

JOURNEY TO TOTALITY

Series IV

Ishwar C. Puri

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Series IV

Ishwar C. Puri

INTRODUCTION

The Institute for the Study of Human Awareness encourages individuals to know and understand themselves in the manner of the Socratic theme of “Know Thyself.” This knowledge permits us to better understand others and the world in which we live. The Institute provides resources which lead to the investigation and discovery of one’s real self.

These publications are compilations of taped lectures by Ishwar C. Puri. Due to the varied formats and lecture subjects, some information may be repeated. We hope that you would experience the love as if you were there, and we invite you to experience the reality of your true being.

Ishwar C. Puri is an international traveler and lecturer on a wide variety of subjects. Presentations by Mr. Puri include art, religion, human relations, science, philosophy, human awareness and consciousness, and many other topics. The lectures are motivating, enlightening, and reflect the highest flight of philosophy and human understanding.

Mr. Puri retired in recent years from his official duties with the Indian Government Services and is presently employed as the senior consultant for the Vegetarian Health Society, based in Chicago, Illinois.

As founder and principle speaker for the Institute for the Study of Human Awareness, Ishwar Puri continues to donate his time and resources to others through this nonprofit organization.

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INTELECT—ITS POWER AND LIMITATION

We are all trying to solve our problems intellectually. We are somehow convinced that the intellect is the best source of knowledge, awareness and the capacity to resolve problems. This belief is erroneous and, therefore, a very important consideration on our journey. Let us, first of all, consider a simplified structure of human awareness and consciousness to see where intellect is placed within that structure. I'm not creating a new structure, but simply trying to create a better understanding of the terms used in these subjects. Very often there is a lack of communication because we use words which have quite different meanings. We have not the same connotation for words and, therefore, it is useful at the onset to understand what we are talking about.

Human awareness, or the capacity to be aware, consists of five broad levels. The lowest level is what we might call the physical level, that of the physical body. We have given a name to our body and we call ourselves by our

body's name. One calls me Ishwar Puri and says, "Ishwar Puri is going to talk to us." The correct statement would be, "This man whose body is called Ishwar Puri is going to talk to us." If there is any other capability for awareness other than the body, it has not been named Ishwar Puri. Only this body, after birth, was so named. If I continue thinking that I am Ishwar Puri rather than my body is called Ishwar Puri, I am identifying myself with that which is not me. What is mine cannot be me—with just a simple understanding of this statement. When I say, "This is my jacket," it cannot be me. If I say, "This is my body," my body cannot be me. It is my body—I own it, possess it, I use it—but it cannot be me. In the same way, when I say, "These are my eyes," it does not mean that I am the eyes. When I say, "This is my mind," my mind does not agree, but I cannot be my mind. We are using terms with which we identify ourselves, although it does not take very long to discover that we are not those things which we are using. This body that we use is the first level of knowledge, awareness, and contact with experience. With

this body we create a relationship with the entire world. Father, son, mother, brother, children, friends—all are relationships of the body. If we did not have the body, these relationships would not exist. The father is not my father, but my body's father. The mother is not my mother, but my body's mother, as she gave birth to this body of mine. Therefore, when we talk of the lowest level of awareness, we are talking of the awareness arising from this physical body. The bodily awareness which we consider very important is, in fact, the lowest.

The next level of awareness is that of the senses—awareness through the sensory perception. The perception arising from the senses is also ascribed to the body while we are using the body. For instance, I say that I can see because I have eyes in the physical body; but even when I close my eyes, I can see many things. Imaginatively, I can see my home, my friends, what I was doing earlier this morning. I can even visualize and see what I will be doing tomorrow. You might say that this is imagination. I am not talking of imagination, but of vision—the capacity to

