supramental reality, and the transforming of the physical body. In this way the growing numbers of seekers after truth are offered a method with which they can very practically and directly work on the dawning of consciousness of the physical body.

Happily the necessary cathartic processes of the physical body require less time than those of the higher mind-spiritual path, and are easy to fulfill than those, so that everyone is in a position to take part in this process. Whereas, for example, ten years ago one needed five hours for the communication of a particular breathing experience, today one only needs one hour. Mother explained this phenomenon with the following words:

***“From the progress which an individual makes in the dawning of consciousness of the physical body all (bodies) in the world profit!”***

Some days after I had begun with the work for this publication, the following sentences formed themselves in my intuitive consciousness which I wrote out en bloc– without looking at them in my Mind during that :

The path of supramental consciousness – first through a body formed by The Mother on a subtle-physical level – to help it to a realization takes place exclusively (!) in the physical body, and through the work with it and on it. It does not take place through an intensification or healing of some other part of a person, neither through a higher Mind nor through their inner and psychic being, nor is it in any other way

dependent on whether – and to what extent – the outer Mind and Vital are purged. Only in this way can a large (and requisite) number of people take part in this work. During the practical work on, with and through the physical body the Experience of Breath (after Ilse Middendorf) assumes great importance.

The work on a psychic-spiritual level including the purging of the Vital and the mental does not in any way become redundant through the work suggested here on the physical body. On the contrary: a physical body which no longer stands under the influence of the Cellular mind which have been working unchanged for three million years, but rather (at least partly) is unified with the consciousness of the new subtle-physical body will give all endeavors a completely new basis above all in the purging of physical and mental so that the cathartic process

can become in the words of Sri Aurobindo a “sunlit path” on which the so-called ego allows with greater pleasure itself to be led by an inner direction.

The work proposed here, through and with the help of the Experience of Breath to reach a silence of the Vital and Mind, preparing oneself intensely with sensing to concentrate on the subtle-physical body formed by The Mother, represents in no way a “further development” of the Perceptible Breath. Rather it affects its development in respect of the possibilities through it to be able to build up connections to the inner being. It is much more a very specialized application of the potentials which exist in the Perceptible Breath.

Sarti, the 19th May 2001

Helge Langguth

## 2.0 Introduction to the subject

For readers who are not familiar with the work and the aims of Sri Aurobindo, The Mother and Ilse Middendorf, I would like to give an overview in this chapter of the basics upon which my proposals for practical work are based. For a more advanced view I recommend the last book by Sri Aurobindo 'The Manifestation of the Supramental' first published in 1948. A fine survey of the entire canon is to be found in the newly written volume by Satprem titled: 'Sri Aurobindo or the Adventure of Consciousness'.

In order to comprehend – or better to be able to live what the Experience of Breath (after Middendorf) is all about, I would recommend first of all to take part in a five-day basics seminar "The Experience of Breath" (and only then if necessary to read about it.)

The corresponding courses for Berlin and Beerfelden in the Odenwald region of Germany can be found at:

[www.Erfahrbarer-Atem.de](http://www.Erfahrbarer-Atem.de)

or if you find easier to remember

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We send a brochure as well the list of courses also by post (free of charge).

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## 2.1 Sri Aurobindo und Mirra Alfassa About them – their aims – their teachings

**Sri Aurobindo:** whether as poet, yogi or as prophet of an evolution yet to come – Sri Aurobindo is regarded by many as the greatest exponent in these fields in modern times. Like The Mother he is an “Avatar” i.e. a person to whom the Divine consciousness spontaneously opened at the highest levels in order that he be informed about forthcoming changes and be encouraged to work for those changes.

Sri Aurobindo commented on his outer life that it revealed nothing about his life as an avatar. He was born on the 15th of August 1872 in Calcutta. His father sent him at the age of seven to a school in England. He completed there his studies at King’s College Cambridge. During his period as a student he learned a number of languages including Latin, Greek, French and German so that he could read all the philosophical works of the West in the original.

At the beginning of 1893 he returned to India and took a job in the Princedom of Baroda. In 1906 he started to edit the journal ‘Bande Mataran’ which called on the people – with great success – to take part in resistance against British rule.

Up till 1904 Sri Aurobindo had not concerned himself with yoga. He commenced a study of Hatha Yoga (five to six hours daily). In the search for further guidance, he met the Guru Vishnu Bhashar Lele from Maharashtra. The latter gave him the task: make your spirit “empty”. Sri Aurobindo later wrote about this in “On himself“:

**“Sit down,” I was told, “look and you will see that your Thoughts come into you from outside. Before they enter, fling them back.” I sat down and looked and saw to my astonishment that it was so; I saw and felt concretely the thought approaching as if to enter through or above the head and was able to push it back concretely before it came inside.**

**In three days – really in one – my mind became full of an eternal silence – it is still there.**

From that moment, in principle, the mental being in me became a free Intelligence, a universal Mind, not limited to the narrow circle of personal thought as a labourer in a thought factory, but a receiver of knowledge from all the hundred realms of being and free to choose what it willed in this vast sight-empire and thought-empire.”

In Muzzafarpur on the 30th of April, 1908 terrorists threw a bomb at the District Magistrate which killed two female bystanders. On the 4th of May Sri Aurobindo was arrested and jailed in Alipar. That ended his political career. In the following year in a remand prison (under inhuman conditions) Sri Aurobindo’s insight into what his genuine task consisted of were transformed fundamentally – also under the impact of visions. On the 6th of May, 1909, he was acquitted.

At the end of March 1910 he received a confidential message that the government intended to imprison him once again. On that he fled, obeying an inner voice and directive, to Pondicherry which at that time was occupied by the French.

He arrived there on the 4th of April 1910. He had few students and the external conditions under which he began his work were tough.

On the 29th of March 1914 he met Mirra Alfassa for the first time. She had sought him out, recognized him, however, as the person who had often appeared to her in her meditations.

On the 5th of December 1950 Sri Aurobindo left his body in order he might, as Mother put it: **“to be able to help us better from the other side”**.

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**The Mother:** Mirra Alfassa born in 1926 on the 21st of February 1878 in Paris and known as “The Mother”. Her family was well-to-do, and she obtained a thorough education in music, painting and higher

mathematics. She was a student of the painter Gustav Moreau and knew most of the famous Impressionist artists which was at that time in vogue.

Already in her childhood and teenage Mirra Alfassa was aware of her divine ancestry. Max Theón a personality with wide-ranging knowledge of and abilities in the occult sphere was the first person who was able to provide for her a coherent explanation of her countless inner experiences since her childhood.

A journey to India which she had undertaken led to her first meeting with Sri Aurobindo on the 29th of March 1914. After a period of residence in Japan until 1920 she returned to Pondicherry for good in 1920.

When in 1926 Sri Aurobindo retreated for the rest of his life to his quarters to devote himself to working concretely on yoga, he passed on to her the direction of the ashram, named her from this point in time “The Mother”, and published the book ‘The Mother’.

When in 1950 Sri Aurobindo departed from his body, he transferred important skills and powers of consciousness to The Mother. She reported to Satprem on the 20th of December 1972:

***“He had accumulated a great deal of supramental force in his body, and as soon as he left he.... He was on his bed, you see, and I was standing beside him, and all the supramental force that was in him passed quite concretely from his body into mine—so concretely that I thought it was visible. I could feel the friction of the passage.***

***It was extraordinary—extraordinary! It was an extraordinary experience. It went on for a long, long time like this (gesture of the Force passing into Mother's body). I was standing beside his bed, and it passed into me. Almost physical—it was a physical sensation. It lasted a long time.***

***That's all I know.”***

She began to search for a way in which the supramental consciousness which Sri Aurobindo had seen could be fully realized. Soon after it became apparent that the work on, with and through the physical body had to begin and not, as Sri Aurobindo had supposed through the development of a higher Mind and of the psychic being.

In 1969 Mother recognised that she (with the help of Sri Aurobindo “on the other side”) had formed a (her) body at the subtle-physical level which was an in-between stage on the path to a transformation once and for all of the physical body, and whose formation she attempted (in vain) in her own physical body until 1973

The subtle-physical level named above is not identical with the so-called “occult” level and the level of the finestuff which some people have the ability to perceive. The occult level is a sub-domain of the finestuff level, and this in turn a part of the subtle-physical level. The Mother had already at the beginning of her experiences with yoga experienced that the supramental Consciousness cannot be achieved through the means and powers of the occult level.

The work of the mother and her concern with the physical body remained fully incomprehensible to her students (with the exception of Satprem). She stated on the 24th of May 1969 to him: ***“Mon petit, you are helping me as much as you can. It's very good.... There's one thing: you are the only one I can talk to. And that's good. From a general standpoint, I am very grateful for that —you are the only one I can talk to. The others don't understand. - The others don't understand.”***

Some of them held her to be insane – many senile. During her almost daily conversations with Satprem, the tape recorder was running. Satprem published these tape recordings in the 13 volume work “Mother’s Agenda” (with almost 5,000 pages). Since their publication (first in French, then in English – in German up to volume 11 and the year 1970 has been translated) ever more followers of Sri Aurobindo and The Mother have begun to understand her concern and work, and have been trying to find ways to transform the body.

On the 17th of November 1973 The Mother passed away, and left to us the task of working with and on the body so that the body which formed itself within her at the subtle-physical level can reveal itself as the first stage to its definitive supramental transformation.

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## Her goals and her teaching

Mother: ***“In nature there is an ascending evolution from stones to plants, from plants to animals, from animals to people. Since the human being of today is the last rung at the summit of ascending evolution, they consider themselves to be last stage of this process of improvement, and they believe that there can be nothing on Earth better than them. In this they are mistaken. In his physical nature he is still almost an animal, a thinking and speaking animal indeed but in his physical habits nevertheless an animal. Without a doubt Nature cannot be satisfied with such an incomplete result; it strives to bring forth a being which would be in relation to people what people are to animals, a being which will remain in outer form like a human but whose consciousness is, however, far above the Mind and its slavery to ignorance.*”**

***Sri Aurobindo came to the Earth in order to herald this truth to humanity. He taught them that people were a transitional creation which lives in a Mind consciousness but has the chance to achieve a new consciousness – the consciousness of truth; and that they possess the ability to live a life which is totally harmonic, good and fine and completely conscious.***

***During his life on earth, Sri Aurobindo dedicated himself exclusively to the task of setting up that consciousness, which he termed “supramental“ and to help those who had gathered around him to self-fulfillment.”***

The consciousness which enables the next stage of evolution was dubbed by him the “supramental consciousness”

and he stressed that it was not the spiritual consciousness to which humanity has up till now begun contact: ***“If spiritual and supramental were the same, as readers assume according to what you said, then in that case all the sages and their admirers, Yogis and Saddhus in the course of time would have become supramental beings, and everything which I have written about the supramental would be highly irrelevant, useless and without purpose. Everyone who has spiritual experiences would then become a supramental being, and likewise every other ashram in India.”***

While the entire established world of orthodox science believes that first of all came material, and that consciousness (in people in its most advanced i.e. most differentiated expression) was a result of material (chemical-physical) processes, that is the “**Primacy of Material**” is the case. In contrast for the most part higher mind/spiritually orientated people including Sri Aurobindo and The Mother, have a conception of the world with the principle of the “**primacy of consciousness**”. From that viewpoint results the important realization that the body is not the producer of spirit and soul as materialists believe but rather its instrument.

Mother stated about the “primacy of consciousness” on the 19th of November.1969:

***“In the Supreme it's a unity that contains all possibilities perfectly united, without differentiation. The creation is, so to speak, the projection of all that makes up that unity, by dividing all opposites, that is to say, by separating (that's what was caught by those who said that creation is separation), by separating: for instance, day and night, white and black, evil and good, and so on (all that is our explanation).*”**

***All together, all of it together is a perfect unity, immutable and ... indissoluble. The creation is the separation of all that "makes up" this unity—we might call it the division of the consciousness—the division of the consciousness, which starts from unity conscious of its unity to arrive at unity conscious of its multiplicity IN UNITY.***

Even though the characteristics of the transformed body which Mother stated may seem “unbelievable” from the viewpoint of today’s level of consciousness, in those times during which there was no respiration from the lungs, the idea of such breathing in the future would likewise also have seemed “unbelievable”.

So the goal consists of unifying oneself with the supramental consciousness which is connected with a transformation of the physical body. The results of The Mother’s researches established that this goal cannot be reached in one step, that means, the leap from the normal consciousness of the body to the supramental consciousness is too big to be mastered in one step so that an intermediary step into the subtle-physical level is required. So The Mother was concerned with the formation of this body in the subtle-physical which she was able to do with the help of Sri Aurobindo. Her next goal was to incarnate this new form of being in her own physical body but this she was not able to achieve. This task is on the agenda for humankind, that means “we” have to resolve this question. Her teaching consists essentially in referring us to the necessity that the work has to take place in and through the physical body (right down to the cellular level) – and not as Sri Aurobindo surmised – through the development of a being on a higher Mind and soul level.

On the 9th of Dec.1971 Satprem wrote a speech for the Indian radio station on the occasion of the centennial of Sri Aurobindo, in which he describes in unsurpassed manner Aurobindo's aims and which outstanding and important place the physical body occupies.

**Satprem ( to Page 17)  
SRI AUROBINDO AND THE  
EARTH'S FUTURE**

Sometimes a great wandering Thought sees the ages still unaccomplished, seizes the Force in its eternal flow and precipitates upon earth the powerful vision, which is like a power of realizing what it sees. The world is a vision becoming real. Indeed its past and its present are not the result of an obscure impulse coming from the womb of time, of a slow accumulation of sediments which little by little mold us—and stifle us and imprison us. It is the powerful golden attraction of the future which draws us in spite of ourselves, as the sun draws the lotus from the mud, and forces us to a glory greater than any our mud or efforts or present triumphs could have foreseen or created.

Sri Aurobindo is this vision and this power of precipitating the future into the present. What he saw in an instant the ages and millions of men will unwittingly accomplish. Unknowingly they will seek the new imperceptible quiver that has entered the earth's atmosphere. From age to age great beings come amongst us to hew a great opening of Truth in the sepulchre of the past. And in actuality, these beings are the great destroyers of the past. They come with the sword of Knowledge to shatter our fragile empires.

This year, we are celebrating Sri Aurobindo's Birth Centenary. He is known to barely a handful of men and yet his name will resound when the great men of today or yesterday are buried under their own debris. His work is discussed by philosophers, praised by poets, people acclaim his sociological vision and his yoga—but Sri Aurobindo is a living ACTION, a Word becoming real, and every day in the thousand circumstances that seem to want to rend the earth and topple its structures we can witness the first reflux of the Force he has set in motion. At the beginning of this century, when India was still struggling against British domination, Sri Aurobindo asserted: "It is not a revolt against the British Government [that is needed].... It is, in fact, a revolt against the whole universal Nature." (A.B. Purani, *Evening Talks*, p. 45.)

For the problem is fundamental. It is not a question of bringing a new philosophy to the world or new ideas or illuminations, as they are called. The question is not of making the Prison of our lives more habitable, or of endowing man with ever more fantastic powers. Armed with his microscopes and telescopes, the human gnome remains a gnome, pain-ridden and helpless. We send rockets to the moon, but we know nothing of our own hearts. It is a question, says Sri Aurobindo, "of creating a new physical nature which is to be the

habitation of the Supramental being in a new evolution." (*On Himself*, XXVI.112.)

For, in actuality, he says, "the imperfection of Man is not the last word of Nature, but his perfection too is not the last peak of the Spirit." (*The Life Divine*, XIX.763.)

Beyond the mental man we are, there exists the possibility of another being who will be the spearhead of evolution as man was once the spearhead of evolution among the great apes. "If," says Sri Aurobindo, "the animal is a living laboratory in which Nature has, it is said, worked out man, man himself may well be a thinking and living laboratory in whom and with whose conscious co-operation she wills to work out the superman, the god." (*The Life Divine*, XVIII.3.)

Sri Aurobindo has come to tell us how to create this other being, this supramental being, and not only to tell us but actually to create this other being and open the path of the future, to hasten upon earth the rhythm of evolution, the new vibration that will replace the mental vibration—exactly as a thought one day disturbed the slow routine of the beasts—and will give us the power to shatter the walls of our human prison.

