

## **Four essential features of the witness-consciousness: Jivatma; unit of life; 6<sup>th</sup> consciousness**

**1. Witness is the background awareness:** the non-local unchanging observer of the changing contents of experience.

*“awareness with objects we call witnessing.” I Am That ch. 71*

The consciousness possessed by the hidden observer cannot be a fitful one. Being the very principle of awareness, able at any time to shine through its projections, the wakeful or dream selves, it must therefore be an unbroken and unfailing one. *The Wisdom of the Overself* “*Secret of the I*” Para 34.

Thus we have advanced from the narrow personal 'me' to the wider, more inviting and more inspiring 'I'. The final and most important member of the 'I' family is this unseen and unknown one. It is the subject of which they are the object. It is the silent spectator of a play in which the others are actors. It is the mystical quintessence of the 'I'. The ordinary 'I' is a thought, the ultimate 'I' is *pure* Thought. . “*Secret of the I*” para 48

The Overself perceives and knows the individual self, but only as an imperturbable witness-- in the same way that the sun witnesses the various objects upon the earth but does not enter into a particular relation with a particular object. So too the Overself is present in each individual self as the witness and as the unchanging consciousness which gives consciousness to the individual. 22.3.338

What is the reality behind all our experiences? Since they are thoughts, and since thoughts are made possible by Consciousness, it must be the Consciousness. This remains true even when the "I" is unaware and unconscious, because limited and little, being only a thought itself, an object known like other objects; the Real is still there but hidden. 21.5.175

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

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

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

There are two kinds of consciousness, one is in ever-passing moments, the other ever-present. The one is in time, the other out of it. The ordinary person knows only the one; the enlightened sage knows both. 19.3.182

## ***2. Presence of Awareness available for use***

... the witnessing self is present in hidden association or mystic immanence in the personal self and reflects into that self the feeling of its own real existence.

... This projected fraction of awareness is what we ordinarily term consciousness,

The Wisdom of the Overself para 45 "Secret of the I"

The Overself-consciousness is reflected into the ego, which then imagines that it has its own original, and not derived awareness. 8.1.33

That element in our consciousness which enables us to understand that we exists, which causes us to pronounce the words, "I Am," is the spiritual element, here called Overself. It is really the basic self for the three activities of thinking feeling and willing are derived from it, are ripples spreading out of it, are attributes and functions which belong to it. But as we ordinarily think feel and act, these activities do not express the Overself because they are under the control of a different entity, the personal ego. 8.1.1

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)

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 they have this limited kind of consciousness they derive from It, share the spirit, are part of it. 21.2.98

### **PB: The Wisdom of the Overself EX 4**

4. You should remember the metaphysical tenet that behind all those thoughts which were changing continuously, the consciousness which observed them remained static throughout, unmoved and unaltered, that through all the flow of experienced events and things there was a steady element of awareness.

5. You should try to identify yourself with this consciousness and to disidentify yourself from the accustomed one.

### ***3. Consciousness as Creative and Understanding.***

*Witness not only awareness, it is the source of creativity, love, longing, sympathy, power and wisdom. It is the deeper mind which participates in the manifestation of the world--and it is what understands the experience.*

The source of wisdom and power, of love and beauty, is within ourselves, but not within our egos. It is within our consciousness... 8.1.2

It is not only the hidden and mysterious source of their own little self but also the unrecognized source of the only moments of real happiness that they ever have. 22.3.195

Let no one imagine that contact with the Overself is a kind of dreamy reverie or pleasant, fanciful state. It is a vital relationship with a current of peace, power, and goodwill flowing endlessly from the invisible centre to the visible self.(P) ([22:3.206](#))

When man shall discover the hidden power within himself which enables him to be conscious and to think, he will discover the holy spirit, the ray of Infinite Mind lighting his little finite mind. 22.3.181

When this exalted feeling is transferred to the intellect and there turned into thought, whether for expression in words for one's own understanding or for communication to others, it is termed a truth. In this form it becomes a source of renewed inspiration, a help in darker times, and a guide to live by in ordinary times. 22.2.4

It is this grandeur of self that is the magnetic pole drawing us to the Good, the Beautiful, the Just, the True, and the Noble. Yet itself is above all these attributes for it is the Attributeless, the Ineffable, and Infinite that human thought cannot grasp. 22.3.178

### ***4. the repository of distilled experience.***

**TWOTO “The Immortal Overself” para 13 or so**

Why am I myself and not somebody else? This is an important question which can find a final answer only when we can penetrate into the consciousness of the Overself which projected this particular ‘I’ into incarnation, **for an entire tangle of evolutionary necessity and karmic history would need to be unraveled. Meanwhile it may be said that the Overself projects itself into a series of separate beings** but instead of holding its light they hold its shadow. **Although the Overself is but a segment of the one World-Mind its expressions during cosmic manifestation, that is personalities will each possess traits of their own which differentiate one from the other.** These are the transient differences which divide the innumerable living beings but they all exist on a lower level than the Overself which eternally unites them. ... **The memory of the essential characteristics of all former related incarnations is registered and preserved within the Overself,** although it does not need to sit and brood over this knowledge, which is kept latent.

***Useful meanings of awareness and consciousness from Nisargadatta:***  
*(my additions in blue)*

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 relative to its content (i.e. when Awareness is in relation to content, whether the content is personal thoughts or things, then we speak of “consciousness); 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. Interest in your stream of consciousness takes you to awareness. The very consciousness of being conscious is already a movement in 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*

***And witnessing, which is awareness shining on contents.***

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

M: Awareness *with* objects (contents) we call witnessing (i.e. witness consciousness). When there is also self-identification with the contents (thoughts, feelings, perception, memory, person, things), usually 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 (consciousness); when colorless and limitless, it is called the Supreme. *Ch 71*

Q: Can the witness *be*, without the contents to witness?

