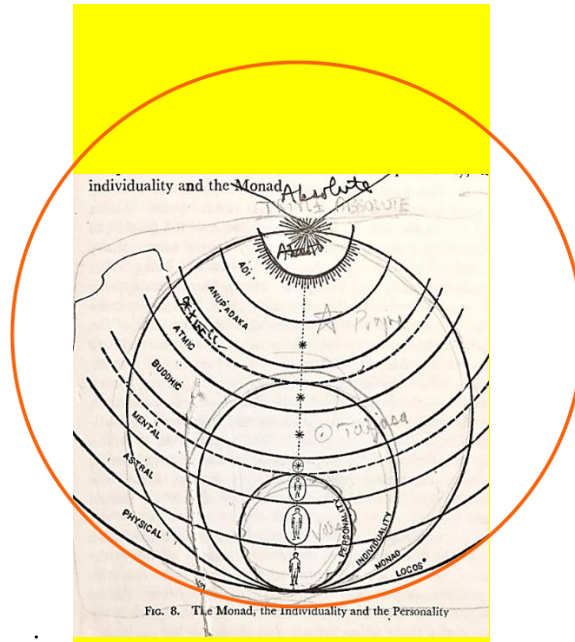
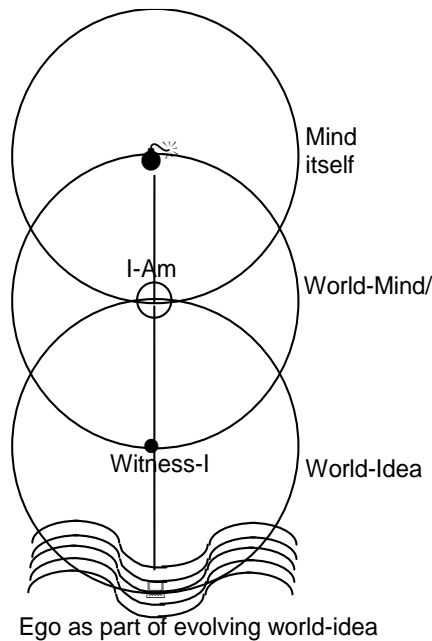


A THREE RING PICTURE with WITNESS and I AM



a. **The ego-self** is a conjunction of thought and consciousness. = **PERSON**

b. **witness-self** = **UNIT OF LIFE** = **JIVATMA** = **INDIVIDUAL** = function of the Overself
Witness is the presence of the Overself in **four modes**:

-- **Witness is the background awareness**: the impersonal observer of the changing contents of experience. "awareness with objects we call witnessing." NM ch. 71

--**Source and filter of the World-Idea: 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 actually understands the experience.

--**Actual available presence of consciousness in experience and 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." para 45 "Secret of the I"

--**the repository of distilled experience and evolutionary growth**

"The memory of the essential characteristics of all former related incarnations are registered and preserved within the Overself." PB

c. **I Am** = **OVERSELF** = **ATMA** = **MONAD** is being consciousness itself, the source of all limited states of consciousness and existence. It is the Overself itself. However, even as such, Overself is "a ray, not the original itself". It is an infinitesimal of infinite being.

d. **Beyond the I-Am is the Logos and Parabrahman... ineffable, infinite...**

see **WEB**: [Witness Definitions](#) [P.1-5 best: the rest my extra pics]

WITNESS:

. Overself as Witness and beyond

Witness consciousness, the viewing of subject and object as contents, is not a final position of our being, as it involves us still in the duality of knowing and the field of knowing. To BE is the state of the self beyond the relation to contents at all.