Everywhere about us we see this paroxysmal shattering of all the old forms: our borders, our churches, our laws, our morals are collapsing on all sides. They are not collapsing because we are bad, immoral, irreligious, or because we are not sufficiently rational, scientific or human, but because we have come to the end of the human ! To the end of the old mechanism—for we are on our way to SOMETHING ELSE. The world is not going through a moral crisis but through an "evolutionary crisis." We are not going towards a better world—nor, for that matter, towards a worse one—we are in the midst of a MUTATION to a radically different world, as different as the human world was from the ape world of the Tertiary Era. We are entering a new era, a supramental Quinary. We leave our countries, wander aimlessly, we go looking for drugs, for adventure, we go on strike here, enact reforms there, foment revolutions and counterrevolutions. But all this is only an appearance; in fact, unwittingly, we are looking for the new being. We are in the midst of human evolution.

And Sri Aurobindo gives us the key. It may be that the sense of our own revolution escapes us because we try to prolong that which already exists, to refine it, improve it, sublimate it. But the ape may have made the same mistake amid its revolution that produced man; perhaps it sought to become a superape, better equipped to climb trees, hunt and run, a more agile and

clever ape. With Nietzsche we too sought a "superman" who was nothing more than a colossalization of man, and with the spiritualists a supersaint more richly endowed with virtue and wisdom. But human virtue and wisdom are useless! Even when carried to their highest heights they are nothing more than the old poverties gilded over, the obverse of our tenacious misery. "Supermanhood," says Sri Aurobindo, "is not man climbed to his own natural zenith, not a superior degree of human greatness, knowledge, power, intelligence, will, . . . genius, . . . saintliness, love, purity or perfection." (*The Hour of God*, XVII.7. 2.)

It is SOMETHING ELSE, another vibration of being, another consciousness.

But if this new consciousness is not to be found on the peaks of the human, where then, are we to find it? Perhaps, quite simply in that which we have most neglected since we entered the mental cycle, in the body. The body is our base, our evolutionary foundation, the old stock to which we always return, and which painfully compels our attention by making us suffer, age and die. "In that imperfection," Sri Aurobindo assures us, "is the urge towards a higher and more many-sided perfection. It contains the last finite which yet yearns to the Supreme Infinite.... God is pent in the mire ... but the very fact imposes a necessity to break through that prison." (*Dilip K. Roy, Sri Aurobindo Came to Me*, p. 415.)

That is the old, uncured illness, the unchanged root, the dark matrix of our misery, hardly different now from what it was in the time of Lemuria. It is this physical substance which we must transform, otherwise it will topple, one after another, all the human or super-human devices we try to graft on it. This body, this physical cellular substance contains "almighty powers," (*Savitri*, IV.III.370.) a dumb consciousness that harbors all the lights and all the infinitudes, just as much as the mental and spiritual immensities do. For, in truth, all is Divine and unless the Lord of all the universe resides in a single little cell he resides nowhere. It is this original, dark cellular Prison which we must break open; for as long as we have not broken it, we will continue to turn vainly in the golden or iron circles of our mental prison. "These laws of Nature," says Sri Aurobindo, "that you call absolute ... merely mean an equilibrium established by Nature.... It is merely a groove in which Nature is accustomed to work in order to produce certain results. But, if you change the consciousness, then the groove also is bound to change." (*A.B. Purani, Evening Talks, p. 92.*)

Such is the new adventure to which Sri Aurobindo invites us, an adventure into man's unknown. Whether we like it or not, the whole earth is moving into a new groove, but why shouldn't we like it? Why shouldn't we collaborate in this great, unprecedented adventure? Why shouldn't we collaborate in our own evolution, instead of repeating endlessly the same old story, instead of chasing hallucinatory paradises which will never quench our thirst or otherworldly paradises which leave the earth to rot along with our bodies? "Why be born if it is to get out at the end?" exclaims the Mother, who continues Sri Aurobindo's work. "What is the use of having struggled so much, suffered so much, of having created

something which, in its outer appearance at least, is so tragic and dramatic, if it is only to learn how to get out of it—it would have been better not to start at all.... Evolution is not a tortuous course that brings us back, somewhat battered, to the starting point. Quite the contrary, it is meant," says Mother, "to teach the whole of creation the joy of being, the beauty of being, the grandeur of being, the majesty of a sublime life, and the perpetual development, perpetually progressive, of this joy, this beauty, this grandeur. Then everything has a meaning."

(*Questions and Answers*, November 12, 1958.)

This body, this obscure beast of burden we inhabit, is the experimental field of Sri Aurobindo's yoga—which is a yoga of the whole earth, for one can easily understand that if a single being among our millions of sufferings succeeds in negotiating the evolutionary leap, the mutation of the next age, the face of the earth will be radically altered. Then all the so-called powers of which we boast today will seem like childish games before the radiance of this almighty embodied spirit. Sri Aurobindo tells us that it is possible—not only possible but that it will be done. It is being done. And perhaps everything depends not so much on a sublime effort of humanity to transcend its limitations—for that means still using our own human strength to free ourselves from human strength—as on a call, a conscious cry of the earth to this new being which the earth already carries within itself. All is already there, within our hearts, the supreme Source which is the supreme Power—only we must call it into our forest of cement, we must understand the meaning of man, the meaning of our selves. The amplified cry of the earth, of its millions of men and women who cannot bear it anymore, who no longer accept their prison, must open a crack to let the

new vibration in. Then all the apparently ineluctable laws that bind us in their hereditary and scientific groove will crumble before the Joy of the "sun-eyed children." (*Savitri, IR.JV.343.*)

Expect nothing from death," says Mother, "life is your salvation. It is in life that you must transform yourself. It is on earth that you progress and on earth that you realize. It is in the body that you win the Victory." (*On the Dhammapada.*)

"Nor let worldly prudence whisper too closely in thy ear," says Sri Aurobindo, "for it is the hour of the unexpected." (*The Hour of God, XVII.I.*)

Pondicherry, 9 December 1971  
Satprem

#### **Description of some of the terms used:**

The following terms which I often employ in this book are defined in different ways. So I would like to describe them in the terminology of Sri Aurobindo to denote their meanings here.

I understand by the term **"soul"** of a person that immortal element in us which survives the death of the physical body, in order that it incarnates itself once more in a physical body. In the course of an individual consciousness evolution, around the soul develops a **"psychic being"** with whose **"outer periphery"** the **"inner being"** .

We have to differentiate the soul from the **"psyche"** likewise the **"person in the foreground"** , the **"outer being"**. The problem in using this term **"Psyche"** is that it is translated into German with the term **"Seele"** (soul) although it basically differs from the actual souls of people as I have described it above.

Inside the psyche we can distinguish

between two parts of being the **"Mind"** and the **"Vital"**. Unfortunately we are concerned here in the term **"Mind"** with characteristics which in the German language are partly attributed to the **"spirit"** (here **"higher Mind"**).

Sri Aurobindo in 'Letters on Yoga', Volume 1 : ***„The word “mind” includes in the everyday use of language without differentiation the entire consciousness because human beings are mind beings and everything they experience passes through their mind; but here the word “Mind” is used in order to characterize that part of nature which has to do with understanding and rationality, with ideas, perceptions of Mind or of thought, with true stirrings of the Mind and structuring, with displaying the Mind, the will of the Mind etc. which are all parts of his rational comprehension.***

***The Vital has to be precisely differentiated from the Mind even when it contains a Mind element; the Vital is the nature of life which is composed of yearnings, feelings, excitements, passions, impulses for action, the yearning-will and the reactions which are in the “vital souls” of people, and as well consists of all those games of the possessive and other related instincts such as anger, fear, greed, lust etc, all of which belong to this part of human nature.***

***The Mind and the Vital are mixed with each other on the surface of consciousness but they are in themselves very different forces; as soon as one is able to penetrate behind the routine surface consciousness, one recognizes them as separate, one discovers their differences. “***

After soul and spirit, now to the bodies of people. They consist not only of the physical level which is visible to everyone. They exist too in a so-called “finestuff” field which can be perceived by people with the appropriately trained consciousness. Within this finestuff domain there are numerous levels. One of them is e.g. the so-called occult level whose laws and ways of working the Mother completely mastered, but which she recognized

are not suitable for achieving the goals named here. Another domain of the finestuff the Mother termed the “**subtle-physical**” level on which she formed a body which serves as a form of in-between stage or preliminary stage for the final transformation of the physical body. Now we are concerned with the perceiving this subtle-physical body, and to unify it with the physical body.

## 2.2 Ilse Middendorf - as a Person - the Perceptible Breath

Ilse Middendorf was born on the 21st of September 1910 in Frankenberg in the German state of Sachsen as the second child of Johanna Kullrich and Carl Kullrich. Her parents were loving, humorous and tolerant. What was remarkable in her as a child was her thirst for knowledge which survived her initiation into school life. At the age of 12 she had a strong sense of intuition. She heard a significant voice:

**“You have to breathe”.**

In the 1930s Ilse Middendorf, who had always been interested in breathing and was trained in gymnastics, nutrition and nerve massage, began to search for possibilities to address people more “inwardly” and “deeper” than was possible with gymnastics and massage. As a result she commenced systematic research into her own breathing. Through that she made many discoveries which she then investigated intensively. When she met Cornelis Veening in 1938, she found in him a person who confirmed her own experiences of breathing, and who accompanied her for many years on this path.

In the course of her research, it became clear that a sensing access to one’s body could be so much the better achieved the more that breathing could “come and go its own accord”, that means taking place unconsciously or not intentionally directed. This “permitting” she formulated with the well-known sentence: **“I let the breath come on its own, go on its own, and wait until it comes back on its own”**. In this manner Ilse Middendorf discovered that

**“focusing, perceiving, breathing”**

influence each other and established with that the basis of **“Perceptible**

**Breath”**. With this name she made clear that these methods were grounded exclusively in experiences (and not mental observations). Ilse Middendorf: **“The era of knowledge is coming to an end – the era of experience has begun.”**

The so-called “law of breathing“ named above states that between “breathing“, “focusing” and “perceiving“ there exists an inner connection, that means each of these three elements influences the other. Whichever focus I choose at the beginning of an exercise, both the other two elements will become stronger and more directly perceivable. In this way the abilities to perceive and to concentrate develop. Surrender and conscious awareness support this way of working, and themselves grow too through the work on breathing. So the breath is the medium through which we can develop all necessary abilities and characteristics of the body which are required for the tasks which are under discussion here.

The Mother likewise stressed the importance of experiences: **“I have noticed unmistakably that something is guiding me to the discovery of this power – to this knowledge –, of course on the only possible path, that of experience.”**

And on the 25th of July 1970 she stated: **“Previously when I used to have experiences (long ago, years ago), it was the Mind that benefited more or less, and then it would spread it, use it; now it's not like that: it's directly the body, it's the body that has the experience, and it's MUCH TRUER. There's an intellectual attitude that puts a kind of veil or ... I don't know, something ... something unreal on the perception of things—an attitude, it's an attitude.**

***It's like seeing through a certain veil or a certain ... something ... a certain atmosphere, whereas the body feels the thing in itself, it BECOMES that. It feels in itself. It's not as if the thing were taken like this*** (gesture of absorption in oneself), ***it's as if the body itself BECAME that*** (gesture of bursting or expansion). ***Instead of shrinking the experience down to the individual's scale, the individual widens to the scale of the experience.***"

In breathing work it is important to be able to distinguish between a sensation and feeling. The (nerve-based) sensation is always primary. The feeling is an interpretation of the sensing perception and with that secondary. The presence of feelings shows that either elements of the outer being (the so-called psyche) or the inner being likewise correspondingly the psychic being are participating. If these are silent, then no feelings are perceived but rather exclusively the sensation of the body.

So that no false image of the methods of the Perceptible Breath, I would like here to point out that in it the elements of the outer being (the so-called psyche) or the inner and the soul being are always integrated. So the breath work always involves the "whole" person. The dawning of consciousness and formation of the "Leib" is a matter of concern for the Perceptible Breath. (The "Leib" refers to the total complex of physical and spiritual interaction which makes up body and soul).

Insofar the proposal which I make in this publication to "bring to silence" the Mind and the Vital is completely untypical for the methods of the Experience of Breath. This work approach does not represent a "further development" of the Experience of Breath. In the breath work area which Ilse Middendorf termed "quieting thoughts" which

as she pointed out is "also the silence of the Vital", occasional attempts were indeed made to research this "pure" sense work: Nevertheless the breathing work was never associated with a concentration on the subtle-physical body (as proposed here).

The ability to "be able to permit the breath" requires a certain practice. In five-day (and weekend) seminars "The Perceptible Breath" this ability can be acquired through working at exercises which are almost exclusively practical. Already after two such seminars, those who practice these methods in general develop a sense of what is meant by the phrase "to let the breathing come and go of its own accord". With that the students of the method can make progress on this path and increase their ability to sense, receptiveness and their ability to focus whereby surrender and conscious awareness are two further important skills; they all exist in a common interrelation with one other, and mutually determine and stimulate each other.

A further, important perception is that a carried-out extension exercise (of the body or part of the body) immediately brings about an intake of breath, and the breath – in the area of the body which has been extended – flows into it in an intensified way. In the course of the breath work, this is always more clearly perceived as sensing consciousness.

Some milestones in the personal life of Ilse Middendorf:

1940 She married Jost Langguth (organist and director of music) – 11th of September 1941 gave birth to her son Helge Langguth. Immediately after the end of WW2, Ilse Middendorf returned to Berlin where she found that the premises of her therapeutic practice had been bombed out. Her husband – my father, Jost Langguth – did not return from the fighting.

1950 She married the photographer Erich T. Middendorf.

After many years of work in her own practice and institutions close to professions, she became a professor at the University for Music and Fine art in Berlin. In the year 1965 she founded and directed the first training institute for the Perceptible Breath (Berlin). That was followed in 1982 by the Institute in Beerfelden (Odenwald) whose founder and director is the author of this book. Interested persons who speak English have the possibility of being trained in the USA at the Institute there by Juerg Roffler: [www.breathexperience.com](http://www.breathexperience.com).

Of all the modern breathing methods, that of the Perceptible Breath has achieved the greatest degree of fame. The significance of the Perceptible Breath in the "search" for the body formed in the subtle-physical by The Mother cannot be too highly estimated. The breath is the medium through which, according to the statements of The Mother, connections can be brought about from the physical body to the body on the subtle-physical level. Over and through breathing we will experience that breath too of which Sri Aurobindo in Savitri wrote:

***"And should the hidden eternities manifest themselves to you, the breath of the infinities which have never yet manifested themselves...."***

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Scientists working within a different framework have also recognized the significance of breathing; the physician Dr. Ludwig Schmitt wrote about their research in his book 'Atemheilkunst' ('The Art of Healing with Breath'). Here is a summary:

**a) Mechanically** there is a correlation between breath movements and countless organs of the body and their functions;

**b) Circulatorily-dynamic** breath movements are coordinated closely with the functions of the heart and the body and lung circulation;

**c) Chemically** the following are all influenced by breathing: the supply of oxygen, the carbon dioxide level, the concentrations of ions and with that the entire state of the metabolism;

**d) Nervous-reflexive** breathing has an effect on the neighboring organs and their functions by way of interconnections of nerves;

**e) Central-nervous** There is a deep-reaching influence on the motor activity of the organs above all on the motor activity of breathing, on the cerebrum - and the processes of consciousness of people and with that on their sensing and feeling lives.

In the *Formatio Reticularis* a complexly networked center in the depths of the cerebrum, all information flows together which comes into being in the body and brain. Every small stimulation coming either from outside or inside changes the form and way of breathing which after the appropriate exercises can be experienced and sensed in a differentiated way.

## 2.3 The most important books for this theme

(concerning evolution and transformation)

1. The Manifestation of the Supramental, Sri Aurobindo, Pondicherry 1948

2. Mother's Agenda from the years 1951 – 1973 (Editor: Satprem) Publisher: Hinder+Deelmann

'The Manifestation of the Supramental' is Sri Aurobindo's final work. It contains 93 pages ? and offers a profound insight into the possibilities of the future person.

Mother's Agenda is a 13 volume work (about 5, 000 pages) which contains the conversations recorded on tape which The Mother held with Satprem in the years 1950 to 1973. In 1977 Agenda were first published in French. A translation in English and German followed.  
(Hinder+Deelmann)

Satprem published a summary of the Agenda with the title 'Mutter – Notizen aus dem Labor (1950–1973). In Germany this is distributed by the publishers Hinder+Deelmann.

Mother's Agenda represents the sole source of information which provides an answer to the question "how" the sought-after goal can be reached. That publication was the first to make known that the path has to begin via the work on the physical body – and not as Sri Aurobindo supposed with the dawning of consciousness of a higher Mind and the psychic being.

So it is understandable that the knowledge of these facts only slowly percolated. In the German language, for instance, the volumes which are of especial importance in this respect covering the years 1967 to 1970 have only recently been made available.

