

STATES OF CONSCIOUSNESS

The dream state is the key to the mystery of *who* he is, while the more advanced deep sleep state indicates *what* he is; but it only indicates, points, and does not reveal. However, the problem of sleep is humanity's great study because it solves many others.19.3.34

Why I chose "*What Am I*": (1) Because I wanted to start with the idea of a non-"I" consciousness instead of their own "I" with which they are continuously occupied; (2) Because the word Brahman is of neuter gender, neither masculine nor feminine. Brahman in us is Atman, the Self--but utterly impersonal. "What" lends itself more easily to this impersonality than "Who"; (3) The answer to "*What Am I?*" is multiple but it begins with "a part of the world!" and is followed by another question, "What is my relation to this world?" The answer requires the discovery of Mentalism, leading back through the thought of the world, thinker, and consciousness, to Brahman. 8.1.36

A person never leaves Consciousness. The world comes into it as perception, that is, as idea. Whether anything, object or state, comes into it or not, Consciousness remains as his unchanging home. Whether asleep or awake, wrapped in himself or out in the world, his essential being remains what it is. His thoughts and sense-impressions, feelings and passions are produced by it or projected from it: they exist in dependence on it and die in it.

19.3.183

In our view, even deep sleep unconsciousness is a form of this "consciousness" which transcends all the states we ordinarily know--waking, dream, and deep sleep--yet includes them when they merge back into it. Such a "consciousness" is unthinkable, unimaginable, but it is the true objective awareness. It is also the *I* you are seeking so much. But to reach it, then you have to let go of the I which you know so well. 19.3.184

49. It should now be clear that this consciousness must be identical with the fourth state of consciousness which we earlier found to transcend sleep. It is the fundamental observer who notes the comings and goings of the other three states because it can stand aside from them in unbroken beatitude. It is our truest deepest self because it alone outlives unchanged the surface self of changing personality. The Wisdom of the Overself “secret of the I”

Although the aspirant has now awakened to his witness-self, found his "soul," and thus lifted himself far above the mass of mankind, he has not yet accomplished the full task set him by life. A further effort still awaits his hand. He has yet to realize that the witness-self is only a part of the All-self. So his next task is to discover that he is not merely the witness of the rest of existence but essentially of one stuff with it. He has, in short, by further meditations to realize his oneness with the entire universe in its real being. He must now meditate on his witness-self as being in its essence the infinite All. Thus **the ultramystic exercises are graded into two stages**, the second being more advanced than the first. **The banishment of thoughts reveals the inner self whereas the reinstatement of thoughts without losing the newly gained consciousness reveals the All-inclusive universal self.** The second feat is the harder. ([23:6.88](#))

To the person who has come along the path of loving devotion to God and finally gained the reward of frequent, joyous, ardent, inward communion with God, equally as to the one who has practised the way of mystical self-recollection and attained frequent awareness of the Overself's presence, an unexpected and unpalatable change may happen little by little or suddenly. God will seem to withdraw from the devotee, the Overself from the mystic. The blisses will fade and end. Although this experience will have none of the terror or isolation and misery of the "dark night" it will be comparable to that unforgettable time. And although it will seem like a withdrawal of Grace, the hidden truth is that it is actually a farther and deeper bestowal of Grace. For the person is being led to the next stage--which is to round out, balance, and complete their development... 22.8.24

This they will be taught to do by first, acquiring cosmological knowledge, and later, attaining ontological wisdom. That is, they will learn something about the World-Idea and then, this gained, pass upward to learning the nature of that Reality in whose light even the universe is illusion. Thus from study of the operations of the Power behind the World-Idea one passes on to pondering on the Power itself. This last involves the highest degree of concentration and is indeed the mysterious little practised *Yoga of the Uncontradictable*. When successfully followed it brings about the attainment of Insight, the final discovery that there is no other being than THAT, no second entity. 22.8.24