If anyone could fully perceive the astounding implications of the dream and sleep states, he could not become or remain a materialist. For he would perceive that there is something within him which is able to announce a fact of his experience but which is nevertheless outside his conscious experience. That fact is deep sleep; that ``something" is the witnessing element, the soul. Notebooks 19.3.16

The translation of the Sanskrit phrase antardrishti is literally "inward seeing" in the sense of seeing beneath appearances what is under them. It does not refer to clairvoyance in the psychic sense, but rather to the metaphysical or mystical sense. It can be particularized as meaning entering into the witness state of consciousness. The ordinary person sees only the object; penetrating deeper, he enters the witness state which is an intermediate condition; going still deeper, he reaches the ultimate state of Reality when there is no subject or object, whereas in the witness there is still subject and object, but the subject no longer identifies himself with the object as the ordinary person does. 22/8/85

The Witness is both an abstract metaphysical concept and a concrete mystical experience. It is not an ultimate one, yielding pure Being, the unsplit Consciousness, but a provisional one.(P) (25.2.98)

The problem of our relation to the Overself is difficult to clear up satisfactorily in words. Hence the statements about it in my book must not be taken too literally and too precisely. Words pertain to a lower order of being. The Overself is not a discriminating observing entity in our human and ordinary sense. But its power and intelligence are such that the activities of discrimination and observation would *appear* to be at work merely through its presence. ... 22.3.234.

Although the Overself does not pass through the diverse experiences of its imperfect image, the ego, nevertheless it witnesses them. Although it is aware of the pain and pleasure experienced by the body which it is animating, it does not itself feel them; although detached from physical sensations, it is not ignorant of them. On the other hand, the personal consciousness does feel them because it regards them as states of its own self. Thus the Overself is conscious of our joys and sorrows without itself sharing them. It is aware of our sense-experience without itself being physically sentient. Those who wonder how this is possible should reflect that a person awakened from a nightmare is aware once again in the form of a revived memory of what he suffered and what he sensed but yet does not share again either the suffering or the sensations. 22/3/337

Amid all the perplexities and oscillations of life, the witnessing and understanding Overself waits with infinite patience. No one is ever left out. This is the only God we can hope to know, the true Teacher for all. Those who yearn to unite with it should plead persistently for its Grace. 22/3/60

The whole of your past is now a thought. The whole of your future is likewise a thought. The present is unseizable and indeterminable.... Even if you could catch it the past would at once claim it and it would be converted into an idea. Therefore all your life—which includes all its background of a panoramic world—is but a thought! If no other proof were available this alone would suffice ! 306 ??

WITNESS EXERCISE

To stop abruptly activities, movements, thoughts and hold one's mind in a state of suspense, yet relaxed, is another exercise if the relaxation is passive enough. It leads into a meditative mood or a glimpse. Useful exercises are to concentrate consciousness on the point between the eyebrows or in the heart centre or in the centre behind the solar plexus. These are of course only yogic exercises, but useful as preparatory ones. More important is the attempt to put his own person into a new perspective, to transcend his own ego from the Overself plane. 23.6.39

*The position of the impersonal observer is only a tentative one, assumed because it is a practical help perhaps midway toward the goal. For when it is well-established in understanding, outlook, and practice, something happens by itself: the observer and the observed ego with its body and world become swallowed up in the undivided Mind. 23.6.84

Keep on remembering to observe yourself, to watch yourself, to become aware of what you are thinking, feeling, saying, or doing. This is one of the most valuable exercises of the Quest. 4/7.2

Be present at your thinking and breathing and feeling and doing. This is what the Buddha called "mindfulness." But the highest possible form of mindfulness is to be present with the Overself for, after all, the other four are concerned with the ego, even though they are attempts to free yourself from it; but here it concerns that which completely transcends the ego. 23.6.236

It is an experience wherein he finds himself aware of the ego from within itself and also, at the same time, aware of it as an observer. This is not to be confused with an experience wherein he finds himself standing behind his body, not identifying with it but observing it: yet he still remains in ego. 23.6.85

When a person has practised this exercise for some time and to some competency, he will become repeatedly aware of a curious experience. For a few minutes at most and often

only for a few moments, he will seem to have stepped outside his body and to be confronting himself, looking at his own face as though it were someone else's. Or he will seem to be standing behind his own body and seeing his face from a side angle. This is an important and significant experience. 23.6.91

Let him play the part of a witness to his own ego, through all its experiences and vicissitudes. In that way he will be emulating by effort those enlightened men to whom the part comes easily and naturally by their own development. 23.6.100