## 2.4 Stages in my study of Yoga and Evolution

My interest in the “big questions“ of human existence was awakened in 1955 when I was 14 years old. I started to read esoteric and philosophical literature, took lessons in Hatha Yoga and practiced everyday for at least two hours. In the years 1955 to 1958 as a result, I underwent far-reaching visions and experiences which demonstrated to me that there is more to existence than the material world. I experienced the fundamental difference between human love and the consciousness of love on the spiritual level. “Out of body” experiences at that time still termed “extra-bodily experiences” showed me that my consciousness was also available outside of my body. Only years later did I read books on this topic.

My yoga teacher informed me that a purging of the ego (in the classical yoga style) would be required so that one would not suffer damage on the path and in order to make progress; as a result in 1958 I decided to exit from that path. I dedicated myself then entirely to the “outer”, became a construction engineer with a diploma, and a technician at the Wasserbau Institut (Institute for Hydraulic engineering) of the Technical university in Berlin.

At the end of the 1960s I commenced once more to read philosophical literature. The book by Satprem, ‘Sri Aurobindo or the Adventure of Consciousness’ was a turning point. After I had read some 20 pages I knew intuitively and with complete certainty “This is it!”

In 1971 I experienced the so-called Kundalini energy which ascends in a steady wave form from the sacrum, and unfolds itself through the head whereby I felt myself to be “one with everything, where I was able to experience the importance of the “Leib”

“Leib” : a term describing the total body “imbued with soul” too, in – depth.”

Then in October 1972 I had the decisive key experience (see the chapter 3.3.3) which revealed to me the meaning of the Perceptible Breath for the evolution of humanity and showed me a “new breath”and “new body”. Following that I took part in the breathing training under the direction of Ilse Middendorf at the Berlin Institute where I was able to learn in depth about the importance of the body.

Although countless periods of residence in the years 1976 to 1988 in Pondicherry brought me closer to the work of Sri Aurobindo as well as The Mother and her goals, it was, nevertheless, Mother’s Agenda which first gave me decisive information about the “how”. It was through her that my intuitive hunches over many years were confirmed that the new consciousness had to be brought through the body (and only through it) into this our world.

Although Ilse Middendorf was at first skeptical – “Who needs gurus from the East?” – her interest in this theme grew as a result of my intensive pre-occupation with it, and the conversations that arose as a result. Since then she has become the person who of everybody I know works most intensively at a practical level, and we remain in continual contact concerning these questions in order that we exchange experiences and intuitive insights.

The following publication of my 30 years involvement with this theme I summarized in May 2001 in the isolation of Greek forests and the strands of Sithonia (Mount Athos before my eyes).

### 3.0 Evolution, Transformation and the Perceptible Breath

I have described in Chapter 2.1 the aim and the teachings of Sri Aurobindo and The Mother. Here is another “invitation” yet from The Mother to participation in this “adventure” and further quotes in respect of the theme.

The Mother: ***“I am inviting you to take part in a major adventure, and in this adventure you should not repeat spiritually what others have done before us because our adventure commences beyond this stage. We speak out for a new creation, completely new which contains within itself everything which is unpredictable, all dangers and risks – a true adventure in which certain victory is the goal, but the path to it is unknown, and has to be tracked down step by step into the unknown. It is something that has never been up till now in the universe, and which in its present form will not exist any more. If that interests you, well, climb on board. What will happen tomorrow, I do not know.”***

On the 7th of November 1970 she stated: ***“We are at a specially favorable time of universal existence, when everything on the earth is preparing for a new creation, or rather a new manifestation in the eternal creation”***

On the topic of Evolution another two quotes from The Mother: ***“Since the appearance of humankind two to three million years ago, Nature has not brought forth any new species as if it had found in humankind the most appropriate form of expression. Now however evolution cannot come to a standstill because if it were it would no longer be evolution.”***

***“With that the key to evolution does not lie any more in the duplication of species by means of reproduction but rather in the power of consciousness itself. Until the appearance of humankind consciousness was still too closely attached to its material supports; with people consciousness adequately liberated itself in order to enter into its true mastery over material nature, and to bring about its own mutations. From the point of view of evolutionary biology, this means the end of sexuality. We are standing at a crossroads where it is necessary to make the changes from a libido-driven natural evolution to a spiritual evolution through the power of consciousness.”***

30th September 1966: ***“Because in all the transition from plant to animal and from animal to man (especially from animal to man), the differences of form are, ultimately, minor: the true transformation is the intervention of another agent of consciousness. All the differences between the life of the animal and the life of man stem from the intervention of the Mind; but the substance is essentially the same and it obeys the same laws of formation and construction. There isn't much difference, for instance, between the calf being formed in a cow's womb and the child being formed in its mother's womb. There is one difference: that of the Mind's intervention. But if we envisage a PHYSICAL being, that is, as visible as the physical now is and with the same density, for instance a body that wouldn't need blood circulation and bones (especially these two things: the skeleton and blood circulation) . . . it's very hard to imagine.”***

On the 15th of July 1953 The Mother wrote in a discussion about the interrelation between God and the Creation: ***“You will see that your whole idea and conception (of Paradise and of Hell) is based on one matter or one being which you term God, and on a world which you term His Creation by which there are two different things , according to what you believe. The one which created the other, and the other which is subordinated to the first, and which is the expression of that which the first one created. And therein lies the causal mistake.”***

***“If you were able to sense deeply that there is no divide between what you dub your God and what you dub***

***Creation, if you could say to yourselves: “They are exactly the same things“, and you should sense that that which you name as God (perhaps it really is after all nothing more than a word) also suffers, when you yourselves suffer, is also ignorant when you yourselves are ignorant, and it slowly but surely finds itself again through the entire Creation, step by step, unites again with itself, realizes itself, expresses itself, and that the Creation in no way at all is something that it wanted arbitrarily and created arbitrarily but rather much more a growing steadily developing expression of a consciousness which objectifies itself.”***

### **3.1 The most important stages of experiences up to now of the supramental consciousness and that of the Superman through The Mother**

In historical sequence:

1. The Manifestation of the Supramental on the 29th of February 1956
2. The manifestation of the consciousness of the "Future person" on the 1st of January 1969
3. Mother's contact to her body on the Supramental level on the 30th of August 1969
4. Material Nature accepted the new Creation on the 14th of March and 9th of May 1970
5. A significant experience of breathing on the 25th of March 1972

#### **1. The Manifestation of the Supramental on the 29th February 1956:**

*"This evening the Divine Presence, concrete and material, was there present amongst you. - I had a form of living gold, bigger than the universe, and I was facing a huge and massive golden door which separated the world from the Divine.*

*As I looked at the door, I knew and willed, in a single movement of consciousness, that 'THE TIME HAS COME', and lifting with both hands a mighty golden hammer I struck one blow, one single blow on the door and the door was shattered to pieces.*

*Then the supramental Light and Force and Consciousness rushed down upon earth in an uninterrupted flow.*

*The manifestation of the Supramental on Earth is no longer a promise rather a living fact, a reality. It is working here, and the day will come on which the blindest, those with the least consciousness and even the most unwilling will be forced to recognize it.*

*One of the biggest victories will be the transformation of nature which*

*seemingly is the most estranged from the divine. The supramental body which has to be called into life possesses four main characteristics:*

*Lightness  
Ability to adapt  
Flexibility  
and intensity of radiation .*

*If the physical body with the greatest care is rendered divine, it will always experience the sensation of walking on air, it will not contain any heaviness, Tamas (principle of inertia) or Unconsciousness. Also its adaptability will be without limitation: whatever the external circumstances are in which it finds itself, it will respond equally to any requirements because its total consciousness will drive out all this inertia and inabilities which usually makes material an ordeal for the spirit. Supramental flexibility will make it possible for him to endure the attacks of any hostile power which tries to seize it: it will not counter the attack with any dull resistance but will rather be in contrast so yielding that it neutralizes the power in that it lets it run past and miss. In this way it does not have to suffer damaging consequences, and even the deadliest of attacks will leave it uninjured.*

**Finally the physical body will be transformed into a being composed of light, every cell will radiate the supramental glory. Not only those who have developed themselves sufficiently so that their vision has opened, but rather also the most routine people will be able to perceive these lights. It will be for everybody a clearly visible fact, a constant proof of the transformation which will convince even the strongest skeptics.**

**“But that is the future which has begun but for whose total implementation time is still needed. In the meantime we find ourselves in a very remarkable situation, an extraordinary position which is without precedent. We are present at the birth of a new world, completely weak – weak not in its content, but rather in its outward manifestation – still not recognized, still not fulfilled, rejected by the majority; but it (this world) is here, here it is and would like to grow and is completely certain of the result. But the road to it is a new road which has never before been traveled; nobody has been on this path, nobody. It is the beginning. A universal beginning and so a completely unexpected and unpredictable adventure.”**

Two years later on the 3rd of February 1958 The Mother described the supramental world and spoke respecting that from the creation of a transitional stage:

**"The supramental world exists in a permanent way, and I am there permanently in a supramental body. I had proof of this today when between two and three o'clock in the afternoon my earthly consciousness went there and in full consciousness remained. I now know that for the two worlds to join in a constant and conscious relationship what is**

**missing is an intermediate zone between the existing physical world and the supramental world as it exists. This zone has yet to be built both in the individual consciousness and in the objective world, and it is being built. When formerly I used to speak of the new world that is being created, I was speaking of this intermediate zone. And similarly, when I am on 'this' side – that is, in the realm of the physical consciousness – and I see the supramental power, the supramental light and substance constantly permeating matter, I am seeing and participating in the construction of this zone.**

**I found myself upon an immense ship, which is the symbolic representation of the place where this work is being carried out. This ship, as big as a city, is thoroughly organized, and it had certainly already been functioning for quite some time, for its organization was fully developed. It is the place where people destined for the supramental life are being trained. These people (or at least a part of their being) had already undergone a supramental transformation because the ship itself and all that was aboard was neither material nor of finestuff, neither Vital nor Mind: it was a supramental substance.**

**This substance itself was of the most material supramental, the supramental substance nearest the physical world, the first to manifest. The light was a blend of red and gold, forming a uniform substance of luminous orange. Everything was like that – the light was like that, the people were like that – everything had this color, in varying shades, however, which enabled things to be distinguished from one another. The overall impression was of a**

**shadowless world: there were shadings, but no shadows. The atmosphere was full of joy, calm, order; everything worked smoothly and silently. At the same time, I could see all the details of the education, the training in all domains by which the people on board were being prepared.**

**When I returned with the memory of the experience I knew that the supramental world exists continually that I am there continually in the present, and that what is lacking is the intermediate step only which it is necessary to create between the consciousness and the substance and this intermediate step is that what is now being built.”**  
(The Mother in ‘Bulletin’)

Already in this first description of the contact with the supramental it is noticeable that mother reports practically only about the physical body and its transformation as well as its qualities and abilities.

## **2. The origin of the consciousness of the “Future person“ on the 1st of January 1969”**

8th of January 1969 The Mother: **“Yes, that's it. It's the descent of the superman consciousness. I had the assurance of it afterwards. It was on the 1st of January after midnight. I woke up at 2 in the morning, surrounded by a consciousness, but so concrete, and NEW, in the sense that I had never experienced that. It lasted, quite concrete and present, for two or three hours, and then it spread out and went to find all those who could receive it. And at the same time I knew it was the consciousness of the superman, that is, the intermediary between man and the supramental being.**

**It has given the body a sort of assurance, a sort of trust. That experience has made it steady, as it were, and if it keeps the true attitude, all the support is there to help it.”**

On the 18th of January 1969 she spoke once more about that: **“There is in it a consciousness (something VERY precious) that gives lessons to the body, teaches it what it has to do, that is, the attitude it should have, the reaction it should have.... I had already told you a few times how difficult it is to find the procedure of the transformation when there's no one to give you indications; and it's the response, as it were: "he" comes and tells the body, "Have this attitude, do this, do that in that way." So then the body is happy, it's quite reassured, it can't make a mistake anymore.”**

Further commentaries follow about this event. On the 8th of February 1969: **„This atmosphere or consciousness [of the superman] seems to have an educative activity, because since it came, it has been looking after the education of the body—of the body's CONSCIOUSNESS —and that's quite interesting. And this education isn't something personal at all: it's the vision of the earth's evolution, especially concentrated on human evolution. There are no doubt notions of the whole, and with very particular things, quite particular viewpoints, but then, with precise details and with insistence, lasting sometimes an hour on one subject, so as to make deeply understood the cause and the consequences, and the CURVE of evolution.”**

On the 15th of February 1969: ***“During these few hours (three or four hours), I understood in an absolute way what having the divine consciousness in the body means... But that state, which lasted for several hours ... never had this body, in the ninety-one years it's been on earth, felt such happiness: freedom, absolute power, and no limits (gesture here and there and everywhere), no limits, no impossibilities, nothing...”***

On 19th of March 1969: ***“I, I don't know what this I is; it's what speaks, what collects experiences. It's not the body, but what uses or works in this body; yes, it's the consciousness at work in this body, but not like something working ON something else: it's identified with the body, but at the same time not tied to that identification, in the sense that it feels totally free and independent, and yet it's identical—what sense can you make out of all that!... Free, independent, AND identical at the same time.***

***Since the beginning of this year a new consciousness is at work upon earth to prepare men for a new creation, the superman. For this creation to be possible the substance that constitutes man's body must undergo a big change...”***

On the 2nd April 1969: ***“But the inner change is considerable—considerable. It's considerable: from the point of view of consciousness, it has been the greatest change in my whole existence; I've had many of them, I've worked a lot, but ... nothing in comparison with what has taken place since the 1st of January. To such a point that the body feels like a different person....”***

### **3. Mother's contact to her body on the Supramental level on the 30th of August 1969**

30th August 1969: ***„And last night he told me, he showed me how this or that thing would be, how the body would be. I remember that when I woke up, he was lying down on a bed, I was kneeling beside the bed, looking at him, and while he was that new body, he at the same time explained to me how the superman's body would be (the supramental being). And it was so living that even when I woke up, it remained—I can still see it. But the details ... (how can I put it?) the memory doesn't have the precision that enables it to explain (I don't know how to put it). I still have the vision ... it had a color ... it wasn't casting rays of light, not that, but ... and not luminescent like an object, but with a special luminosity which had that light ... a little like Auroville's flower (but it wasn't like that, it looked perfectly natural). He was showing me his body; he was lying down, and showing me his body, saying, "Here is how it is." The form was almost the same, with some ... I still have the memory there (gesture in the atmosphere), but I don't know how to explain.... Lately, I had been wondering, "It's odd, we don't at all know how it [the new body] will be." And I was saying to myself, "There's no one to tell me." Because this Consciousness that came, it acts through the consciousness, but not so much through the vision. So then, I had that last night. For a long, long time I was with Sri Aurobindo, a long time, for hours.***

***It has entered the consciousness, it will come out again one day. But I kept the memory of the last thing: I saw myself, I was in two places at the same time*** (and maybe I too wasn't quite as I am, but that didn't interest me: I was looking at him, who was lying down and explaining to me), ***and it was ... it was the same thing as a luminescent body, but it wasn't luminescent, it was ... if I am not mistaken, it was the color of this sari*** (Mother points to Sujata's sari), ***something like that.***

On the 19th of November 1969 Mother had a connection to the supramental consciousness: „***There. But then, despite everything, the body retained some slight consciousness of its needs all these days*** (though it's not concerned with itself—I always said it isn't concerned with itself, not interested), ***but that's what Sri Aurobindo said: "I feel I am still the old man."*** ***This morning I understood that, because it was no longer there! You see, that sort of very calm perception, but still of what "goes wrong" (a pain here, a difficulty there), very calm, very indifferent, but the thing is still PERCEIVED*** (without becoming more important)—***even that, prrt! gone, completely swept away!...***

***I do hope it won't come back. That's really ...that's what I understand to be a transformation! You are conscious in a golden immensity*** (it's wonderful, mon petit!), ***luminous, golden, peaceful, eternal, all-powerful. How did it come ? . . . There are really no words to express it, that sense of wonder towards the Grace...The Grace, the Grace is a thing that exceeds all understanding in its clear-sighted goodness.***

***Naturally, the body had the experience. Something took place which I won't tell, and it had the true***

***reaction; it didn't have the old reaction, it had the true one: it smiled, you know, with this Smile of the supreme Lord—it smiled. That remained there for a day and a half. And that difficulty was what let the body make the last progress, let it live in that Consciousness; if everything had been harmonious, things might have dragged on for years—it's wonderful, you know, wonderful! How stupid people are! When the Grace comes to them, they drive it away, saying, "Oh, how horrible!..." I'd known that for a long time, but my experience is ... a bedazzlement.***

#### **4. Material Nature accepted the new Creation on the 14th of March and 9th of May 1970**

14th March 1970: „***Which means that the material conditions, which were elaborate by the mind, FIXED by it*** (Mother clenches her fist tight), ***and which appeared so inescapable, to such a point that those who had a living experience of the higher worlds thought one had to flee this world, abandon this material world if one really wanted to live in the Truth (that's the cause of all those theories and beliefs), now things are no longer like that.***

***The physical is CAPABLE of receiving the higher Light, the Truth, the true Consciousness, and of manifesting it.***

***It's not easy, it calls for endurance and will, but a day will come when it will be quite natural. It's only just the open door—that's all, now we have to go on.***

(silence)

***It has taken this Consciousness ... a little more than a year to win this Victory. Naturally, as yet it's visible only to those who have the inner vision, but ... it's done.***

(long silence)

***Then— then the body begins to feel, "There you are! . ." It has that joy, that joy of ... the lived Marvel.***

***Things are not as they were, NO LONGER as they were—things are no longer as they were.***

***We have to struggle on, we need patience, courage, will, trust— but things are no longer "just the way they are." It's the old thing trying to hang on tight—hideous! Hideous. But ... it's not like that anymore. It's not like that anymore.***

***There.***

(silence)

***And all, all circumstances are as catastrophic as they can be: troubles, complications, difficulties, everything, just everything goes at it relentlessly like that, like wild beasts, but ... it's over. The body KNOWS that it's over. It may take centuries, but it's over. To disappear, it may take centuries, but it's over now.***

This wholly concrete and absolute realization that one could have only when going out of Matter (Mother brings a finger down), it's sure, sure and certain that we will have it RIGHT HERE.

