

What Is Consciousness? *consciousness, Overself-consciousness, Awareness,*

When a person comes to their real senses, they will recognize that they have only one problem: "How can I come into awareness of, and oneness with, my true being?" 1.1.130

The first question is also the final one; it is quite short, quite simple, and yet it is also the most important question which anyone could ever ask, whether of oneself or of others. This question is: "What is consciousness?" Whoever traces the answer through all its levels will find themselves in the end in the very presence of the universal consciousness otherwise called God. 19.3.32

If you ask what reality is, in philosophy's view, the answer must be consciousness. If you further ask what our work in this life is, the answer must be to become conscious of consciousness as such. But because, ordinarily, consciousness never discloses itself but only its varying states, we can accomplish this only by adopting extraordinary means. We will have to steel the feelings and still the mind. In short, we will have to deny ourselves. 20.3.155

What is the reality behind all our experiences? Since they are experiences, and since experiences are made possible by Consciousness, it must be the Consciousness. This remains true even when the "I" is unaware and unconscious; the Real is still there but hidden. 21.5.175

Why is it that so many people are so unaware of their own higher existence? The answer is that their faculty of awareness itself is that spiritual existence. Whatever they know, people know through the consciousness within them. That in them which knows anything is their divine element. The power of knowing--whether it be a thought that is known, a complex of thoughts such as memories, a thing such as a landscape--is a divine power for it derives from the higher self which they possess. (21:2.136)

If there is anything worth studying by human being, after the necessary preliminary studies of how to exist and survive in this world healthily and wisely, it is ... a deep investigation of our own consciousness, of its nature itself, its own unadulterated pure self. 1.6.81

It is the disentanglement of consciousness from its own projections, its thoughts of every kind, which is the final and first work of a would-be philosopher. Consciousness is then in its pure unconditioned being. 23.7.181

We discover that Consciousness, the very nature of mind under all its aspects, the very essence of be-ing under the personal selfhood, is where man and God finally meet. We know that God indisputably exists, not because some religious dogma avers it but because our own experience proves it. 25.1.39

Awareness is the very nature of one's being: it is the Self. 28.2.130

That which is aware of the world is not the world. That which is aware of the ego is not the ego. When this awareness is isolated, the man "experiences" the Overself. 22.5.5

...Everyone knows that they are aware of themselves, others, the world. But that awareness exists also in an unlimited uninterrupted way they do not know. Yet to the extent that we have this limited kind of consciousness we derive from It, share the spirit, are part of it. (21:2.98)

This is one of the subtlest acts which anyone can perform, this becoming conscious of consciousness, this attending to attention. 23.7.228

The principle of consciousness in every human being is indeed the same thing as spiritual consciousness and not a second thing, but we interpose so many clouds of thoughts, sensations, emotions, and passions into it that we seldom come to this knowledge. We seldom isolate this consciousness principle. 19.3.11

Everything else can be known, as things and ideas are known, as something apart or possessed, but the Overself cannot be truly known in this way. Only by identifying oneself with It can this happen. 22.3.190

We can know the Overself only by *being* it, not by thinking it. It is beyond thoughts for it is Thought, Pure Mind, itself. 22.3.191

Because it is impossible for the questing ego to become the Overself, the quester must recognize that they are the Overself and stop thinking in egoistic terms of progress along a path, or attainment of a goal. 22.3.26

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

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

If you will try to perceive the mind by which you perceive the world, you will be practising the shortest, most direct technique of discovering the Overself. This is what Ramana Maharshi meant when he taught, ``Trace the `I' to its source." 22.5.6

Every kind of experience, whether it be wakeful, dream, hypnotic, or hallucinatory, is utterly and vividly real to the ego at the time its perceptions are operating on that particular level. Why, then, amidst such bewildering relativity, do we talk of divine experience as being the ultimate reality? We speak this way because it is concerned with what bestows the sense of reality to all the other forms of experience. And that is nothing else than the central core of pure Mind within us, the unique mysterious source of *all* possible kinds of our consciousness. This, if we can find it, is what philosophy calls the truly real world. 21.5.205

Where We Meet Reality

We live in what appears as a multiverse, a timed and spaced existence--in short, a finite one. But those who can pierce through to its secret--and some have done so--find that it is actually the Unconditioned revealing itself *as if* it were the Conditioned. 26.1.196

The little center of consciousness that is myself rests in and lives by the infinite ocean of consciousness that is God. The first momentary discovery of this relationship constitutes a genuine religious experience, and its expansion into a final, full disclosure constitutes a philosophic one. 25.1.31

