

Nisargadatta Maharaj: I Am That Consciousness and I Am

A03C: Allowing Everything To Be

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

Whatever happens points to your existence as a perceiving center. Disregard the pointers and be aware of what they are pointing to. It is quite simple, but it needs to be done. %

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

M: Changes are inevitable in the changeful, but you are not subject to them. You are the changeless background, against which changes are perceived.. I Am That ch. 69 %

Q: It is hard work, you know

M: The self is near and the way to it is easy. All you need do is do nothing. %

Q: I found my Sadhana very difficult.

M: Your Sadhana is to be. The doing happens. Just be watchful. Where is the difficulty in remembering that you are? You are all the time. ch51 %

... Don't be afraid, don't resist, don't delay. Be what you are. There is nothing to be afraid of. Try and try. Experiment honestly. Give your real being a chance to shape your life. You will not regret. ch33... %

Q: How do I get at it?

M: You need not get at it, for you are it. It will get at you, if you give it a chance. Let go your attachment to the unreal and the real will swiftly and smoothly step into its own. Ch 1 %

Q: How is it that in spite of so much instruction and assistance we make no progress?

M: As long as we imagine ourselves to be separate personalities, one quite apart from another, we cannot grasp reality which is essentially impersonal. First we must know ourselves as witnesses only, dimensionless and timeless centres of observation, and then realise that immense ocean of pure awareness, which is both mind and matter and beyond both.

Q: To know myself must I practise awareness?

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

Awareness and Consciousness

Q: What is the relation between awareness and consciousness?

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

Q: how does one go beyond consciousness into awareness?

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

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

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

Q: Are there levels of awareness?

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

Awareness' reflection in the mind is love and understanding.

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

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

Only do not take the gifts for the source.

Realise yourself as the source and not as the reflections.

Q: If awareness is not an experience, how can it be realised?

M: Awareness is ever there. It need not be realised. Open the shutter of the mind, and it will be flooded with light. 80

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

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

Q: What I do not follow is what you say about going beyond consciousness. I understand the words, but I cannot visualise the experience. After all, you yourself have said that all experience is in consciousness.

M: You are right, there can be no experience beyond consciousness. Yet there is the experience of just being. There is a state beyond consciousness, which is not unconscious. Some call it super-consciousness, or pure consciousness, or supreme consciousness. It is pure awareness free from the subject object nexus. ch 65

While the mind is centred in the body and consciousness is centred in the mind, awareness is free. The body has its urges and mind its pains and pleasures. *Awareness is unattached and unshaken. It is lucid, silent, peaceful, alert and unafraid, without desire and fear. Meditate on it as your true being and try to be it in your daily life, and you shall realise it in its fullness.* Mind is interested in what happens, while awareness is interested in the mind itself. Ch 48

The body appears in your mind, your mind is the content of your consciousness; you are the motionless witness of the river of consciousness which changes eternally without changing you in any way. Your own changelessness is so obvious that you do not notice it. Have a good look at yourself and all these misconceptions will dissolve. ch44

The nature of the self is pure awareness, pure witnessing, unaffected by the presence or absence of knowledge or liking. Undeceive yourself and be free. You are not a person. Ch 34

From the awareness of the unreal to the awareness of your real nature, there is a chasm which you will easily cross, once you have mastered the art of pure awareness. Ch. 99

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

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

The deepening and broadening of self-awareness is the royal way. Call it mindfulness, or witnessing, or just attention—it is for all. None is unripe for it and none can fail. ch67

Awareness and Witnessing

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

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

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

M: Don't say: "everybody is conscious." Say: "there is consciousness," in which everything appears and disappears. Ch 48 %

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

M: The mind must learn that beyond the moving mind there is the background of awareness, which does not change. The mind must come to know the true self and respect it and cease covering it up, like the moon which obscures the sun during solar eclipse. Just realise that nothing observable, or experienceable is you, or binds you. Take no notice of what is not yourself. Ch 48

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

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

I Am

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

Even the sense of “I am” is composed of the pure light and the sense of being. The “I” is there even without the “am”. So is the pure light there whether you say “I” or not. Become aware of that pure light and you will never lose it. The being-ness in being, the awareness in consciousness, the interest in every experience—that is not describable, yet perfectly accessible, for there is nothing else. Ch 45 %

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

M: Hold on to the sense “I am” to the exclusion of everything else. When thus the mind becomes completely silent, it shines with a new light and vibrates with new knowledge. It all comes spontaneously, you need only hold on to the “I Am” You will recognize that you have returned to your natural state by a complete absence of all desire and fear. After all, at the root of all desire and fear is the feeling of not being what you are. Ch 69 %

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

Q: Who is the conscious living being?

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

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

The source of consciousness cannot be an object to consciousness. To know the source is to *be* the source. When you realize that you are not the person, but the pure and calm witness, and that fearless awareness is your very being, you *are* the being. ch20 #108

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

M: Realize yourself as the ocean of consciousness in which all happens. This is not difficult. A little of attentiveness, of close observation of oneself, and you will see that no event is outside your consciousness. Ch. 65 %

M: Our minds are just waves on the ocean of consciousness. As waves they come and go. As ocean they are infinite and eternal. Know yourself as the ocean of being, the womb of all existence. These are all metaphors of course; the reality is beyond description. You can know it only by being it. . Ch 4 %

M: All you need is to be aware of being, not as a verbal statement, but as an ever present fact. The awareness that you *are* will open your eyes to *what* you are. It is all very simple. First of all, establish a constant contact with yourself, be with yourself all the time. Into self-awareness all blessings will flow. ch98 %

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

Only something as vast and deep as your real self can make you truly and lastingly happy. 46

Allot enough time daily for sitting quietly and trying, just trying, to go beyond the personality, with its addictions and obsessions. Don't ask how, it cannot be explained. ch98

You are aware anyhow, you need not try to be. What you need is to be aware of being aware. Be aware deliberately and consciously, broaden and deepen the field of awareness. 48

be aware of your being -- here and now. ... there is nothing more to it. 30
Awareness of being is bliss. 46

CONSCIOUSNESS AND WORLD

Q: Why do you deny being to the world?

M: I do not negate the world. I see it as appearing in consciousness, which is the totality of the known in the immensity of the unknown. What begins and ends is mere appearance. The world can be said to appear, but not to be... ch7

Within the immensity of space floats a tiny atom of consciousness and in it the entire universe is contained. ch55

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

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

M: Our minds are just waves on the ocean of consciousness. As waves they come and go. As ocean they are infinite and eternal. Know yourself as the ocean of being, the womb of all existence. These are all metaphors of course; the reality is beyond description. You can know it only by being it.

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