***It looks ... it looks like a miracle in the body. The disappearance of this formation really looks miraculous.***

***And everything becomes clear. We'll see.***

(long silence)

***Things have moved relatively fast.***

(silence)

Question from Satprem: “**Good.** . . Does it mean that all the human consciousnesses that have a little faith now have the possibility of emerging from this mental hypnosis?”

***Yes, yes, exactly. Exactly. Exactly.***

9th May 1970: „That was the true consciousness.

And it was my BODY that had it, not the psychic being or the higher beings (there, those things have been quite familiar for a long time), but the BODY, the very body, THIS, this, this. That gave it such a peace !. . .

(silence)

***It's the MATERIAL Nature, the physical Nature, the material physical Nature, and she said, "I've put on the dress, I've put on YOUR dress—I've put on your dress to tell you that I've adopted it." It means that material Nature has adopted the new creation.***

Mother has so created in the subtle-physical the body which represents an intermediate step towards supramental transformation. She was not able to succeed again in her attempt herself to unify this body with her physical body. For me this is a clear signal that this task has passed to us people.

## **5. A significant experience concerning breathing on the 24th and 25th of March 1972**

**Mother: *"For the first time, early this morning, I saw myself: my body. I don't know whether it's the supramental body or . . . (what shall I say?) a transitional body, but I had a completely new body, in the sense that it was sexless: it was neither woman nor man.***

***No, but here too there must have been breathing. The shoulders were strikingly broad (gesture) in contrast. That's important. But the chest was neither feminine nor even masculine: only reminiscent of it. And all that—stomach, abdomen and the rest—was simply an outline, a very slender and harmonious form, which certainly wasn't used for the purpose we now use our bodies. What will change a great deal, of course—it had acquired a prominent role—is breathing. That being depended much on it."***

At this point I would like to refer that the experience which I had in October 1972 (described below) revealed that the cells of the new body are fed from another breath, which from outside enters first of all into the head and as a "breath wave" (not dissimilar to our experiences with letting the breath come and go of its own accord) runs through the body right down to the soles of the foot. Already during the experience and not first later on (!) I identified this phenomenon ("without reflecting on it") from a spontaneous inner knowledge as "breathing". A breathing that has nothing to do with "energies" and also nothing to do with the Kundalini power which flows through the Chakras which I was lucky enough to be permitted to experience during the summer of 1971 in a very impressive form.

### 3.2 The question of the „how“ of unifying the physical and subtle-physical body

Three years went by after I had begun to read Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, when I stumbled upon the reference by The Mother that although she had been shown the outcome of the supramental Transformation – generally in relation to her own body – nevertheless the “how” and with what methods this process of transformation could be completed remained totally closed to her.

Since I had until that point been under the impression that The Mother “knew everything” which she wanted to know, I was extremely surprised by this statement and an intuitive voice said: “Here it is necessary to seek – that’s what humanity has to find out.” Since then I have endeavored to come closer to the answer to this question. The current publication is the result of those endeavors – and as one can learn from reading it basic and important questions of the “how” were discovered by The Mother and also in the Perceptible Breath (after Ilse Middendorf), a method which enables practical work on this theme.

The most central findings of The Mother are that one has to begin with the physical body and indeed on the basis of the so-called “Mind of the body likewise the cells” – and this although Sri Aurobindo had written that they cannot be changed. About that The Mother on the 1st of January 1969: **„The only thing in it that was a little morbid was this physical mind, the body-mind, which Sri Aurobindo regarded as impossible to change—it was very stubborn, but you see, it's the one that has done the work, it has worked out the change.”**

On the 12th of July 1969, The Mother expressed herself once more on this theme:

**„Oh, but if it's the physical mind ... Because it's the physical mind that's now developing, [in Mother] out of all proportions foreseen as possible, while Sri Aurobindo himself thought it wasn't possible; he said it's better to get rid of it, it won't be possible [to transform it]. But I have noticed it can be transformed, because the mind and the vital are gone, so there was a need to replace the mind in the functioning, and this physical mind has developed in quite an extraordinary way. It has become ... (what should I say?) far more conscious, first of all, far more organized and methodical in its work.”**

Because of its significance I am repeating here the conditions which I mentioned in the introduction which are necessary for the work:

The path of supramental consciousness – first through a body formed by The Mother on a subtle-physical level – to help it to a realization takes place exclusively (!) in the physical body, and through the work with it and on it. It does not take place through an intensification or healing of some other part of a person, neither through a higher Mind nor through their inner and psychic being, nor is it in any other way dependent on whether – and to what extent – the outer Mind and Vital are purged. Only in this way can a large (and required) number of people take part in this work. During the practical work on, with and through the physical body the Perceptible Breath (after Ilse Middendorf) assumes great importance.

The work has to take place exclusively with and through the physical body. The competencies required which are necessary to develop and increase it are the ability to sense, receptiveness, ability to focus as well as attentiveness. According to the experience of The Mother the ability to sense and of the most significance, and she repeatedly points out that that the Vital and Mind disturb this ability to sense if they do not (completely) recede into the background. It cannot be fully ruled out that even feelings of the inner being can disturb this purely physical work sensing.

Sri Aurobindo's suppositions in this respect have proved to be very problematic. He argued that in the search for "how it [the work] will go forward", it would prove to be impossible to begin the work with and on the physical body before the higher Mind were clearly raised into consciousness, and the psychic being had further developed and taken over the guidance of life. In addition, if reading the corresponding passages only superficially (above all in 'The Manifestation of the Supramental') the impression could come about that he had not made these statements as suppositions but rather spoken of concrete facts.

First through the diaries of The Mother did the recognition gradually replace his ideas that – as The Mother stressed –that in the physical body lie the key and the door to supramental consciousness unlike Sri Aurobindo's supposition. For many of his followers it appears to be difficult to take in this finding, and to break away from endeavors for spiritual growth, and to apply themselves to the physical body especially as none of them knew exactly how such a path would look. The Perceptible Breath represented – as far as I know the sole – method of being able to work consciously on the

body as The mother envisaged it (see chapter 3.6.2).

To return to what The Mother said about "how": from what she said it cannot be concluded that the work on the inner being and the psychic being is unnecessary. Of course that it is not. For a new transformed body should be lived in by a conscious psychic being, and not be an instrument of a superficial ego.

As a result the following differentiation is important: apparently The Mother had discovered that the cells of the body themselves, likewise what she called the "cellular mind" have to be transformed, and that these are indispensable in a process of the body and not in a process of the spirit or of the soul! Processes of the spirit and of the soul are imperative so that "new land" can be appropriately inhabited. The access to the "new material" will be reached however, by way of the dawning of consciousness of the "old material".

The Mother did not only have this realization but rather had also already formed a body at the subtle-physical level (with the assistance of Sri Aurobindo from the "other" side). This body waits only to be recognized and permitted. The question of "how" posed in this chapter relates to the way forward and the requirements to make contact with this subtle-physical body. This does not yet represent the (definitive) transformation to the supramental body!

Along with the uncanny fact that in the physical body of humankind an evolutionary process of consciousness is in motion which according to Sri Aurobindo is unique in the material cosmos, there is something else which is also meaningful for me – and so I mention it here once again: it is that

while Sri Aurobindo and The Mother did indeed have profound insights into the occurrences of the processes which already revealed a supramental being and an in-between step on the way to that, but as to the question as to how this process and in what circumstances and with what pre-conditions it might take place, they had, according to their own accounts, no indications.

For people who have already penetrated more deeply into Sri Aurobindo's works and the yoga of The Mother, it may at first be disconcerting that I here so emphasize the "gaps" in the huge consciousness of Sri Aurobindo and of The Mother. I do this because I think that this surprising fact means something. I suppose that this meaning is (for whatever reasons) the task of human beings to discover, to develop and carry out that procedure of which The Mother said that it was unknown.

According to Sri Aurobindo people as they are now are have the possibility for the first time in the course of evolution to be present consciously during this process, to be informed of its results even before that process has actually begun. In my opinion that is also the reasoning behind the task.

In the last years of her research The Mother had emphasized the importance of the physical body in this process. So it is our task to become conscious of this physical body. Not in the sense of abstract knowledge or in a scientific way but rather in the form of direct experience and experiencing in the body. In that respect precisely the people who are spiritually highly developed who are wary of the material or of transferring those yoga methods al-

ready known to them to this work. I think it would be precipitate to assume that tried and tested experiences concerning spiritual levels may be simply transferred to the procedures (the subject of this publication) with the supramental. Sri Aurobindo made it quite clear that the supramental consciousness in its structure and being is completely different from mental consciousness. So what justifies the assumption that the pre-conditions and procedures required for a spiritual and soul development can be transferred to the supramental development?

In the dawning of consciousness of the body, sport and physical education are important. They are less suited, however, to develop the necessary finer ability to sense and receptiveness. A suitable method is the Perceptible Breath which is able to develop a consciousness of sensing also to the depths, to the cells, brings about a major receptiveness in the physical body and (during the Experience of Breath) can quieten the Vital and the Mind or bring them completely to silence.

An important criterion in the question of "how" is that the procedure which is found needs to be simple. Everything which creates greatness is simple. The basic principles of life are not complicated – what is difficult are the scientific abstractions of them. The liver, for example, in its structure a straightforward organ, is in a position to let 1, 000 different chemical processes take place simultaneously, of which many are still not understood by state-of-the-art chemistry, and for whose technical implementation a factory building of the size of a number of football fields put together would be required.

Methodology of the Perceptible Breath is simple! Everyone can learn it and make it their own. The methods need to be not only simple in their inner structure but rather also able to be carried out by ordinary people in their everyday lives. A method which requires a substantial alteration of the routine everyday would have no chance of finding the necessary recognition by humanity. In the Perceptible Breath it is a concern that those who are working on their own breathing should not exercise only in a structured exercise period as their "breathing program", but instead that they integrate the breathing experiences into their everyday life.

As for the questions of the "how" and for "what is required", I would like to refer to the fact that up till now nobody who is alive today has reached the exalted (and most exalted) spiritual heights, and whose higher Mind is strongly developed has reported changes to their physical body – and this although The Mother not only once unambiguously stated that people who were ready could achieve this goal already. For me this is a (further) indication that even a high degree of fulfillment of spirit and the spiritual being exercises no direct influence on the dawning of consciousness of the physical body.

I would like to conclude this chapter with a characteristic experience of The Mother from 23rd November 1968: ***„I've had an interesting experience.... Not yesterday evening but the evening before, someone I won't name told me, "I am fully in the physical consciousness: no more meditations, and the Divine has become something up above, so far away...." Then, instantly, while he was speaking, the whole room FILLED with the divine Presence.***

***"Oh," I told him, "Not up above: HERE, right here."***

***And at that moment, EVERYTHING, the whole atmosphere . . . you know, the very air seemed to change into divine Presence (Mother touches her hands, her face, her body): you understand, everything was touched, touched, permeated, but with ... above all, there was a dazzling Light, a Peace like this (massive gesture), a Power, and also such Sweetness . . . something . . . you felt it would be enough to melt a rock.***

***And it's the BODY'S experience, you understand, physical, material, the body's experience: everything, absolutely everything is full, full' there's NOTHING but That, and we are like . . . everything is like something shriveled, you know, like dried-up bark, something dried up. You get the impression that things (not completely—superficially) have become hard, dry, and that's why they don't feel. That's why they don't feel Him, otherwise everything, but everything is NOTHING but That; you can't breathe without breathing Him, you understand; you move about, and it's within Him that you move about; you are . . . everything, the whole universe is within Him—but MATERIALLY, physically, physically.***

***It's the cure of the "drying up" that I am now seeking. I feel it's fantastic, you understand.***

***And then, when I listen, It also says things; I told Him, "But then, why do people always climb up above?" And with the most extraordinary, fantastic humor:***

***"Because they want me to be very far from their consciousness!"***

### 3.3 Diverse interconnections and Indications of the Perceptible Breath regarding The Mother's goals

The experiences and occurrences which I have described in the next four chapters are placed in the same chronological sequence in which they took place rather than in their significance. Two of them were fundamental and had effects which were life-determining not only for Ilse Middendorf but also for me.

#### 3.3.1 Ilse Middendorf's mission

A perception of Ilse Middendorf which was to stamp her life took place at 12 when she heard an inner voice clearly state: "Du musst atmen" ("You have to breathe").

#### 3.3.2 My Experience of the Power of Kundalini

In the summer of 1971 during a meditation it happened to me that in the region of my sacrum I noticed a movement. Then I had the sensation as if my spine were bending strongly. This sensation of bending wandered up the spine and I had the impression that it turned like a snake. I experienced as large the bending out of the axis of the spine so that I experienced anxiety and believed in the first moment that it would break. But since this occurrence took place without pain, I was able immediately to leave this pain behind.

The wave movement reached the height of my arms. Now all the bones of both arms began to "bend". In the area of my head I had none of these sensations of movement. About ten centimeters above my head the movement induced a vision of tremendous proportions. I cannot describe what I then experienced in words. For some seconds I was "everything" that means in complete identification "with

everything". A rising feeling of my external Vital and Mind "I want to be that too" ended this experience immediately. My knowledge of Kundalini was superficial but extensive enough for me to be sure that I had just experienced that.

It was only years later that I read in the Agenda that it did not belong to the normal experiences of Kundalini to go beyond the head. The Mother and Sri Aurobindo had according to their own words experienced that, but stressed that no other corresponding case was known to them. On the 11th of July 1970 The Mother spoke to Satprem about that: ***"Perhaps I would have died if the experience had gone on for longer. I suppose nevertheless that something has changed since the "teachings" in the old texts which makes it possible for the Chakra above the head to open without being damaged."***

After this experience my desire to get to grips with the phenomena of consciousness grew.

#### 3.3.3 An encounter with Cornelis Veening

Cornelis Veening psychologist and breath therapist was for many years a companion on Ilse Middendorf's path of breathing. He was very reticent concerning his own person.

So it only became known from his estate after his death that he had corresponded with The Mother. He started out on a journey to Pondicherry but he broke it off in Madras for unknown reasons shortly before reaching his destination.

I met him briefly a number of times. One time (1976) directly after my return from Pondicherry he asked me what the motivation was which took me to travel there, and I answered him that I saw a connection between the Yoga of Sri Aurobindo and the Experience of Breath. He nodded and replied: "You still have much to discover there."

### **3.3.4 The new consciousness of body – "the new breathing" My peak experience from October 1972**

In 1972 I was employed as a technician in the Institute for Hydraulic Engineering at the Technical University of Berlin, and I hadn't yet worked for even one hour with The Experience of Breath. Of the possibility that humankind was situated shortly before a decisive evolutionary step, I had learned year earlier from the book by Satprem 'Sri Aurobindo – or The Adventure of Consciousness'. I was only vaguely conscious that this would be connected with a transformation (too) of the physical body, and I had not yet posed the question of "how".