We can not ever know the Divine which is Transcendent but we can acknowledge that it IS. We may however know the Divine which is Immanent, recognize, perceive, and feel its presence. 25.1.120

God's immanence is reflected throughout the whole universe. God's reality is indicated by the very existence of the universe. God's intelligence is revealed by the intelligence of the creatures in the universe. (26:1.208)

The ego to which we are so attached turns out on enquiry to be none other than the presence of World-Mind within our own heart. If identification is then shifted by constant practice from one to the other, we have achieved the purpose of life. [8.1.127](#)

The One Infinite Life-Power is the ultimate of all things and all consciousness. There is no thing and no mind beyond it. 28.1.11

The world is a spectacle presented for our meditation in depth. It is a clue, a pointing sign, and even a mystery play. 26.1.189

Neither the senses nor the intellect can tell us anything about the intrinsic nature of this Infinite Mind. Nevertheless we are not left in total ignorance about it. From its manifestation, the cosmos, we may catch a hint of its Intelligence. From its emanation, the soul, we may catch more than a hint of its Beneficence. "More than," I say, because the emanation may be felt within us as our very being whereas the manifestation is outside us and is apart. (28.2.97)

No mortal may penetrate the mystery of the ultimate mind in its own nature--which means in its static inactive being. The Godhead is not only beyond human conception but also beyond mystic perception. But Mind in its active dynamic state, that is, the World-Mind, and rather its ray in us called the Overself, *is* within range of human perception, communion, and even union. It is this that the mystic really finds when he believes that he has found God. 25.1.71

... The true self will then reflect as much of the divine as it is able to, but it can never exhaust it. It is the Overself and, through the threefold path, is Knowable. In the Unique Godhead, ever mysterious in its unmanifested self-existence, there rises and sets, like the sun's light, the manifested World-Mind, in which - in its turn - there rises and sets all this wonderful cosmos of which it is the very soul. The first is forever beyond man but the second is always accessible to man as the Overself within him. 28.2.91

The individual mind presents the world-image to itself through and in its own consciousness. If this were all the truth then it would be quite proper to call the experience a private one. But because the individual mind is rooted in and inseparable from the universal mind, it is only a part of the truth. Man's world-thought is held within and enclosed by God's thought. 21.3.70

The act of creative meditation which brings the universe into being is performed by the World-Mind. We, insofar as we experience the world, are participating in this act unconsciously. It is a thought-world and we are thought-beings. [27.3.19]

It is always there, the only reality in a mind-made world. 28.1.17

With every thought we break the divine stillness. Yet behind all thoughts is Mind. Behind all things that give rise to thoughts is Mind. 28.1.10

That which is at the heart of all existence--the world's and yours--must be real, if anything can be. The world may be an illusion, your ego a fiction, but the ultimate essence cannot be either. Reality must be here or nowhere. 28.1.15

There is only this one Mind. All else is a seeming show on its surface. To forget the ego and think of this infinite and unending reality is the highest kind of meditation. 28.2.102

All he needs to take him through intricate problems of metaphysics is this single masterly conception: Mind alone is. 28.1.1

The Infinite cannot be set against the finite as though they were a pair of opposites. Only things which are on the same level can be opposed to one another. These are not. The Infinite includes and contains within itself all possible finites. The practical import of this truth is that Mind cannot only be experienced in the Void but also in the world. The Reality is not only to be discovered as it is but also beneath its phenomenal disguises. 20.4.124

M: There can be no experience of the Absolute as it is beyond all experience. On the other hand, the Self is the experiencing factor in every experience and thus, in a way, validates the multiplicity of experiences. ... That which makes the experience possible is the Absolute. That which makes it actual is the Self. *I Am That Ch 6*

There is only the One. When we recognize that the Real is continuous with its Appearance and that the latter is indeed the very incarnation of it, when we understand that the vast universe is a presentation by the Mind to the Mind, the tendency to scorn the flesh and desert the world itself deserts us.