Mindfulness is a Buddhist exercise, but practising the Witness attitude is a Hindu one. Pythagoras too gave an exercise which is in some ways similar. 23.6.101

Being the Witness paras from The Notebooks

The practice of the impersonal point of view under the guidance of mentalism leads in time to the discovery that the ego is an image formed in the mind, mind-made, an image with which we have got inextricably intertwined. But this practice begins to untie us and set us free. 8.2.34

It is hard to look upon the reality of one's own personality as a myth. Few are likely even to make the attempt, so undesirable does it seem. And there would be small chance of success if there were not a concurrent attempt at discovering the reality of the Overself, which is to displace the myth. 8.1.22

To play the role of an observer of life, his own life, is to assist the process of inwardly detaching himself from it. And the field of observation must include the mental events, the thought-happenings, also. For mentalism shows that they are really one world. In the end everything belonging to experience belongs to mental experience. 23.6.82

The student has to stand aside from the thought-forms, which means that he must stand aside from the person and look at it as something external to himself. If and when he succeeds in getting behind it, he automatically adopts the standpoint of the Overself. He must make the person an object and the Overself its observer. Now this element of pure awareness is something constant and unbroken; hence it is not ordinary consciousness, which is a discontinuous thing made of totalized thoughts, but transcendental consciousness. 23.6.83

The way out is constantly to remember to think and to affirm that the world and all one sees and experiences in it has no other substance than Mind and gets its brief appearance of reality from Mind. When this is thoroughly understood and applied, its truth will one day stay permanently with him. (21:5.18)

What is the practical use of enquiring, "To whom is this experience happening? To whom this pain, this joy, this distress, or this good fortune?" First, it makes him remember the quest upon which he is embarked by reminding him that it is the ego which is feeling these changes and that he is not to identify himself with it and thus limit his possibilities if he really seeks the higher self behind it. Second, it suggests that he look for the root of his ego and with it his hidden "I" instead of merely being swept away by what is happening within the ego itself. 23.6.108

If you try to hold to the thought that all this turmoil is after all an idea and to be valued accordingly, it will be easier to find and retain your inner calm. If you can look upon the present era with the detachment with which you look upon the Napoleonic era, the trick will be done; but of course, humanly speaking, it is impossible to do this except by minute-to-minute effort and day-to-day practice carried out over a period of years to discriminate what is real and what is merely an idea. It is this long-continued striving which really constitutes gnana yoga, and it eventually brings success in the form of a settled and unshakeable understanding of the truth behind life. 188

One special exercise of the Short Path is easily done by some persons and gives them excellent results, although it is hard to do by others. It consists in refusing to let remain any particular mental registration of the surrounding place or people, or of any physical experience being undergone. Instead the mental image is to be firmly dismissed with the thought, "This too is like a dream," and then immediately forgotten. The exercise may be kept up for fifteen to twenty minutes at a time. The practical benefit it yields is to give improved self-control; the metaphysical benefit is to weaken the sway of illusion; the mystical benefit is to enable him to take the stand of the Witness-attitude more easily; and the personal benefit is to make him a freer and happier man. 23.6.95

As meditation is practised, further indrawing takes place and the apparatus for thinking is repudiated in turn. "I am not this mind." The process continues further; as the self ever draws inward he casts off, one by one, all that he once held to be himself. 23.6.104