One day in October 1972 something completely unexpected as follows: I found myself in my flat sitting in a comfortable leather chair and in a meditative mood, when the question came into my Mind: "What is she actually doing up there?" – By "she" I referred to my mother (Ilse Middendorf) and with "actually" I meant the fundamental, the achievements of the Experience of Breath, because of course I knew that through breathing she helped her clients with their problems. By "up there" I referred to the fact that the Breath Institute was situated above my flat.

The "answer" to that question was one I received afterwards so immediately

that I had the impression that I hadn't yet thought the question completely to its end. My body straightened up so that I sat completely upright despite the very soft underlay falling away in a backwards direction. Perhaps I should better say that the body straightened itself up. "I" didn't do anything and I noticed no muscular activity neither to straighten my posture nor to maintain this position. There was no power or energy either from outside or inside which held me. It was also not this power of the (ascending) breath which I was later to get to know. I sensed the power of breathing as supporting the body from inside. But here it was the material itself, the cells of the body which had "decided for themselves" to adopt this position.

Since I didn't want to believe what I sensed I opened my eyes. My glance fell on a large wall mirror and I saw myself sitting completely upright. Then my consciousness expanded itself so much that simultaneously i.e. it perceived different phenomenon not one after the other but rather in a parallel way. I became conscious that what we call time doesn't exist in reality. Everything exists simultaneously and, however, there is a succession of events through which I changed the main focus of my concentration. At first I perceived the phenomenon that I at once recognized (in the meaning of an inner certainty) as "breath". It was though not the breath which we know and which makes the walls of the body go broad and then small in rhythm with the breathing. This breathing came from "above", entered through the head and left behind after running through the body (down to the feet) a sensation, which is not dissimilar to that of the "breathing wave" caused by the normal breath in the body. While the first of these "breathing waves" had arrived somewhere in the pelvic area, the next

entered in the head area so that some two to three waves ran through the body at the same time.

I found this “different breath“ so natural and self-evident that during this experience I was not at all even conscious that this was a very different breathing from the normal. It was clear to me that this breathing “feeds” the body. This was so self-evident that I devoted myself to phenomenon which seemed unusual to me in contrast to that.

At first there was a sensation that the body had entered into a “higher vibration“. I became aware of the fact that the body i.e. the cells of the body “vibrate” through the cells swinging “quicker” than before. Not very much quicker but still clearly perceptibly “higher”. It is however not a vibration which has something to do with the “Brownian molecular movement”. It was a vibration which I at the same time sensed at the same time as unmoved. A contradiction which the Mind cannot bridge.

I felt myself all in all much lighter. The influence of gravity appeared to have disappeared. I considered my body (with closed eyes) and perceived that I was able to see into it. According to where I concentrated myself, I looked at organs, cells and systems. Indeed I shifted the center of my concentration continually but I saw everything simultaneously and my view “of the whole” was not reduced through that. I enjoyed this ability and was pleased about it.

Everything was very quiet, peaceful and I was conscious at the same time of my universal expansion while I

looked at my body from inside. The impression was very realistic as if I were observing it with my own physical eyes – indeed more than realistic since I saw everything not only in its entirety but also in detail at the same time and eyed it with a sharpness which allowed me to perceive the bodily material as “over-realistic”.

During the entire time I was aware that this was a very unusual experience. On the other hand it all appeared to me self-evident. No “ah” and “oh”, no astonishment, no questions. Perhaps this was the reason that it lasted for some two minutes – a long time when time no longer exists. In my subjective consciousness I remained in this state for some twenty minutes in this state. As I fell back into my normal consciousness, I knew that I had been entrusted the task of devoting myself to the Experience of Breath, whereby I was conscious that I had perceived the goal of a path but not the path itself.

In his book ‘Savitri’ Sri Aurobindo spoke of a new breathing: **“And you shall have opened to you the hidden eternities, the breath of that which never ends, which has never yet been revealed...”**

Later I discovered in relation to “seeing”, a statement The Mother made on the 1st of December 1971 which strongly reminded me of my own experiences: **„And then, for sight, for instance, sometimes I see more clearly with my eyes closed than with them open, and the vision is the SAME, physical, purely physical vision; but a physical that seems . . . more complete, I don't know what words to use.”**

The Mother said about the sensation of the “higher vibration” of the cells on the 23rd of April 1969: ***“It gives an intense aspiration, and at times a moment when it goes like this (gesture expressing a swelling in the cells). I don't know what happens, it's something going on in the cells, and then ... there's no self-giving anymore or anything ... neither a "consecration" nor "listening to the command": it's a state, a state of intense vibration. It's something COMPLETELY new for the body.”***

Satprem describes in his book ‘Evolution II’ an experience which is the same as mine in that the material carries itself: ***“I had an experience which repeated itself for a number of days in the same way: there was a new structure which no longer had to wait for the Darwinian millennium long and slow alteration of the shell of one species to the next. This density held one upright in any case, without reinforcement alone through the power of its fluid thickness.***

***Nothing will be destroyed and everything will be changed. Strange is that this density or energy is at the same time your structure and your breathing. Both of the main evolutionary elements are unified.”***

And further: ***“But shouldn't the conditions of his “breathing“ first change? – A physical respiration which brings about certain death or certain frailness, and another type of breathing which would bring with it a life without death and without***

***frailness or respiratory atmosphere If this new form of breathing or respiratory atmosphere were to win through (truly a different kind of respiration from that through oxygen and nitrogen), then the transformation does not constitute any more problem, it turns out to be an “secondary consequence” as The Mother said, “It takes place completely naturally , slowly but surely within the species.”***

### **3.3.5 The golden earth – my experiences of the Divine which lives within matter**

It was at the beginning of my training to be a breath therapist (September 1975). We had worked in the morning on the “lower breathing space” and Ilse Middendorf posed the question what qualities had been experienced. A number of trainees replied it was “dark” “warm” “earthing” and so on. The word “muddy ground” was used.

In the early afternoon when I repeated this type of breathing, I perceived breathing the “lower breathing space” manner described above. Suddenly however the perception completely changed. Under the space where I was sitting a bright sphere of enormous size (as large as the earth) came into being. It appeared on the one hand to consist of pure gold, on the other hand of pure light, bright orange. This perception was accompanied by a bright, very friendly laugh. Then, as were the voice modeled on the laugh: “see how the “muddy ground” can look and the material which emanates from it.”

### 3.4 The work on the physical body – Reports of The Mother about her experiences and discoveries in the years 1950 to 1973 (in historical sequence)

At the beginning of this chapter I would like to highlight an urgent warning which The Mother made not to emulate her life or way of behaving in the belief that everything which she had done or experienced, has to be always and fundamentally the right thing for oneself, or that progress would be made through experiences as The Mother had had them. She pointed out that she as an “Avatar” possessed skills which had made her behavior possible, but that other people normally do not possess them and should not endeavor to.

Before I cite Mother’s work on the physical body, a quote from Sri Aurobindo from ‘The Manifestation of the Supramental’ (1948). „***In the past the body has been regarded by spiritual seekers rather as an obstacle, as something to be overcome and discarded than as an instrument of spiritual perfection and a field of the spiritual change. It has been condemned as a grossness of Matter, as an insuperable impediment and the limitations of the body as something unchangeable making transformation impossible. This is because the human body even at its best seems only to be driven by an energy of life which has its own limits and is debased in its smaller physical activities by much that is petty or coarse or evil, the body in itself is burdened with the inertia and inconscience of Matter, only partly awake and, although quickened and animated by a nervous activity, subconscious in the fundamental. action of its constituent cells and tissues and their secret workings.***”

Now follow quotes from The Mother (all from the ‘Agenda’) in historical sequence:

21st April 1954: ***“The consciousness of the body can first know something exactly when it exists shortly before its realization. To know, means for the body, to be able to do something.”***

August 1954: ***“The transformation of the consciousness of the body will take place first of all.”***

14th May 1958: ***“It seems one can only then understand something if one understands it with the body. In this new substance which spreads itself out there is such an intensive warmth, power and joy that all intellectual activities appear in contrast cold and dry.”***

4th June 1958: ***“With the air which you breathe you absorb this new supramental substance which is spreading itself throughout the entire earthly atmosphere, and it is preparing something in you which will suddenly manifest itself as soon as you have taken the crucial steps.”***

11th December 1958: ***“Corresponding with spiritual and occult lore, consciousness precedes the form: consciousness produces its forms in which it is concentrated .”***

25th March 1967: „*What's interesting is to follow this sort of change in the consciousness of the cells: a lot of them still have a sense of wonder at the fact that the Truth exists. That's the form it takes: a sense of wonder.... "Ah, so that's what it is ! " A wonder. A wonder at the existence, the UNIQUE existence of the Lord—a joy! Such an intense joy and a childlike wonder, you know: "Oh, so it's really like that! " And this goes on in one part of the body after another, one group of cells after another. Truly charming. And then, when the mantra comes spontaneously, oh! ... An adoration: "It's like that, like that ! That is true, THAT IS true—all the disorder, all the ugliness, all the suffering, all the misery, all of that isn't true! It's not true, THAT is true."* And not with words (words make it very small): with an extraordinary sensation, extraordinary! Then ... it's the beginning of that sort of glorious, marvelous life. It's still at the stage of wonder; that is, something unexpected in its sublimity.”

24th June 1967: „*The near totality of the body's movements are movements of habit. There is, behind, the consciousness of the physical mind (what I call the "cellular mind") which, for its part, is constantly conscious of the divine Presence and anxious not to let in anything except That. So a whole work is going on to change, to shift the origin of movements. I mean that instead of that origin automatically being habit, the work is for the divine Consciousness and Presence to automatically be the prime mover (Mother makes the gesture of forcing the consciousness into the body).*

*But it's quite . . . quite inexpressible, that is, as soon as you try to express it, it becomes mentalized, it's no longer the thing. That's why it's very difficult to express. I can't talk about it.”*

31st January 1968: „*Instead of the consciousness being inside the body, it is the body which is inside the consciousness, yet it is still the body consciousness.”*

10th February 1968: „*The body (this is becoming interesting) has the same experiences on the heights of the consciousness, the same experiences (supramental ones, we could say, because, well, there, it's really supramental) as the vital, the mind and the inner beings had previously.*

*It's going through the same experiences—the body itself.”*

13th March 1968: „*Mentally, we can explain everything, but that doesn't mean anything at all: for the body, the material consciousness, it's abstract. When the material consciousness catches hold of something, it knows it A HUNDRED TIMES BETTER than we can know it mentally. When it knows, it has the power: knowing gives it the power. That's what is being slowly, slowly worked out. For an ignorant consciousness it's slow and painful—but for the true consciousness, it's not that! Pain, joy, all that is ... such an absurd way of seeing things—of feeling and seeing things.”*

28th August 1968: „**Penetration into the body. Yes, penetrations of currents I had several times, but that night (two nights ago, that is), what came all of a sudden was as though there was nothing anymore except a supramental atmosphere. Nothing remained except that. My body was in it. And it was PRESSING to enter, from everywhere, but everywhere at the same time—everywhere. You understand, it wasn't a current flowing in, it was an atmosphere penetrating from everywhere. It lasted for at least four or five hours. And there was only one part that was BARELY penetrated: it was from here to here (gesture between the throat and the top of the head). Here it seemed gray and dull, as if the penetration were less ... My teeth are in a dreadful state, my head is in a dreadful state—I tell you, I can't see anymore, can't hear anymore, can't . . . All this (from head to throat) is in need of a great transformation. But apart from it, all the rest without exception—it was pouring and pouring and pouring in.... I had never, ever seen that before, never! It lasted for hours—hours. Perfectly consciously.**

4th December 1968: “**But the body isn't mistaken, it knows what it is. It knows what it is. And it knows one thing, that it's only when (and because) it can be absolutely peaceful—peaceful like something completely transparent and still—that this Power can act. The body knows. It knows the only thing asked of it is that total, transparent stillness.**

(silence)

**The body is very simple, it has a child's simplicity. This morning it was assailed with visions—not "visions," I don't know what to call**

**them . . . they weren't exactly recollections, but things coming and all of them expressing hatred, violence (all that side, you know), and the body saw, it saw and felt, and said so spontaneously (it continues to be in this constant communion with the divine Presence), it said to the Lord, "Why do You carry all that in Yourself ?" With a child's candor and simplicity: "Why do You carry all that in Yourself ?" And just when it said that, there was a sort of vision, a vision extended over the whole earth of all the horrors constantly committed on it: "Why do You carry . . . ?" So then, the Answer is always, always the same (it's like this, it's here like this [gesture around the head]): "In my Consciousness, things are different." Or, "In my Consciousness, things have a different appearance." And there was this insistence: "Work to have the true consciousness." The TRUE consciousness that contains everything.”**

(silence)

**„One must ... one must have that immutable Peace, one must be as vast as the universe to be able to bear the idea that EVERYTHING is the supreme Lord. And the body has understood that it's only now it has the experience because it's only now it is sufficiently conscious and surrendered (surrendered in the true sense; I might almost say "identified," but that's too high-sounding a word, it doesn't want to use it, it knows it's not like that and identification will be some thing else), but quite simply that it's now capable and ready to bear the idea that everything is the Lord, that there is NOTHING but the Lord. Previously, for quite a long time, it still needed to feel that all these movements (gesture forward) lead to the Lord, while all those movements (gesture backward) lead away from**

**the Lord. For a long time, the choice was necessary. And now, now it's doing its tapasya to be able to bear this idea—but without admitting or accepting movements of degradation and cruelty.... That is, with the nascent impression that things are not what they seem to be; that we only see the appearance and they are not what they seem to be."**

11th December 1968: „**The body is something very, very simple and very childlike, and it has that experience so imperatively, you understand, it doesn't need to "seek": it just has to stop its activity for a minute and . . . it's there. So then, it wonders why people haven't been aware of that since the beginning? It wonders, "Why, why have they sought all kinds of things—religions, gods ... all kinds of things—when it's so simple!" So simple, for the body it's so simple, so selfevident.**

**All those constructions—religions, philosophies ... all those constructions—are a need of the mind to . . . "play the game." It wants to play the game well. While the body is so simple, so simple, so obvious! So obvious, so simple: "Why," it wonders, "Why, why have they been seeking all kinds of complications ... when it's so simple?" The very fact of saying, "The Divine is deep within you" . . . (it remembers its own experience, you understand) is so complicated, while it's so simple!"**

28th December 1968: **"The nature of time is changing. A type of intensity of consciousness is changing the value of time."**

18th January 1969: **"There is in it a consciousness (something VERY precious) that gives lessons to the body, teaches it what it has to do,**

**that is, the attitude it should have, the reaction it should have.... I had already told you a few times how difficult it is to find the procedure of the transformation when there's no one to give you indications; and it's the response, as it were: "he" comes and tells the body, "Have this attitude, do this, do that in that way." So then the body is happy, it's quite reassured, it can't make a mistake anymore."**

15th February 1969: „**There is something wholly independent of our aspiration, our will, our effort ... wholly independent. And this something appears to be absolutely all-powerful, in the sense that none of the body's difficulties exists. At such times, everything disappears. Aspiration, concentration, effort ... no use at all. And it's the DIVINE SENSE, you understand, that's what having the divine sense means. And then, this body, that body, that other body ... (gesture here and there, all around Mother), it doesn't matter: it moved about from one body to another, quite free and independent, aware of the limitations or the possibilities of each body—absolutely wonderful, I had never, ever had this experience before."**

19th February 1969: „**But now the body has learned to be ab-so-lute-ly indifferent to those reactions—absolutely. It smiles. It smiles with this benevolent Smile [of the superman consciousness], it has the same smile. And it sees, it knows, it senses where that [the worry or the "haste"] comes from, it's thoroughly conscious."**

17th April 1969: **"Even if only one single person loyally places themselves at the disposal of the truth, he can change the world."**

23rd April 1969: **“Something completely and absolutely new for the body.”** **“There is an intensive aspiration and in certain moments that brings about a type of opening in the cells. I don’t know what happens, something happens in the cells, and it is a state of intense and utterly unmoved vibration. When people emerge from that, one even asks if one still has the same shape! Something totally new for the body.”**

24th May 1969: **„The body has reached a state of consciousness in which it knows that death can bring about a change, but isn’t—isn’t a disappearance (disappearance of the consciousness). And then, that idea the vast majority of human beings have: the repose of death ... (Mother puts her hand on her mouth, as if before an extraordinary piece of nonsense). Not even that consolation. For most people, it’s the opposite of a repose. So then, there too, but even more acutely and intensely: "The only, the SOLE hope is ... You, Lord, to be You. Let there be nothing but You. Let this separation, this difference disappear, it is MONSTROUS!" Let it disappear. Then, let it be as You will: You in full activity, or You in complete repose it doesn't matter in the least; whether it is this way or that way, either way it's completely, completely unimportant; the important thing is that it should be You.**