It is as incomplete a vision to see the world as transitory alone without its underlying reality as it is to see the reality alone without its manifestation as the world. The two are inseparably linked and true insight sees them as such, not as opposed to each other. The Real and its expression through the World-Idea are, after all, not two irrevocably separate things but an unbroken unity. The Wisdom: Near end CH 12

A03 Be still and know: *From Category 24 section 4*

He does not, can not, fabricate this inner silence, but he provides the correct conditions of relaxed concentrated listening which allow it to be discovered as a presence within himself. 24.4.77

By this simple act of unlearning all that you know--all that you have acquired by thinking, by remembrance, by measurements, by comparison, and by judgement--when you return to the mere emptying of the consciousness of its contents of thoughts and ideas, and when you come to the pure consciousness in itself, then only can you rest in the Great Silence. 24.4.78

He must not only give up the slavery of passion, but also the slavery of intellect. 24.4.79

Shiva Yoga Dipika: "Listen, I shall mention to you the method of worshipping Shiva who is made of Intelligence. It is a secret--the essence of the Sastras and the bestower of instantaneous freedom. . . . Thoughtlessness is the contemplation of Shiva; Inactivity is his worship; Motionlessness is going round him in veneration; the realization of the state 'I Am He' is prostration before him; Silence is singing his glory; knowledge of what ought to be done and what not, is good character; looking on all alike is the supreme pleasure." 24.4.80

The mind must constantly give itself up to the idea of its own infinity. 24.4.82

Thinking can put together all sorts of theories and speculations and even discoveries. But only when it dies down and lets the pure quietened mind come to rest in the very essence of consciousness, at peace with itself, with nature, with the world, only then is there a deep sense of utter fulfilment. 24.4.87

When thinking comes naturally to its rest, either because he has felt his way through intense reverence to the higher power or because he has apprehended the truth by the subtlest and sharpest perception, then stillness is born. It would be an error to continue either the feeling or the thinking beyond this time. The utter stillness must take their place, and he must humbly yield to it. At such a moment, the ego is withdrawn; the knowing intuition, the great Peace, alone remains. 24.4.88

Where the heart goes, there soon or late the other faculties will follow. This is why it is so important *to let* the Overself take possession of the heart by its total surrender in, and to, the Stillness. 24.4.90

It is nice and noble to talk about becoming an instrument in God's hands, a channel of the Overself. But this is still an inferior relationship. It is not the highest kind. It is still occupied with the ego. Ascend to a higher level, give yourself completely to, and talk about, the higher power alone. 24.4.92

This centre of his own being never moves. It is forever in stillness. 24.4.94

Whether they are positive or negative, let all thoughts die. Then there will remain only Mind, which is always there, which is the Real. 24.4.95

The Stillness is both an Understanding, an Insight of the mind, and an Experience of the being. The whole movement or vibration comes to a stop. 24:4.172

The seeker after stillness should be told that the stillness is always there. Indeed it is in every person. But he has to learn, first, to let it in and, second, how to do so. The first beginning of this is to remember. The second is to recognize the inward pull. For the rest, the stillness itself will guide and lead him to itself. 24.4.51

That beautiful state wherein the mind recognizes itself for what it is, wherein all activity is stilled except that of awareness alone, and even then it is an awareness without an object--this is the heart of the experience. 24.4.6

“Be still and know that I am God” is the key to the enigma of truth, for it sums up the whole of the Short Path. Paradox is the final revelation. For this is “non-doing.” Rather is it a “letting-be,” a non-interference by your egoistic will, a silencing of all the mental agitation and effort. 23.5.202

He will understand the real spirit of meditation when he understands that he has to do nothing at all, just to sit still physically, mentally, and emotionally. For the moment he attempts to do anything, he intrudes his ego. By sitting inwardly and outwardly still, he surrenders egoistic action and thereby implies that he is willing to surrender his little self to his Overself. He shows that he is willing to step aside and let himself be worked upon, acted through, and guided by a higher power. 23.7.238

The Short Path is, in essence, the ceaseless practice of remembering to stay in the Stillness, for this is what we really are in our innermost being and where we meet the World-Mind. P 97

The real Short Path is really the discovery that there is no path at all: only a being still and thus letting the Overself do the work needed. This is the meaning of grace. 23.5.223

More than any other author, Lao Tzu has put in the tersest and simplest way the importance, the meaning, and the result of the sitting-still practice, the patient waiting for inner being to reveal itself, the submissive allowing of intuition to be felt and accepted. 23.7.270

The principle which makes union with the Overself possible is always the same, albeit on different levels. Whether it appears as humility in prayer, passivity to intuition, stillness in meditation, or serenity despite untoward circumstances, these attitudes temporarily weaken the ego and lessen its domination. They temporarily silence the ego and give the Overself the opportunity to touch us or work through us. So long as the ego dominates us, we are outside the reach of the Overself and separated from its help. 22.5.3