Scott in his search for the South Pole amid ice-bound Antarctic wastes and Smythe in his quest for the summit of Mount Everest amid terrible avalanches of stone and snow, reported in their written accounts the sense of not being alone, of being companioned by a mystic unseen presence which bestowed a strange calm. Scott's venture ended in heroic death whereas Smythe survived to enjoy the warmth and safety of his home. Both however knew what it was to be uncommonly blessed at the time, for Scott passed to his fated death with an utter serenity and an inward trust in its aftermath which took all the horror out of it for him. This noble passage to another stage of existence was not the miserable calamity which it was for many other men. What was the mystic presence which walked beside these men? Each may have had his own belief about it, may have constructed in imagination what his previous knowledge experience tendencies and outlook may have naturally persuaded him to construct. Each therefore may have had different ideas about it, but this would not affect the actual power which inspired and animated him at the time. For that power was nothing less than the Grace of the Overself, and if we understand the psychological secret of what happened to Scott and Smythe we may then understand that it is not only far-wandering explorers and high-climbing mountaineers who may call up the Overself by their brave trust. The same dangerous experience which has brought fear, horror, and despair to other men brought them dignified confidence and mystical enlargement of consciousness which made them aware for the time of the hidden observer. They had indeed suddenly but partially stepped into the transcendental state. Whoever successfully practises the Hidden Observer meditation will experience precisely the same sense of not being alone, of being companioned by a mystic presence which

brings with it a benign sense of assurance and security. He will, however, experience much more than that. 23.6.86

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. (P) (25.2.100)

**“A Meditation on the Timeless Self”
from The Wisdom of the Overself**

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.

Imagine yourself immortal

To imagine is to create. That which a person thinks, he becomes. Rightly thinking yourself immortal, you consequently attain immortality. [“Immortal Overself” para 7]

Think of yourself as the individual and you are sure to die; think of yourself as the universal and you enter deathlessness, for the universal is always and eternally there. We know no beginning and no ending to the cosmic process. Its being IS: we can say no more. **Be that rather than this**--that which is as infinite and homeless as space, that which is timeless and unbroken. Take the whole of life as your own being. Do not divorce, do not separate yourself from it. It is the hardest of tasks for it demands that we see our own relative insignificance amid this infinite and vast process. The change that is needed is entirely a mental one. Change your outlook and with it “heaven will be added unto you.” (p. 290) 21.5.95

A part of the practical technique for attaining the inner awareness of this timeless reality is the practice of the AS IF exercise. With some variations it has already been published in *The Wisdom of the Overself*, and an unpublished variant has been included in descriptions of the Short Path as "identification with the Overself." The practitioner regards himself no longer from the standpoint of the quester, but from that of the Realized Human. He assumes, in thought and action, that he has nothing to attain because he bases himself on the Vedantic truth that Reality, of which he is a part, is here and now - is not reached in Time, being timeless - and that therefore he is as divine as he ever will be. He rejects the appearance of things, which identifies him only with his ego, and insists on the higher identification with the Overself also 23.6.115

PB notes on States of Consciousness

NISARGADATTA MAHARAJ I Am That on Witness

Q: We were told that of all forms of spiritual practices the practice of the attitude of a mere witness is the most efficacious. How does it compare with faith?

M: The witness attitude is also faith; it is faith in oneself. You believe that you are not what you experience and you look at everything as from a distance. There is no effort in witnessing. You understand that you are the witness only and the understanding acts. You need nothing more, just remember that you are the witness only. If in the state of witnessing you ask yourself: 'Who am I?', the answer comes at once, though it is wordless and silent. Cease to be the object and become the subject of all that happens; once having turned within, you will find yourself beyond the subject. When you have found yourself, you will find that you are also beyond the object, that both the subject and the object exist in you, but you are neither. Ch. 64

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

Being the source of both, the self is beyond both knowledge and power. 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. 141

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. Ch 44

M: you know the witness because you are the witness. You need not see the witness in front of you. Here again, to be is to know.

Q: Yes, I see that I am the witness, the awareness itself. But in which way does it profit me?

M: What a question! What kind of profit do you expect? To know what you are, is it not good enough?

Q: What are the uses of self-knowledge?

M: It helps you to understand what you are not and keeps you free from false ideas, desires and actions.

Q: If I am the witness only, what do right and wrong matter?

M: What helps you to know yourself is right. What prevents, is wrong. To know one's real self is bliss, to forget -- is sorrow.

Q: Is the witness-consciousness the real Self?

M: It is the reflection of the real in the mind (buddhi). The real is beyond. The witness is the door through which you pass beyond. Ch. 16

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: 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 71

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.

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