

ON THE STATES OF CONSCIOUSNESS... Category 19 section 3 +

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 himself or of others. This question is: "What is consciousness?" Whoever traces the answer through all its levels will find himself in the end in the very presence of the universal consciousness otherwise called God. 19.3.32

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

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

In the waking state we experience the physical world, in the dream state our experience corresponds to the etheric astral world, in the deep sleep state we enter a still higher level of experience which is that of the God whose will is expressed in the other and lower two worlds. This God the Hindus call Ishvara; I have called it World-Mind. Now underlying these three states and therefore the Reality, the consciousness, the real consciousness underneath them, man experiences as enlightenment. The other three are states whereas this is the Reality supporting those three states--waking, dream, and deep sleep. In deep sleep man reaches God, it might be said, but owing to his ignorance he is unaware so he does not benefit by it. 19.3.193

One of the first things a student of philosophical psychology must learn to understand is that the different states of consciousness are not the same as pure basic essential consciousness-in-itself. The states are like little circles within larger ones. They possess various limits and limitations, belong to

lower levels, and are subject to alteration. Basic consciousness transcends all these things, all these conditions, and may therefore be called transcendental consciousness. 19.3.195

What is called *Turiya* or the "fourth state" in Sanskrit, although it is neither waking, dreaming, nor sleeping, is related however to all three as their background. Therefore, before one falls asleep it comes into play. Before one wakes up in the morning it also comes into play. Or before a dream comes to an end and deep sleep supervenes, it comes into play. This is why either the practice of meditation or the brief practice of spiritual remembrance at any of these three natural pause periods takes the fullest advantage of them. This is also why during the interval between two separate thoughts, it comes into play. Thus, throughout a man's life, he's comfortably being brought back into touch with his divine Self. But because his face is turned the other way and he's looking in the wrong direction, he never takes advantage and becomes aware of that Self. 19.3.196

The fourth condition is attained when the true nature of the other three is fully comprehended, so fully that all the thoughts, feelings, and acts of the person are henceforth based upon the unshakeable conviction that the three are only appearances within the Real. 19:3.197

The ego moves through all the three states, but *Turiya* itself is motionless. 8.1.26

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

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

The inability of little man to enter into the knowledge of transcendent God does not doom him to perpetual ignorance. For God, being present in all things, is present in him too. The flame is still in the spark. Here is his hope and chance. Just as he knows his own personal identity, so God knows God in him as the Overself. This divine knowing *is continually going on, whether he is awake or asleep, whether he is an atheist or a saint*. He can share in it too, but only by consenting to submit his intellect to his intuition. This is not an arbitrary condition imposed by theocratic whim but one which inheres in the very nature of the knowing processes. By accepting it, he may put the whole matter to the test and learn for himself, in due time, his other nonpersonal identity. 28.2.89

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Islamic mystics called Sufis differentiate between glimpses, which they call "states," and permanent advances on the path, which they call "stations." The former are described as being not only temporary but also fragmentary, while the latter are described as bearing results which cannot be lost. There are three main stations along the path. The first is annihilation of the ego; the second is rebirth in the Overself; and the third is fully grown union with the Overself. The Sufis assert that this final state can never be reached without the Grace of the Higher Power and that it is complete, lasting, and unchangeable. 22.8.28

NIRVIKALPA and SAHAJA

Sahaja samadhi is the awareness of Awareness, whether appearing as thoughts or not, whether accompanied by bodily activities or not. But *nirvikalpa samadhi* is solely the awareness of Awareness. 25.2.140