This stillness is the godlike part of every human being. In failing to look for it, he fails to make the most of his possibilities. If, looking, he misses it on the way, this happens because it is a vacuity: there is simply nothing there! That means no things, not even mental things, that is, thoughts. 24.4.4

If you ask why you can find no trace of God's presence in yourself, I answer that you are full of evidence, not merely traces. God is present in you as consciousness, the state of being aware; as thought, the capacity to think; as activity, the power to move; and as stillness, the condition of ego, emotion, intellect, and body which finally and clearly reveals what these other things simply point to. "Be still, and know that I am God" is a statement of being whose truth can be tested by experiment and whose value can be demonstrated by experience. 22.3.409

"The best form of meditation is to avoid thinking of anything. In the mind so kept clear, God will manifest Himself."--Shankara of Kanchi 23.7.165

Different terms can be used to label this unique attainment. It is insight, awakening, enlightenment. It is Being, Truth, Consciousness. It is Discrimination between the Seer and the Seen. It is awareness of That Which Is. It is the Practice of the Presence of God. It is the Discovery of Timelessness. All these words tell us something but they all fall short and do not tell us enough. In fact they are only hints for farther they cannot go: it is not on their level at all since it is the Touch of the Untouchable. But never mind; just play with such ideas if you care too. Ruminates and move among them. Put your heart as well as head into the game. Who knows one day what may happen? Perhaps if you become still enough you too may *know*--as the Bible suggests. 1.5.72

Those who look for advancement by looking for inner experiences or for discoveries of new truth do well. But they need to understand that all this is still personal, still something that concerns the ego even if it be the highest and best part of the ego. Their greatest advance will be made when they cease holding the wish to make any advance at all, cease this continual looking at themselves, and instead come to a quiet rest in the simple fact that *God is*, until they live in this fact alone. That will transfer their attention from self to Overself and keep them seeing its presence in everyone's life and its action in every event. The more they succeed in holding to this insight, the less will they ever be troubled or afraid or perplexed again; the more they recognize and rest in the divine character, the less will they be feverishly concerned about their own spiritual future. 23.5.222

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. I Am That Ch 99

Mind is to be worshipped silently, thought of negatively and realized in the Void. All other worship yields either an imagination in consciousness or a sensation in the body, that is it yields a symbol of the Real but does not touch the Real itself. *end CH 14*

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. ... I Am That ch 7

*****Never Not Here*****

The Quest will come to an end when he turns away from teachers and teachings and begins to receive instruction from within himself. Previously all that he got was someone else's idea; now he is acquiring firsthand knowledge. 24.4.69

If the real Self must have been present and been witness to our peaceful enjoyment of deep slumber--otherwise we would not have known that we had had such enjoyment--so must it likewise have been present and been witness to our rambling imaginations in dream-filled sleep and to our physical activities in waking. This leads to a tremendous but inescapable conclusion. We are as near to, or as much in, the real Self, the Overself, at every moment of every day as we ever shall be. All we need is awareness of it. 22.3.25

Is this benign state a past from which we have lapsed or a future to which we are coming? The true answer is that it is neither. This state has always been existent within us, is so now, and always will be. It is forever with us simply because it is what we really are. 22.3.23

The Overself is not a goal to be attained but a realization of what already is. It is the inalienable possession of all conscious beings and not of a mere few. No effort is needed to get hold of the Overself, but every effort is needed to get rid of the many impediments to its recognition. We cannot take hold of it; it takes hold of us. Therefore the last stage of this quest is an effortless one. We are led, as children by the hand, into the resplendent presence. Our weary strivings come to an abrupt end. Our lips are made shut and wordless. 22.3.9

Until it is brought to your attention, you may not know that the idol at whose feet you are continually worshipping is the ego. If you could give to God the same amount of remembrance that you give to the ego, you could quite soon attain, and become established in, that enlightenment to which others devote lifetimes of arduous effort. 8.4.153

... By incessantly remembering what we really are, here and now at this very moment, we set ourselves free. Why wait for what already is? 23.1.1

It is a long journey from the condition of seeker to that of sage. But this is true only so far as we ascribe reality to time. To those who know that our human existence is a movement through events, but that the human being in its essence transcends all events and dwells in timelessness, this journey may be considerably shortened or swiftly brought to its destination. For that, the thorough understanding of philosophy and its incessant application to oneself is required. 20.4.88

Q: How do I get at it?

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