have sight. That capacity to have vision and sight is not related to the physical eyes, and yet we always say that we can see only what comes in front of the eyes. Therefore, the eyes do not help us to see. The eyes limit us to what we can see because the rest we reject. Being at the physical level, we say the other vision is not seeing at all and it is imagination. Similarly with hearing—we listen with the ears, but we can listen without the ears. In fact, we are listening without the ears all the time. We are listening to our thoughts. How else do we know what we are thinking? Our ears do not listen to these thoughts. Is the quality of listening or the very experience of listening any different from the experience of listening with the ears? It is not. Therefore, the capacity to listen, to hear, is independent of the ears. So it is true of all other sense perceptions. All sense perceptions exist per se—of their own—and we attribute these perceptions to the body—incorrectly so. If we were unconscious of the body, we would still have all of the sense perceptions. If we used our sense perceptions by themselves, without the body,

that would be called the next higher level of awareness. We sometimes refer to that as the astral level of awareness. Above that is the mental level, that which we call the causal level. We find that it is not even necessary to break up an experience into different sense perceptions to be able to have the experience. Today we are under the illusion that unless we see with the eyes, hear with the ears, touch with the hands, smell with the nose—unless we do all these things with the senses—we can't have the experience. But we know that the mind can pick up experience without having to break it up into these functional compartments. Some experiences are such as not to lend themselves to subdivision of the senses. For instance, in an abstract experience of idealism, we can talk of idealism, understand, and then the experience of idealism comes to us. It can neither be seen, heard, touched, nor is it something that is capable of being experienced through the senses. It is being experienced directly through the mind. If you contemplate a little further, you will find that all experiences can be directly

grasped through the human mind and need not be broken up. But since we have been accustomed to getting experience by breaking it up into pieces through the senses, we think that it is the senses that give us the experience. When you can have experience mentally without having to use the body or sense perceptions, we call it the mental experience or the causal experience. We call it the causal experience because it is the cause of all other experiences.

The fourth stage in the levels of awareness is one we need not experience through the mind. There is one special characteristic of all experiences of the mind and all experiences below it, including the experience of the senses—the physical experiences. They all need time, space, and observe the laws of causation. Even the smallest experience will be subject to these three laws. The mind has three parts. This is a classification only for understanding the subject, so don't take seriously that there are actually three minds. I am using this analysis to show the structure of levels of awareness. The mind has a

lower part which picks up the elements of sense perception from the senses. It does nothing but absorb that which comes to it. Now when I say the mind is absorbing what is coming, please remember that frames of experience that come from the senses by themselves have no meaning until the mind interprets them. It is very strange in that if you are shown merely the pictures of what the eyes see, the few flashes of what the eyes see, the few sounds that the ears hear, the phonetic sounds and a few other sensory experiences that we have, it will make no sense at all. It is the lower part of the mind that picks up these pictures, puts them together and gives meaning to them.

The middle aspect of the human mind is the part that performs what is called reasoning, argument, logic, inferencing, and is called the thinking mind. This part of the mind is functioning all the time while we are alive, day and night, whether we are awake or asleep. Thinking is the origination of words in the middle of the mind, a stream of words continues through the mind at all times.

This function of the mind is called the thinking part and is a continuous process.

The upper part of the mind does what we call creation or creativity. The creative mind is the portion that is rearranging the elements of sense perception with—and sometimes without—the assistance of the thoughts into new patterns and putting them forward. And we say what a beautiful creativity we have. It is nothing that is created except the pattern. The design is new but the elements of creation are the same. Now, the point that I am making is that all of these three functions of the human mind—sensing, thinking, and creating—require time and space and they obey the laws of causation. It is the next higher level of awareness which we in the Orient call the awareness of the soul or spiritual awareness that transcends the limitations of time, space, and causation. In the West, I find that there are very few people who will distinguish between the human mind and the human soul. Very often they regard the two terms as synonymous. In fact, the qualitative difference is so great that there is no

commonality or overlap of the two. The mind, as I have explained, functions only in time, space and causation. The soul of every individual human being has the capacity to have experience which has no time, space, or causation.