M: There is always something to witness. If not a thing, then its absence. Witnessing is natural and no problem (it is the activity of Consciousness). The problem is excessive interest, leading to self-identification. Whatever you are engrossed in you take to be real (whether person or world).

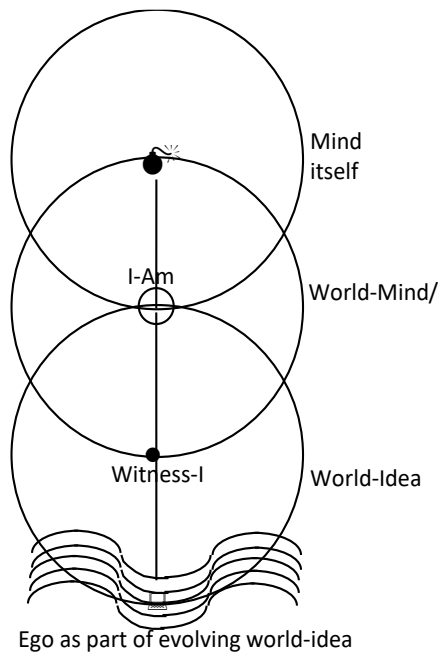
M: The witness that is enmeshed in what it perceives is the person; the witness who stands aloof, unmoved and untouched, is the watch-tower of the real, the point at which awareness, inherent in the unmanifested, contacts the manifested. There can be no universe without the witness, there can be no witness without the universe. *Ch 79*

I think the descriptions from Nisargadatta lay out three levels as clearly as anywhere: there is the ego person, there is the witness, there is the Ultimate. Here is PB:

To be the witness is the first stage; to be Witness of the witness is the next; but to BE is the final one. For consciousness lets go of the witness in the end. Consciousness alone is itself the real experience. 25.2.100

Notice also: you cannot go by other meanings of words. Here it is “consciousness” that is ultimate, not “awareness.” But the context makes it clear. And when PB uses consciousness in this way, he is emphasizing the continuity of our everyday experience and ultimate experience.

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



So we have the ego-person in space/ time. We have the witness-- life to life unit of life in perpetual unfoldment. We have the eternal nature of Overself. the ineffable timeless ultimate Reality itself. We could say that the witness is the functioning of the Overself in relation to the World-Idea--the core of the individual centers of experience. As such it is the background witnessing awareness, not only lights up the experiences, but holds the distilled essence, and provides intuitive luminosity (the source of inspiration, joy, intelligence), and also the immediate intimate sense of I-consciousness. As PB says: it holds the distilled essence of life-to-life experiences:.

### ***Interaction of Soul and World-Idea: transformer and transformed.***

49. Human experience is the final residue of a process of inter-action, a fabric conjointly woven with a common mind in which all human beings dwell and think and which dwells and thinks in them. The world itself is the outcome of a combined cosmic and individual imagination.

53. We have to think the world independently of whether we want to or not for the plain reason that this greater mind is thinking it into our own mind, is projecting and knowing the external world through the individual mind. *“The Secret of the I”*

Paradoxically, or Uroborically, the World-Mind expresses itself as the entirety of World-Idea and also as infinite number of Rays. God or World-Mind expresses itself uniquely through each individual center of experience —through these centers of experience, the world-idea is being manifested and accessed, and also the inner reality of the soul is being expressed.

AS: The organism allows the functions of the soul to be expressed and access to be evoked through the interaction with the wonderful world idea. We can say that paradoxically these functions and intelligence are unfolded from the depths of the soul the potentiality there and also that the soul is Aligning with accessing the wisdom intelligence vibration of the world idea. Transformer and transformed. Use the short quote on the unit of life. Use the quote 1.1.7. Using Anthony’s description of the unit so meeting up with the world idea. The burning focus of experience World, mine thinks its ideas into our mind and this thinking or imagining or activity is what is unfolding evoking the potentiality, which is already in the soul. It is the nature of the soul to express itself through the spectrum of hierarchy in the world idea, and it is also the nature of soul to be the expression or emanation of the divine ideas in the intellectual principle, and to be the medium through which these ideas are expressed and unfolded, in as in through the world and in and as in through these individual unique centers of experience. So there is a complementarity in all our experience of this unfolding of this ray of soul, that we are, and of being a medium the place which is the way that the divine Ideas are being expressed and unfolded in relation to the world idea. So we have the space and time unfoldment. We have the endless cycles of the unit of life. We have the eternal ideas. And we have the timeless background beyond. Roughly corresponding to these, we have the spectrum of knowing willing and feeling, where, at first these functions belong to Mark rest through the ego, and then at a deeper level, the souls rational functions begin unfolding through this life to life unit of life as the more intuitive And inspirational functioning of the rational soul, and then through contemplation, the full maturity of knowing willing and feeling, and of course, then insight, the souls, direct, immediate recognition, timelessly of the ground of being or beyond being. Corresponding to this, we have the person we have the witness we have the eternal divine idea of you as Overself and we have the ultimate supreme ineffable. NPB, we have mind world mind, Overself unit of life ego

***NOTE: here again, see AD excerpts in LIM site:***

**[YOU BECOME WISDOM: Eight themes on Soul's evolutionary journey](#)**