**There's the absolute CERTITUDE (Mother clenches her two fists) that there's only ONE way out of all that, only ONE—only one, not two, there's no choice, there aren't a few possibilities, there's only one: it's ... the supreme Door. The Marvel of Marvels. All the rest ...all the rest is an impossibility.**

**And all that is the experience of this (Mother points to her body), it's not mental, but wholly and completely material.”**

4th June 1969: **„The body doesn't in the least, in the least, have either the ambition or the desire or even the aspiration to become that [the glorified body], but there was only a sort of joy at the possibility that "that" may be—that THAT MAY BE—with anyone, anywhere, anyhow: that that may be. And I looked very, very attentively: not for a minute did it have the idea, "It should be this" (Mother pinches the skin of her hand), you understand? It was, "May that incarnation, that manifestation BE"—not with the choice of one person or another, one place or another, no, none of that was there: it was the THING IN ITSELF which was a wonderful solution. And that's all.**

**Then the consciousness started observing: if there is nothing in this body even "aspiring" to be that, it shows that's not its work. Then came this extraordinary Smile (I don't know how to explain), like that, which passed by and said ... (to put it in a quite childish manner), "That's not your business!" And that's all. And it was over, I didn't concern myself with it anymore. "Not your business," in the sense, "It's none of your concern; whether it's like this or like that, it's not your business. That's all.**

**But what has become its business, in such an intense, intense manner that it's almost inexpressible, is "You, You, You ...," You that no word can express: the Divine, to use a word. That's all. For everything: eating—the Divine; sleeping—the Divine; suffering—the Divine...”**

10th September 1969: „*I have nothing to say. My body is going through extraordinary experiences, but they can't be told.... It's as if it were shown how, in all sorts of circumstances—innumerable circumstances—how one goes towards death and how one goes towards life: with everything, everything, you understand, every part of the body, every organ, every activity, one after another—impossible to tell. One can't talk about it. It's interesting.*

*But this body was built in a curious way, because every time it's in external contact with wickedness, that is, the will to hurt, the will to destroy, the will to cause harm, it doesn't understand, and that gives it ... you know, like a kind of child's sorrow: "How can that be?..." And I see that it's used for a certain work, but ...*

(silence)

*There is also a whole little teaching of every minute with regard to the different ways of receiving sensations (of the body, of course), like the teaching you are given when you do the yoga: the attitude with regard to all thoughts, reactions, feelings, all those things; you are taught to have the true attitude (all that is the past). Well, the body is given the same teaching in detail: the attitude to be taken with regard to every sensation: every sensation—every event, everything that happens, every contact. It's a painstaking work, in details. And it's accompanied by a general attitude; but the general attitude, the body has taken it, it's a*

*settled thing—it's the working out, that is, the painstaking work of every minute.... It's not interesting. It's only the body that finds it interesting; even then, it's not fascinated—it's something painstaking, a painstaking work.”*

18th March 1970: „*I've had this experience for several months now (especially since the start of the year) that the "shift" of the consciousness—instead of the consciousness being in the ordinary state, if you shift it (I am referring to the body's consciousness), if it's directly tuned to the Divine, in a few sometimes seconds, sometimes minutes, but in a few minutes, the disease absolutely disappears. And if you just do this (Mother slightly tilts one finger to the left), if you go back even a little, it instantly comes back. But if you keep your consciousness at the right place, it's gone.*

*That's an experiment I've made more than a hundred times, even with something like toothache (which is hard to cure), even sharp pains at one spot or another. That's the experiment made by the BODY. The body knows.”*

22<sup>nd</sup> April 1970: „*Nights are very peculiar. And precisely because all that isn't mentalized, it's hardly possible to describe or explain.... But this subtle physical very concretely has the sense or feeling or perception (I don't know) of the divine Presence—the divine Presence in all things, everywhere. So then, this body is . . . one might say, partly this way and partly that way (gesture of oscillation between two worlds)...*”

18<sup>th</sup> December 1971: ***“Also I heard something Sri Aurobindo wrote, where he says that in order for the Supermind to manifest on earth, the physical mind has to receive and manifest it. And the physical mind, I mean the bodily mind, mine, is precisely the only one I have left now. And so it came to me very clearly that that is why that one alone was left. And it is being converted very rapidly and interestingly. The physical mind' is developing under the supramental influence. And it's just what Sri Aurobindo wrote, that it was indispensable so the Supermind could manifest on earth in a permanent way.”*** (Perhaps Mother is referring to this text of Sri Aurobindo: ***"And there is too an obscure mind of the body, of the very cells, molecules, corpuscles. Haeckel, the German materialist, spoke somewhere of the will in the atom, and recent science, dealing with the incalculable individual variation in the activity of the electrons, comes near to perceiving that this is not a figure but the shadow thrown by a secret reality. This body-mind is a very tangible truth; owing to its obscurity and mechanical clinging to past movements and facile oblivion and rejection of the new, we find in it one of the chief obstacles to permeation by the supermind Force and the transformation of the functioning of the body. On the other hand, once effectively converted, it will be one of the most precious instruments for the stabilisation of the supramental Light and Force in the material Nature.”***)

Letters on Yoga, XXII.340

22<sup>nd</sup> December 1971: ***“I heard (yesterday, I think, or the day before) a letter of Sri Aurobindo's in which he said that for the Supermind to be fixed here (he had noticed that the Supermind came into him and withdrew, came back and withdrew—it wasn't stable), so he said: to become stable, it has to enter and settle in the physical mind. (Actually, Mother means the bodily mind.) And that's just the work being done in me for months now: the mind has been removed, and the physical mind is taking its place, and for some time I had noticed that it was . . . (I told you that it was seeing everything in a different way, that its relationship with things was different), I have been noticing these past few days that the physical mind, the mind that is in the body, was becoming vast, its visions were comprehensive, and its whole way of seeing was absolutely different*** (Mother extends her arms in an immense, quiet gesture).

***I saw, that's it: the Supermind is working there. And I spend extraordinary hours.***

### 3.4.1 The required abilities and characteristics of the body - Heightening of its ability to sense, receptiveness, ability to focus as well as its ability to surrender and attentiveness

From all the functions which are required to make the body able to experience more consciously and to transform itself, the ability to feel is the most important. According to the experiences of The Mother it may become so significantly refined and increased, that through the finest nerve endings in the physical body connections can be established to the subtle-physical level.

The receptiveness of the body and cells to absorb and as well as the ability to focus are necessary elements for that; on the one hand they make it possible to sense something, on the other to grow by themselves when one works on the ability to sense. So they are elements which mutually condition and promote each other. This is also true for the ability to surrender and conscious awareness.

Parallel to the abilities and characteristics mentioned above, further ones grow which have an effect not only directly on the physical body as well on the ego too and the emotional/psychological as the inner being. They are amongst others: presence, the ability to differentiate, honesty, plasticity and receptivity

The following quotes underscore the importance of these elements in the work in and with the body likewise bodily consciousness.

1958 The Mother: **“One can even state that it is a form of sensing which is refined, subtle, clear, bright, sharp and profound and opens the door much wider to you than the even the most subtle explanations. And when we take the experience a little further so it appears that when**

**pears**

**that when**

***you reach the work of the transformation of the body, if some cells of the body, which are more prepared than others, more refined and subtle and flexible, if they begin to feel concretely the presence of the Divine Grace, of the Divine Will, of the Divine power as well as the revelation which is not intellectual but rather a revelation through identity, if you perceive this even in the cells of the body, then the experience is so total, so irresistible, so lively, concrete and real that everything else appears to be like a mere dream.”***

4th December 1968: **„But the body isn't mistaken, it knows what it is. It knows what it is. And it knows one thing, that it's only when (and because) it can be absolutely peaceful—peaceful like something completely transparent and still—that this Power can act. The body knows. It knows the only thing asked of it is that total, transparent stillness.”**

17th July 1968: **„That's just what the body's transformation is about! It's when the physical cells become not only conscious, but RECEPTIVE to the true Consciousness-Force, that is, when they allow the working of that higher Consciousness. That's the work of transformation....Not so easy !”**

4th April 1970: **„The body (when I go into contemplation like that), there is a moment when the word "anguish" is too strong, much too strong, but the impression is of being on the verge of the unknown—the unknown, the ... something.**

**And that's becoming constant. So there is the awareness that there's only one solution for the body, it's ... total surrender—total. And in that total surrender it realizes that that vibration (how can „ I explain ? ), that vibration is not one of dissolution, but something .. . what?. .. The unknown, completely unknown—new, unknown.**

19th February 1969: „**The body is very conscious of its infirmity—and of the Grace. For instance, there are painful, difficult moments, but it's perfectly aware that it's because of its incapacity to open, to give itself, to change. And a profound joy, VERY CALM, but very vast—vast, you know, the cells feel a broadening. That goes on increasing little by little. It's only when there's a physical pain or something a little acute that the body is obliged to hang on, otherwise ... And even that comes from this idiotic spirit of self-preservation (Mother laughs) in the depths of any cellular consciousness—it knows that. It knows it. It's an old habit. But all that, little by little (little by little, but in reality very fast—very fast), is changing.**

**All the groups of cells, all the cellular organizations have to do their ... not "surrender," a complete self-abandon, in complete trust. That's indispensable. For some, it's the spontaneous, inevitable, constant movement; with others, it comes as soon as there's a difficulty; yet others need to be churned a little in order to learn. So then, the various functions are taken up in turn, in a**

**marvel-ously logical order, following the body's functioning. It's something marvelous, only the body is a poor thing, very poor thing—that's very true."**

19th February 1969: „**I am entirely convinced that things are as they must be, and that it's simply the body that lacks suppleness, tranquillity, trust.... So I can't even say that things grate (they don't grate at all), but ... You understand, the work consists in changing the conscious base of all the cells—but not all at once! Because that would be impossible; even little by little is very difficult: the moment when the conscious base is changed is ... There is almost a sort of panic in the cells, and the impression, "Ooh! What's going to happen?" And since there are still lots and lots of them ... So now and then, it's difficult. It's by group, almost by faculty or part of faculty, and some of them are a little difficult."**

20th November 1963: "**You want TERRESTRIAL results ? Well, these are far more considerable in their quality than you can see." And indeed, I saw small, very small things, movements of consciousness in Matter, tiny little things that were . . . truly astounding in their quality, and that are never noticed because they are totally unimportant (outwardly unimportant). Only if you observe in a most tenuous way do you notice them, because they are, in fact, phenomena of consciousness in the cells—are you conscious of your cells ?**

### 3.4.2 The necessity of quietening the Mind and the Vital in the work on, with and through the physical body (in historical chronology)

The Mother on the 3rd of June 1968: „*The mind and vital have been instruments to . . . knead Matter—knead and knead and knead in every possible way: the vital through sensations, the mind through thoughts—knead and knead. But they strike me as transitory instruments which will be replaced by other states of consciousness.*

*You understand, they are a phase in the universal development, and they will be ... they will fall off as instruments that have outlived their usefulness.*

*So then, I had the concrete experience of what this matter kneaded by the vital and the mind is, but WITH-OUT vital and WITHOUT mind . . . It's something else.”*

In the description of her experiences in August and September 1967 The Mother spoke from the “exclusion“ of the Mind and the Vital. Somebody put a question about that: “Why do they have to be eliminated so that a rapid and effective transformation of the body can take place? Doesn't the supramental consciousness also have an effect on them (the Mind and the Vital)?”

The Mother replied to that on the 21st of December 1968: „*Certainly it acts! It's ALREADY been acting, for a long time. It's because the body is used (was used) to obeying the vital and especially the mind, so it's to change its habit, to make it obey the higher Consciousness alone. That's why. It's to make things go faster. In people, that acts through the*

*mind and vital—and as I said, it's safer that way. As an experience it's rather risky, but it makes things move considerably faster, because normally you must act on the body through those two, whereas in that way, with them absent, That acts directly.*

*That' s all. As questions go, this one is innocent.*

*The process isn't to be recommended! Every time I have an opportunity, I say so: people mustn't imagine they should try to do that (they couldn't, but that doesn't matter), it's not recommended. One should take the time needed. But that was because of the number of years . . . to make things go faster.”*

1st January 1969: „ *These two, the vital and the mind, care very little—very little—for the body's well-being: it's merely an instrument meant to be used, and it just has to obey. But the body feels much freer than before. That' s one of the reasons why they were sent away, it's not merely to go faster—we said it was for the speed of the work, but it's not merely that, it's because the body left to itself has so much more practical common sense.... I don't know how to explain. An extraordinary STABILITY.*

*The only thing in it that was a little morbid was this physical mind, the body-mind, which Sri Aurobindo regarded as impossible to change—it was very stubborn, but you see, it's the one that has done the work, it has worked out the change.”*

8th February 1969: „*The hindrance in most people is mental activity—truly, this body is infinitely grateful that it has been liberated from the mental presence so it may be ENTIRELY under the influence of this Consciousness, without this whole accumulated farrago of so-called knowledge people have.... It's spontaneous, natural, unsophisticated, very, very simple, and almost child-like in its simplicity. And that [the mind's disappearance] is a great advantage. At this speed, things can go very fast—one learns a hundred, two hundred things AT THE SAME TIME, you understand, all of it seen at once. This morning, it was particularly intense.*”

18<sup>th</sup> October 1969: „*But since this body stopped having the sense of its individuality, very spontaneously and naturally it has been, "You are"—all the cells, every cell: You are. For the cells, there' s no "I." Only, everyone has quite conceivably his own path, which is why I didn't tell him, "Don't do this." I took great care not to say that. Yes, because after his realization, he has been very influenced by the teachings of the Swamis, for whom its always, "You are That." They're wrong.*

*That is to say, for the entire old Indian yoga, the body is something untransformable, and therefore it' s a momentary necessity that will disappear; while for Sri Aurobindo, the body is transformable, and the minute it's transformable, instead of thinking of itself as an individual, it thinks of itself as the Lord. And, you know, I guarantee that it' s spontaneous, natural, and ... blissful. While the idea of a separate person is a painful calamity.*

*It's more a passivity that would be missing. Everything is too active.*

*And for the Force to be able to go through rapidly so as to reach the body, a GREAT passivity is needed. I can see that: every time there is a pressure so as to act on some part of the body or other, it always begins with an absolute passivity, which is ... the "perfection of inertia," you understand? What inertia imperfectly represents—it's the perfection of that.... Something with no activity of its own—which is VERY difficult precisely for those who have a great mental development, very difficult. Because its whole life long, the body has worked to be in that state of receptivity to the mind, and that state, which is what brought about its obedience, docility and so on, is what needs to be abolished.”*

14th March 1970: „It's the BODY'S experience. Before, those who had inner experiences would say, "Yes, up above, that's the way it is, but here ..." Now the "but here" will soon cease to be. This tremendous change is what's being conquered, so physical life may be ruled by the higher consciousness and not by the mental world. It' s the change of authority.... It's difficult. It's hard. It's painful. There is some damage done, naturally, but ... But truly, one can see—one can see. And that' s the REAL CHANGE, that' s what will enable the new Consciousness to express itself. And the body is learning, it's learning its lesson—all bodies, all bodies.”

4th April 1970: „*Oh, yes ! (Mother laughs) Oh, yes.... And all things other than the purely material, all psychological, moral things, all that seems so childish! . . "Oh, what fuss you make about nothing! Wait till you know how it is THERE" (Mother points to the body). That's all. Yes (laughing), I think that' s the great adventure !”*

In recent years Ilse Middendorf has occasionally with those appropriately interested carried out a type of breathing which she calls "Thoughts silence" which however, as she informed me refers not only to the Mind but also includes the silence of the Vital. At this point in time it is necessary to connect that work with the focusing on the subtle-physical body which The Mother had formed. Possibly it will be even easier to achieve the "Thoughts silence" with simultaneous concentration on the subtle-physical body than it would be without such a focusing on it since without such concentration a "vacuum" would come about which

would induce reactions in the Mind and Vital.

In chapter 3.6.1 (Purification of the physical body) I go into the difference between the purification required according to whether people take a spiritual path or foreground the physical body. I would like already at this juncture to point out that it possible by means of breathing to let the Mind and the Vital recede into the background during the work on breathing without it requiring the processes of purification which are indispensable for spiritual paths.