There are three main functions which the human soul performs. The first is spiritual intuition. The intuitive spirit in each of us which gives us a sudden flash—that hunch of knowledge does not take any time, does not occur in space and has no cause. Intuition isn't there and then suddenly it is! Very often it is quite inconsistent with what the mind has been reasoning. The mind says, "It should happen like this." Suddenly, an intuitive flash comes which is inconsistent with what the mind has just said. The intuitive flash does not belong to the realm of time, space, or causation.

The second function of the soul is love. When we have the experience of love—that great experience that makes us lose our identity and takes our entire awareness into the one we love—it does not occur in time, space, or

causation. Love was not there, and then it is! When love is there, we think about it and ask, “How is it there?” The thought is in time, space, and causation. The contemplation of what has happened requires time, space, and causation because that is the mind thinking about what has happened. Very often, the mind destroys the love that was beyond time, space, and causation by thinking about what has happened. But the quality of love is such that it does not subject itself to the laws of time, space, and causation.

The third example is that of aesthetic experience or beauty. When you see beauty in something the experience is identical with love. It does not subject itself to any laws of time, space, or causation. These experiences of intuition, love, and beauty do not come from the mind. They arise from a higher level of awareness which we consider as spiritual awareness which comes from the soul of man and not from the mind of man. It arises from a deeper part of the human self and is above the intellect.

Lastly, there is the fifth level of awareness. An inadequacy at the fourth level is that it is still subject to the law of individuation. Even if you appreciate the beauty, it is you that individually appreciates the beauty. You, the individual, separate unto yourself. Even the experience of love is your own experience of love as an individual. The intuition or intuitive awareness is an individual's intuitive knowledge. Individuation itself becomes a weakness of awareness, an inadequacy of awareness, a cover upon awareness. At the fifth level of awareness, this cover is removed and we have what we might call total consciousness or the consciousness of totality. It is here that the discovery is made that the entire picture of experience is drawn up by one author and he is the author of all—and there is no such thing as any wall between one individual and another. The highest level of awareness transcends individuation.

I have briefly described these levels to tell you how we have the capacity to have awareness at different levels. It does not mean that we are using different levels at

different times. All are being used together at the same time. We have the physical body, the senses, the mind, the soul, totality—all together. The whole drama of life is going on with this entire complex of awareness put together. The intellect with which we take so much pride and pain—the reasoning mind—is a limitation to our reaching the highest levels of awareness. All of our educational processes, our system of civilizing ourselves, seem to be directed toward sharpening the instruments and tools of intellect. We don't seem to do anything with the other levels of awareness. The result is that we grow up into a distorted form where we rely far more upon the intellect than on any other form of awareness, including the intuitive form or the spiritual form. The great capacity for awareness which lies hidden in the human being, available through the intuitive power, the power of love and joy and beauty is destroyed by an excessive use of the intellect.

The intellect plays a very important role in understanding and for this there is no better instrument. I have drawn a

picture of the five levels of awareness in such a way that it should appeal to your intellect. Had I not broken it into five parts you would not have liked it because the function of your intellect is to break down. We call it analysis. The soul of man, a higher level of awareness, functions not by breaking down but by joining, or synthesis. In synthesis, we see the beauty of the whole. Through analysis, we can understand the mechanics of the parts, but lose the beauty. Consider another example—a lovely painting. You can look at the painting and immediately see a beauty. Now take the painting and cut it into narrow strips and then make even smaller squares of it. We can then examine the small parts thoroughly. Examine them at length and we will not see the beauty of the original painting which we observed earlier in a split second. We can come to understand the parts, the mechanics, the color, weight, and other scientific analysis. We will have intellectualized the painting by cutting it into pieces. What are we doing to life? Life is a beautiful painting and we are cutting it into pieces—parts of today's, tomorrow's, of here and there, of

this and that. We are applying scissors of the intellect to chop life into smaller pieces and then wondering where the beauty of life lies. If we can pull ourselves together and see life in its totality, the beauty would reappear. That will require not the intellect, but the spirit of man, the soul of man to look at it. The intellect can never see totality. The intellect is our greatest barrier to our seeing our own self. The intellect convinces us that we are the mind. Intellect says, “The shirt that I am wearing is me, the body that I am wearing is me.” These absurdities are accepted as truth because we rely upon the intellect. We must use intellect only to a point—for understanding. Intellect will allow me to communicate with you. There should be a reasonable balance between the use of the intellect and the use of the higher faculties of human awareness. The best contribution that intellect can make to human awareness is to say, “I can go this far and no farther.” Let us develop intellect in order that intellect can discover its own limitations.