### **3.5 Correspondence between the elements of work in the methodology of The Mother (to transform the body) and the Perceptible Breath after Ilse Middendorf**

Many of the most advanced cultures of humankind have transmitted to us the experience that the breath is in the position to connect “Body, soul and spirit” likewise to induce a contact with them. Since in this publication I apply Sri Aurobindo’s terminology, according to which breathing exists in an interactive relationship to the body, to the external Vital and Mind, to a higher Vital and Mind and to an inner and likewise psychic being.

The encounter with the Perceptible Breath after Ilse Middendorf may confirm these findings. So far, so good – now it will become interesting when one perceives the mutual interactivity between the breath and the inner and/or psychic being which are mentioned above. A practical form of breath work should make this clearer:

Sit on a stool and breath – only that – let the breath come, don’t use your willpower, let the breath find and follow its own course. – Whatever you experience after some of the breaths, the Vital and Mind take part in this process insofar as the Mind tries to classify what is happening at that moment and the Vital evaluates it (is it doing me good or not etc.?) The body and breath in turn react to this classification and evaluation through the Vital and Mind (the therapeutic contact with the Experience of Breath is founded on the basis of the interactive relationship).

In advanced work with the breath, the latter “awakes” too the interest of the inner and spiritual nature: as soon as

the breathing is allowed to come and go of its own accord, its participation will be perceived through feelings. They are differentiated very significantly from those of the outer being (the Vital and the Mind). A comparison should make this clear:

#### **a) Feelings of the external being (in the West known in general as “Psyche”):**

Powerful but transient pleasure and transitory happiness, suffering, overwhelming enthusiasm and dejection, doubt, human love (which is reliant on reciprocation), feelings of inferiority, sympathy and antipathy, vanity, pride, quarrelsomeness, power obsession, thirst for glory and arrogance, anxiety, narrowness, fear, concern, annoyance, grief, rage, jealousy, shame, envy, hate, desire and yearning, passion, despondency, restlessness, – suitable expressions are also the terms “yearning psyche” or “outer person” too, “Person of the foreground” and “psyche”. The “psyche” is in many ways the same as the term the “ego”. The evaluation of everything that happens is typical for this level.

A further typical characteristic of the psyche is that (in its unconscious areas) it indulges equally in pleasure as in suffering. In this way one can explain the large number of people who while explaining (and themselves are persuaded of it) that they would do everything in order to overcome an illness from which they suffer, actually (unconsciously) reject every possibility of healing.

**b) The feelings of the inner and spiritual being:**

Love (which is independent of being returned by other people), pleasure which is constant, tranquility, harmony, detachment, greatness, serenity, unlimitedness, timelessness, knowledge which is not sourced by thought, composure, spiritual recognition and the feeling that the “yearning soul”, the “ego” though indeed necessary is not decisive and causative. – Faith, peace, honesty, humility, gratitude, endurance, aspiration, receptivity, receptiveness, courage, magnanimity – all attitudes like conditions of being which (can) grow through the work on breathing.

So much for the superior differentiation of feelings. Now participation of the Vital and the Mind is not absolutely necessary in the breathing and sensing occurrences in the body, that means, also when these domains of being “keep silent” – better expressed in that they don’t influence the occurrences in the body, this does not reduce the effect of the breathing work on the physical body. The opposite is the case. The work on sensing can now follow completely the needs of the breath and of the body, is no longer influenced by the reactions on the feelings of the Vital and the attempts at categorizing by the Mind. The inner being too should “keep silent” i.e. only operate as “observer”, remain completely quiet, without reactive feelings as described above.

A special “gift“ of this breathing work is that that they can create an attitude and atmosphere which allows the Vital and the Mind, yes even so longed-for inner and spiritual being to retreat into the background, if the concentration takes place exclusively on the physical body, the breathing and the sensations. That entails a purging of the Vital and the Mind, as required by all spiritual paths, is then not necessary. Abo-

Above all through the turning to the so-called “salvation” (here: the Divine which is involved in the physical material), the influence of the Vital and the Mind is gradually reduced during the breath work

So that the whole still moves in the right direction that is achieves the “male” part, and with that the decision whether I turn to the body, the spirit or the soul, the entire occurrences based on breathing and sensory inputs are coupled with the ability for concentrated collectedness. I possess (at each moment) the ability to decide freely whether to focus on this or that.

One of Ilse Middendorf’s most important experiences, in effect the basis of the Perceptible Breath is that there is a mutual interaction between breathing, focusing and perceiving: irrespective of where I begin, an exercise that means on which of the three elements I focus at the beginning, the other two follow on. So the abilities both to sense and to concentrate grow at the same time in the physical body through the practicing of breathing and with breathing – and through that its abilities in respect of receptiveness, surrendering and attentiveness – in a continual interaction which assist each other. In the course of the work on breath, this achieves a “quality” which cannot be expressed with words.

On Chapter 3.6.2 I name some methods of exercising which are suitable for allowing the psyche to “let go“ i.e. to “bring it to silence”.

It is also possible to work only and exclusively on and with the consciousness of the physical body. It is self-evident that in spite of ways of breathing which are suitable to quieten the Vital and the Mind, those two domains continually try to take part in the proceedings. An effective method to

gradually bring them (completely) to “silence” is to tell them immediately when they show up: “Not now – it’s your turn later.” When one keeps this promise (!) – and that is essential – which entails after the breath work itself or at a later point in time to give the Vital and the Mind opportunities to report their commentaries and wishes; then both accept that during the work itself they should not interfere.

To reach such a state totally is indeed no easy undertaking, but when compared with the periods which it takes in general for the cathartic processes in yoga to take place, it can be achieved in a shorter time.

Along with the necessity to bringing the Vital and the Mind to silence, it should be emphasized from the experiences of The Mother that as a priority five abilities likewise characteristics have to be developed and built up for the work on, with and through the physical body: **the abilities to sense, receptiveness, the ability to focus, as well as its abilities to surrender and attentiveness.**

These five elements are however the basis and the elements of the work with the Experience of Breath after Ilse Middendorf. So with that, there exists a fundamental connection between the matters of concern to The Mother and the possibility to work absolutely practically towards their realization on the basis of the physical body and of the breath, in fact as The Mother stressed the single, possible path to transformation.

It has become apparent since 1997 of breathing work and in the corresponding conversations with Ilse Middendorf, that the time has come not only to concern ourselves for the most part with the connections which breathing can build up both to the psyche and the inner and psychic being, but rather to put the physical body itself and its consciousness (not like as up till now that the Leib (a term describing the total body “imbued with soul” too) at the center of the breathing work, and thereby to focus totally on the subtle-physical body as developed by The Mother.

Does the breathing have to be developed further or changed in order to get closer to this goal? As this publication demonstrates, one can answer this question with a resounding negative. The breath only has to work consistently on the basis of its own fundamental principles and to remain entirely in its sensations. – The “new” in that is the consistent rejection of the Mind and the Vital whose concerns have always up till now been considered in the breath work to a certain extent. In order to assist the comprehension of those readers who are not familiar with The Perceptible Breath, I shall make clear the most important terms in it and describe them briefly as follows.

### 3.5.1 The abilities and characteristics of the body which can be developed: The ability to sense, receptiveness, the ability to focus as well as attentiveness.

#### Ability to sense

The ability to sense is based on the nervous system's activity of the physical body. Moreover through the Perceptible Breath, parts of the body can be experienced (perceived) which do not have any nerves. For example, the liver can be perceived given a certain "quality of breath" although it does not possess any nerves.

It has been scientifically proven that nerves which are either never or only seldom used conduct badly. However, if they are once more activated (which can only occur through practical exercises) the ability to sense rapidly increases. Furthermore nerves which are often recipients of impulses form on their endings increasingly finer fibers. Through those we can produce connections to the levels of the subtle – physical. The ability to sense is also the founding stone of the work with the body and through the body – and it is the "position" at which the work with the Perceptible Breath cannot be differentiated from the work on the physical body in the sense that Mother's search intended it.

Sri Aurobindo in 'Letters on Yoga Volume 1': ***"The physical nerves are part of the material body but they are extended into the subtle body and there is a connection between the two. Yes, there are nerves in the subtle body."***

#### Focusing

In the Perceptible Breath we consciously differentiate between this ability and that of concentrating. Whereas the ability to collect comes into being through excluding everything which lies outside of its middle-point, and thus has a certain quality of selectivity in its character, focusing means a process which includes all aspects of an occurrence which stands at the center of focus. With that it is possible to collect on/in the entire physical body so that it becomes more conscious of sensations on all levels right down to the cells as total organisms. Furthermore the term concentrating is used more in connection with thinking, whereas focusing refers to the body.

#### Receptiveness

The receptiveness of the physical body is a characteristic which exists and comes into being in interaction and cooperation with the breathing, focusing and perceiving. And there exists here too a mutual dependence: the larger the permeability, the more the breathing can flow whereby in turn the ability to sense increases. The circulation in a part of the body intensifies if this becomes more permeable for the breathing – one of the healing effects of breath work. Parts of the body which had had up till then been impermeable, after they are made permeable through breathing, are sensed and felt more powerfully than before.

If the physical body becomes more receptive in its entirety, then it becomes so not only for something “finer” like the breath likewise the movement of breath which runs through the body in a “breathing wave”, rather it becomes also for other finer sensations. For example for the vibration of what was formed by The Mother in the subtle-physical – so far as one focuses on it.

Certain experiences which I myself had with the Experience of Breath suggest to me that physical body which is permeable in its entirety is in a position to perceive vibrations in the subtle-physical in that it enters into “resonance” with them. For that the body has to vibrate a little “higher” than before. In order to perceive these fine vibrations, it needs along with good permeability a still greater ability to devote and attentiveness aware.

So far as we are speaking here about powers or energies which take their effects on the physical body at its opening to the subtle-physical, so these

bring about neither pains nor a warming-up of the physical body so far as it is sufficiently permeable. What causes friction and with that pains and possibly warming-up in the physical body is the resistance of the stuff given too little receptiveness of the physical body.

### **Surrender and Attentiveness**

Surrender and conscious awareness are two aspects which it is necessary not only to increase but also to balance out. If the surrendering side predominates, then the attentiveness in general diminishes, and vice versa. – The Mother on the 19th of February 1969: **“Surrender one can term the abandoning of the “I limitation”.**”

Transferred to the practical work with breathing that means: focusing on the subtle-physical body in full surrender to the supramental consciousness. “Thy will be done” with at the same time attentiveness of the perceptions of the physical body.

### 3.5.2 Further points in common in the methodology and the elements of work

Along with the similarities described above in the methodology of The Mother and Ilse Middendorf concerning the importance of the abilities to sense, receptiveness and focusing, as well as surrender and conscious awareness, there are further interesting commonalities.

#### a) A “female” path

One of those parallels is that both pursue a more “female” path. In contrast all yoga routes basically possess a more “masculine” orientation, since they are goal-directed and search for God (in the spiritual heights of the spirit). From the teachings about the required processes of “purging”, the searcher could infer what is “wrong” and “right” – and the work involves a continual struggle “against” something (in general against the stirrings of the external Vital and Mind). The female knows no “wrong” and “right”. Just as things “are”, so are things and just as things will be, so they “will be”. – It is a fundamental experience in the work with the breath coming and going of its own accord, that in the breathing events there is nothing wrong or right. Just as the breath coming and going of its own accord flows, so it flows – it flows neither wrongly nor rightly, just as river finds its path through the earth – it flows neither wrongly nor rightly – so far as it is allowed to flow freely and isn’t straightened by people (in general by male engineering graduates).

#### b) From “inner to outer”

A further similarity consists therein that both stress the importance of working from “inner to outer”. The work with the Perceptible Breath begins as a result – apart from a short beginning phase – basically “inner” and has an effect on the “outer”.

Mother expressed herself about this on the 26th of September 1956: ***“The usual mistake is to believe one has to begin on the outside and then goes towards the inside. One has to begin on the inside and then go towards the outer, if one is innerly ready.”*** – and 10 Years later, on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of September 1966: ***“And there is a small beginning of how that being which Sri Aurobindo calls “supramental” will be—the next creation. A small beginning. And it is, as Sri Aurobindo said, an explanation from within outward—the “outward,” the surface, has only a quite secondary importance and it will come at the very end, when it's ready. But it begins from within outward, and it begins in a rather precise and interesting way.”***

Here again the difference between the male and female approaches: the male principle the male principle tries to take effect from the outside to the inside. The female works on the inner and lets this take its effect on the outside. – How wise it was of Sri Aurobindo, to entrust The Mother with the task of carrying out the practical work.

### **c) Saluto-genetic Action**

A fundamental element of the breathing work is not to work on the unhealthy or on what is missing, but rather directed to those parts or areas of the body which are already more conscious and have the power to raise the unconscious to the conscious. Experts in this field term this a “saluto-genetic action”. The author knows only of a few processes which use this principle as a basis and with which the mother too worked on the physical body.

### **d) The necessary simplicity of the method**

A very significant aspect of the similarity of both methods is as The Mother always emphasized that the workings of consciousness (and of nature) that brings about something momentous are simple and have to be. Of course the searcher has the subjective impression that it difficult to reach their goal. Already the length of the process makes the impression of “difficulties” appear. If the goal is reached, one recognizes – and The Mother referred to that – “everything is so simple”.

An example should make this clear: Key into a computer program the computer ants There just two simple commands:

1. Search for a grain of sand which has not been used in the construction, and place one there where one which has been used is positioned –
2. When you cannot proceed any further take one grain of sand away and place it by another grain.

On the monitor as a result you build up anthills with corridors made out of industriously working ants which is astonishingly similar to hills put together by termites. The “blueprint of the ant-hill” which scientific research has up till now been supposed and sought for in the brains (or the genes) of the termites is consequently not in the least necessary, and would be much too complicated for one tiny termite’s brain – and in its practical realization.

Transposed into the work on the transformation of the physical body that means the method must in itself be basically simple. Complicated rituals, the sequence of events of exercises, conditions or pre-conditions would not be suitable to be accepted by consciousness and nature.

The Perceptible Breath is simple – everyone can breathe and acquire the ability to let the breathing come and go of its own accord.

### 3.6 The practical work required

From what has been described so far it follows that the work required consists through the work of the Perceptible Breath of increasing the sensing consciousness contained in the physical body, and through suitable ways of breathing to quieten and then finally to bring it “to silence” (during the practical breathing work). The focusing on the subtle-physical body formed by The Mother is of fundamental significance for that.

At this juncture I shall quote from The Mother some comments which may be helpful and motivating to commence the work:

1st October 1969: **„That's what is remarkable in the physical, it's that when the ~ physical has learned something, it never forgets. Once the cells have learned that, learned this self-giving, this offering to the Divine, and this NEED to offer themselves, its learned, and it DOESN'T BUDGE ANYMORE. Its constant, twenty-four hours a day, ceaselessly, day after day, changelessly; even when something goes wrong (you /1 have a pain or something), the first movement is this: it's to offer it, to give it—spontaneously. The higher consciousness doesn't intervene, it's spontaneous: it's the consciousness contained in the cells.**

***The ego must be abolished —the RULE of the ego must be abolished. Generally, people think it's not possible to abolish the physical ego; not only is it possible, it's DONE, and the body continues, it keeps on walking—it hasn't gone! (It had a difficult little moment ... a little moment.)***

***All those difficulties one has with the inner development when one deals with the vital and the mind, the return of old things and all that, here [in the body] it's over, it's not like that.”***

18th September 1963: **„It is impossible for any change, any change towards perfection (I don't mean a regression, because that's another phenomenon), it's impossible for any change, even in one element or one point of the earth consciousness, not to make the whole earth participate in that change. Necessarily.“**

30th October 1971: **„It's a hundred times more marvelous than we can possibly imagine. We need to find the plasticity of matter—so that matter can progress forever. That's it.”**

### 3.6.1 The purging of the physical body

In order to be able ascend higher Mind and spiritual levels, it is necessary to purge the outer being i.e. the outer Vital and Mind (almost identical with the notion of “ego”). In this point all spiritual and mental paths of the East and West agree however much they otherwise disagree.

The purging is not necessary therefore because the “ego” is “evil” or has to be condemned but rather alone because it “disturbs” the ascent, distorts the outcome, seduces people into misusing the skills they have obtained. For the “normal” human being the ego is necessary to survive in life.

The goal of the purging processes in all spiritual paths consists as a result in breaking the dominance of the ego (where required even to “eradicate” it), to educate it, and to subjugate it to the guidance of the psychic being. This process needs in general a lot of time, and only a few people have (had) the perseverance and the skills to go down this path with success.

The question now is whether in the attempt to unite the physical body with the subtle-physical that the external Vital and Mind likewise are disturbing just as they are in the search for the spiritual heights. The answer is the following: to get rid of them, but “differently” – and this disturbance is relatively easy to overcome!

Whereas on spiritual paths it is not sufficient to switch off the ego only during the period of meditation since an unpurged being would render worthless the results of the meditation; once outcomes have been achieved in the body they are no longer changeable (see the quote in chapter 3.6.2). So that means

that work which transforms the body and the cell consciousness, can take place when it succeeds in pushing the (unpurged) Vital and Mind into the background only for the duration of the work. This is basically possible with the methods of the Experience of Breath after Ilse Middendorf, provided that the breath is permitted to come and go of its own accord.

So much for the processes for purging the ego. – Does that mean that we need no purging for the work on the body? Astounding as it may sound, The Mother speaks of a “Cellular mind”. This cellular mind is indispensable for their building up and maintenance just as the external Mind and Vital are for people’s lives in everyday life. There the problem lies. The cells of the body “do not think at all” of changing their mental program only because it has been demanded of us for the first time – after two to three million years – to do exactly like that. In the “eyes” of the cellular mind the new consciousness even represents at first a threat, since it is inevitable that it is connected with a radical change of the mental program up till now.

Now how can the Mind of the physical body likewise that of the cells be made to become “still”, and to relinquish their dominance of the physical body as well as the transformation. There is an analogy to the processes in “Integral Yoga”. On these paths a double striving is always necessary in order to make progress forwards. Firstly the aspiration (= the striving and the yearning) for the Divine, secondly the purging of the exterior being. – Here: firstly an increasing focusing on the subtle-physical body – secondly the striving to purge the cellular mind i.e. to quieten it.

This quietening of the cellular mind can be achieved by the breath – and presumably only by it – because only it can help to develop a sensing consciousness intensified in this way, which can reach the cells, indeed which even can go beyond the barriers of the nervous system, and is able to construct connections to the subtle-physical level.

It is a significant characteristic of breathing at least when it is allowed to come and go of its own accord i.e. not directed that it possesses its own intelligence. Ilse Middendorf speaks of the work on the “mainsail of breath”. Such breathing is always pleasant, harmonious, tranquillizing, harmonizing. It can and will lead finally to the silence of the ego and of the cellular mind. This is then the “decisive moment” in which the consciousness of the subtle-physical body can enter without it being rejected in a type of shock reaction or becoming over-excited due to too little receptiveness and the “friction” associated with that..

So the purging of the physical body consists in making it sensing and receptive with the intention of perceiving the cell consciousness and quietening it – and perhaps even winning it over to cooperation. Everything else will be achieved by the consciousness of the subtle-physical body as well as Divine grace.

At this point an astounding reaction sets in. The ego which does not feel its existence to be threatened since no suggestions and rules at all are made to it or must restrict it, and as a result the ego gains so much happiness in the aspects of research, of adventure and in the progress of its owner, that it

is increasingly available for cooperation which would bring about a transformation of the ego in the sense of a purging. This has with certainty a healing effect on the entire organism and being – surely positive too for existing illnesses and leads to an increase in the stability of health. The “cooperation” consists as a consequence of the external Vital and Mind being prepared at certain times (the work with breath) to retreat completely into the background. Then people would experience that not only as has been the case in the breathing work up till now, that “the healing of illnesses takes place at the margins” (Cornellis Veening) but rather also that they would recognize that a (certain degree of)

**purging of the ego**  
as well as a (certain) **development of the inner and psychic beings**  
**takes place at the margins!**

Even when these processes in individual cases do not take place exactly as described above, the problem of the purging of the ego will show itself completely differently than has been the case up till now, assuming that the body has already been awakened to a new consciousness. Because the necessity of inner and psychic growth continues to exist after the awakening of the physical body, but from that point in time onwards under completely new pre-conditions which makes it easy for the ego to consent and participate in the process of its purging, or at least not to defend itself against that process. The inner being obtains through that more space to express itself and the curtain behind which the psychic being hides itself becomes thinner.

If the first goal (unification with the subtle-physical body) is achieved, the question is raised once again about the development of the higher Mind and of the inner and psychic being. For although according to The Mother only through the physical body and its dawning of consciousness and the transformation, can the connection to supramental consciousness be brought about, one cannot therefore conclude with that the growth of the higher Mind and of the inner and psychic being will

not have any significance in the future! In contrast to the present day, all people whose bodily consciousness has been transformed (so-called transitional stage) will with pleasure accept this task since in them the external Vital and Mind willingly cooperate, and so the purging which until now has been required will (for the most part) become unnecessary, and with that the work will be able to become what Sri Aurobindo named the "sunlit path".

### 3.6.2 Recommended Exercise for Unity with the Body of the Transitional Stage

I am proposing that you carry out the following exercise sitting on a stool or also standing – or in alternation between sitting and standing.

It would be interesting to try it out while lying down since here we are indeed not concerned with (as we usually are in the Perceptible Breath) with the training of an ego whose working out sitting or standing positions are the most suitable. Those, who without problems (of pain) cannot squat on a stool should try out a supine posture. One possible disadvantage of this, however, consists in the unavoidable drive of the body to change its position, which causes in each case an impression of sensing which might be distracting. This urge to move is also present when sitting due to the miniscule movements through the so-called sitting bones (in general in a breathing rhythm) possibly the legs too, but they cause as good as none additional sensations, and are as a result not disturbing.

The proposed work consists of two parts.

#### 1st Part:

Through suitable methods of breathing exercises which permit the breath to come and go of its own accord, a state of breathing will be entered into which is characterized through the focusing on the sensation of the total physical body, and the respiration coursing through it which is achieved. The Mind and the Vital are quietened by that and in the course of time it is possible to bring them ever closer to silence.

The breathing work which up till now has been termed “silencing thoughts” which always included too the silencing of the Vital is an appropriate exercise.

#### 2nd Part

Now focus yourself on the available subtle-physical body which The Mother formed. It is not “somewhere” but rather (in the first approximation) identical with the contours of our own physical body. Let yourself be guided by your breathing. It will (slowly or suddenly) receive a perception of something which is novel but is also itself. Don't try to mentally categorize and to name it, remain completely in your sensations. Avoid too your Vital beginning to jump with joy. Reject it as described above. Remain completely involved in your bodily sensation.

In this phase of the Mind becoming quiet and the Vital (the ego) as well as the stirrings of the inner being, there lies a difference to the “classical” work with the Perceptible Breath. During the latter one pays attention normally (i.e. for most people) not only to the effect on the body, but also to the psyche and/or on the inner being. In this respect we are treading on virgin territory in this way of exercising.

A process of “illusion” is not meant by this process described above of “focusing oneself on the subtle-physical body”. Illusions are mental processes which slowly bring about what one had imagined to oneself. The body formed in the subtle-physical by The Mother exists already in reality so that one can focus on it and perceive it at a sensory level.

Should fatigue occur during the work, assume one of the of the well-known resting positions. Continue to reject, however, the Mind (judgments) and the Vital (feelings); remain in the sensation. After a break, focus first of all on sensing the entire physical body, and then on the subtle-physical level.

Variation of the second step: Along with the possibility mentioned above of focusing on the subtle-physical body, I would like to describe the following “dynamic“ way of working to get closer to it. After the preparation (1st stage of the exercise described above) we perceive our entire physical body through sensing. Now we pay attention to the varying qualities of breathing regarding inhaling, exhaling and breathing pauses. During inhaling our focus is directed to the sensation of the entire body. In exhaling we transfer our focusing to the subtle-physical body and breathe “out into it” – and indeed not in the way in which one blows up a balloon but rather we let our breath stream into all the cells of its body – like a waft. During inhalation we absorb the sensation of the entire physical body, and during exhalation place it at the disposal of the subtle-physical body.

In the breathing pauses we do something paradoxical. For once we do “nothing” because if we were to do something in this phase, that which has been transferred to the subtle-physical by the exhalation could not be effective. And yet we do actually have to do something namely be alert and focused on that which has developed in the breathing pauses and possibly on that which wants to “resound”, and enter into “resonance” with the cells of the physical body....

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In response to the question which methods are suitable to fulfill this task, the point recurs again and again whether one can with psychoactive drugs (e.g. psilocybin, mescaline and LSD) tap into levels of a “higher” consciousness, and whether what was experienced with that was “real” and “authentic”.

Such drugs are completely inappropriate as the basis of such a path since the experiences which occur are “chaotic“, and cannot intentionally be repeated so that systematic research is not possible. On the other hand, nevertheless, it has been reliably ascertained by the corresponding scientific research (see e.g. Grof) that subjects under the influence of psychoactive substances experience perceptions which are identical (or could be) with those which have been achieved through spiritual methods or occult talents. In contrast to the latter, those who are under the influence of those psychedelics are, however, not able to control what is going on.

The possibility that fundamentally it is feasible to perceive a stupendous range and multi-layeredness of consciousness is not disputed by specialists in the field. The Mother confirmed this: After she had perused reports by Hoffmann (the discoverer of LSD) about his experiences with LSD, and had “identified” with what she had read, she declared these to be experiences of a spiritual nature. She emphasized at the same time that it was dangerous to use these substances.

Scientific research demonstrates that through rituals (as in shamanism) and/or psychoactive drugs which exist and have always existed throughout the planet Earth, the development of consciousness of people has been significantly furthered. First since the days of burning of witches at the stake (one of the last major attempts at repressing the female), has this knowledge disappeared from our culture, or has descended into the underground. The repression of this cultural inheritance is being continued by the current legislation which e.g. throws LSD into the same pot as drugs of addiction. As

a matter of fact LSD has no potential for creating dependency. There is not one single LSD addict in the world and no one has died of LSD itself apart from a few victims of accidents. The media contribute little to educating the public about the scientific facts of the matter.

So as far as the knowledge which I have at my disposal goes, the methods of the Experience of Breath are at present the only ones which are in a position a holistic and systematic way to prepare the physical body for this transformation..

## 4.0 Summary

The evolution of homo sapiens likewise the Divine in humankind has not yet been completed, something that both Sri Aurobindo and The Mother foregrounded. They characterized the new state of awareness that would make this evolution possible the “supramental consciousness”. Since for the process of transformation no experiences at all are at hand, for a long time uncertainty existed about how and with what methods of work this could take place. The Mother’s experiences and discoveries in this matter, I would like to summarise as follows:

The path to assist the realization of the supramental consciousness – at first on a subtle-physical level formed by The Mother – takes place exclusively (!) in the physical body and through the work with and on it. It does not take place through the raising or healing of some other part of people, neither the higher Mind nor its inner and psychic being, nor is it in any way dependent on – and how far – the outer Mind and Vital are purged. Only in this way can the required large number of people take part in this work. During the practical work on, with and through the physical body the Perceptible Breath (after Ilse Middendorf) acquires great significance.

Until the publication of The Mother’s Agenda, her experiences and discoveries were known to no-one apart from Satprem.

The Mother recognized that (in contradiction to Sri Aurobindo’s suppositions) the opening to the supramental consciousness cannot take place through an intensification of the consciousness into the higher Mind and psychic being but rather within the physical body itself and only through it, as she stressed.

The decisive result of her work between 1950 and 1973 above all in the years from 1966 onwards consisted in the creation of a transitional being on a subtle-physical level. In order to untie this with the physical body above all what was required was the strengthening of the following abilities and characteristics of the body: the ability to sense, receptiveness, focusing well as the ability to surrender, and attentiveness.

In the Perceptible Breath after Ilse Middendorf these five elements represent the basis of the work which through the work on breathing can be increased enormously so that these methods offer a way very practically to work towards the goal. That entails through the unifying of the physical body with that of the body formed by The Mother at a subtle-physical level, the pre-conditions are created for the bringing about of the sought-after supramental transformation and evolution of the divine in human beings.

## References to Amendments of the first edition

Enlargement in chapter 2.1 - Satprem’s speech on Indian radio at Sri Aurobindo’s centennial.

Enlargement in chapter 3.4. - Questions of The Mother on the 18th of Dec. 1971 and the 22nd of Dec. 1971.

## Literature

(Concerning evolution and transformation)

### **Mother's Agenda**

Written record of conversations with Satprem taped on a tape recorder,  
The years 1951 bis 1973, 13 Volume, Vertrieb: Hinder + Deelmann-Verlag

### **Sri Aurobindo**

The Manifestation of the Supramental, Pondicherry 1948

### **Sri Aurobindo**

Letters on Yoga, Volumes1-3, Pondicherry 1977

### **Sri Aurobindo**

Savitri – Legend and a Symbol, Hinder + Deelmann-Verlag, 1985

### **Satprem**

Sri Aurobindo or the Adventure of Consciousness, Otto Wilh. Barth Verl., 1973

### **Satprem**

Notizen aus dem Labor 1950 – 1973, Zusammenfassung Mutters Agenda, 1992,  
Vertrieb: Hinder + Deelmann-Verlag

### **Satprem**

**Evolution II**, Hinder+ Deelmann Verlag, 1996

## Recommended Literature

(Concerning the Experience of Breath)

This literature can be ordered from the institutes in Berlin and Beerfelden.  
The delivery is sent with the invoice. The prices include purchase tax + postage costs.

### ***Der Erfahrbare Atem – Eine Atemlehre***

Ilse Middendorf , Paderborn 1984, Published by Junfermann - Book with two CD's (examples of exercises) introduced by Ilse Middendorf. (Also available in English), € 30,-

### ***Der Atem und seine Bedeutung für den Menschen***

Ilse Middendorf, revised edition Berlin1995, Self publication, € 8,-.

### ***Der Erfahrbare Atem in seiner Substanz***

Ilse Middendorf, Paderborn 1998, Published by Junfermann, € 20,-.

### **Filmportrait over Ilse Middendorf**

Production, book and direction: Renate Helker and Wilfried Haak. - developed in the summer 2003 - running time: 45 minutes the film substantial stations of life history Ilse Middendorfs portraitiert and represents the development and meaning of her breath teachings - he asks for the original impulse for the constant search for the nature of the breath and shows Ilse Middendorf in the concrete breath work. (prices inclusive dispatch and 19% VAT.) VHS = € 22,- DVD = € 25,-

## Some information about the author

On the 11th of September 1941 I first saw the light of day, born the son of Jost Langguth (Organist and Choir-master) and Ilse Langguth, née Kullrich, now Middendorf in Frankenberg in the region Saxony. My father fell in the last days of the war in 1945.

My mother moved with me in the summer of 1945 to Berlin where she found her practice had been razed. In 1950 she married the photographer Erich T. Middendorf.

At the age of 14 my interest in the big questions of existence began to grow. "Where do I come from, what am I, and what is my goal?"

In the years 1955 to 1958 I practiced Hatha Yoga intensively. As a result of this among other things out of the body experiences took place as well the first conscious encounter with my psychic being.

At the end of 1958 I resolved only to live in the "outside" since the process of purging which my Yoga teacher wanted to lay on my shoulders appeared to me to be irreconcilable with the demands of the real world. My work as a graduate engineer and technical assistant at the Technical University of Berlin (1970 to 1975) was the result of this section of my life whose conclusion was initiated by my experience of Kundalini power (1971)

In October 1972 I had the decisive peak experience of "another body" and a "new" breath.

In 1973 I read the book by Satprem, 'Sri Aurobindo, or the Adventure of Consciousness', and obtained with that the first contact to the works of Sri Aurobindo and The Mother.

Already after a few pages I knew with complete certainty, "This is it!"

In May 1975 I completed my work as a graduate building engineer and began the breathing training under the direction of Ilse Middendorf as well as parallel to that the training to become a non-medical practitioner.

1975 until 1988: countless periods of residence in India at Pondicherry and Auroville.

1977 until 1981: organizational administration of the Ilse Middendorf Institute in Berlin

On the 1st of January 1982: I founded the 'Institut für Atemtherapie, Atemunterricht und Ganzheitliches Heilen' (Institute for Breathing Therapy, Breathing Training and Holistic Healing'. It is now known as the Ilse Middendorf Institute for the Experience of Breath, and is located in Beerfelden (in the Odenwald region of Germany); since then I have directed its organization.

In 1990 I took over the Ilse Middendorf Institute in Berlin and its organizational direction.

In June 1996 I wrote the first (as yet unpublished) script about the current theme.

From 1996 until today I have taken part in numerous conversations with Ilse Middendorf about the topic at issue.

In May 2001 I rewrote this work on the strands of Sithonia (opposite to Mount Athos, Greece) with the plan of publishing it in the Internet at:

[www.TransformationundAtem.de](http://www.TransformationundAtem.de)