In the spiritual development of man towards higher awareness the mind has been the greatest obstruction; but when it has understood its obstructive role, it has been the greatest help. The point to remember is that the mind does not have consciousness. There is but one being in our body. Consciousness is derived only from the soul. Look back from the time of birth until the present—how much of our time have we spent with experience and how much time have we spent with the experiencer?

There was once a king with a great army—in those days, a king was only as big as his army. But there was no war! The neighboring kings were peaceful, and he had a difficult time convincing himself he was king because his army was not fighting any battles. So he decided to set up mock battles within his kingdom in order to have the feeling that he was king. But mock battles would be no fun. The battles should be made realistic and made to take place in the presence of all the people. People would then say, “What are you doing, King?” And they would make him stop—as people will. Therefore, he decided to build

a large fortress with high walls all around it. On the inside of the fortress, the king constructed an area where he could array his forces. Inside the fortress, the king built townships with their own walls and waterways. The mock battles within looked very real. Now the king, when building the outside walls, left small chinks and openings in the wall. The people of the kingdom now began to peep inside through the openings. What was happening was not real, but the people liked to watch very much and they believed the battles to be real. Soon they would not leave the wall. They would take turns watching and spent their entire lives looking through the holes in the wall. They had glued themselves to the openings and had forgotten their own true existences. They could not then even turn about to see who it was that was stuck to this experience.

Some people read good intellectual books. The books say that you should begin from within, and yet we read more books—from the outside! The books we read tell us that if we wish to see what is behind the eyes we must first find someone who has seen behind the eyes. Another book will

tell us to worship the Lord who is inside of each of us— and off we go outside to a church or temple to worship the lord who is inside of us! After reading the books, listening to lectures, and hearing the preachers, we begin to think about it with all the intellectual comprehension and we continue to go outside. It is this quality of the intellect that keeps us outside and so creates our problems. The human mind has one immediate failing though—it is fond of pleasure. This weakness is also a strength in that the pleasures we see in the mock world can be replaced with the pleasures we can observe in the real world inside. Once we turn our intellect within, it will not wish to come outside again and it becomes the strength of the human mind. One of the greatest gifts that God gave man is the power of attention. The capability of our attention means that we can be here and not elsewhere. We can pick up part of an experience and exclude the rest. We can manipulate our attention to control which experiences we would attend to and those which we would not. Through the use of the mechanism of attention, we can change the

direction of the intellect from within outside to outside within.

There are two areas of the spiritual journey where we become blocked and a special human effort is required. The first is the transition of our attention from outside to within. The second comes at a much higher level, when we transcend from individuation to totality.

THE SPIRITUAL FORCE

In every language, you will find the spiritual force mentioned. In some European languages, they could find no word for the spiritual force and it became known as “the Word.” Why do we call it the Word? Why don’t we refer to it as power or the spiritual force? Spiritual force is an inadequate title. It is a definition laid down by human beings at the wakeful level of consciousness. The word “force” would suggest that there is a pressure or something requiring a push. The “Word” needs no pushing. The spiritual force needs no pushing. It is never pushed about but flows smoothly, automatically, at all times. This flow of the Word, of absolute consciousness, of the Ultimate Creator, takes place uninterrupted. Nothing ever stops it, reverses it or ever changes it. Everything else may change, but not this spiritual force or Word. Why do we call it Word, language, music or music of the spheres? The reason is that this Word or spiritual force has identity which can be perceived by listening.

What can be listened to would best be described as the Word. If we could not listen to it, but only experience it by other means, we need not call it Word. It is the spiritual force that sustains all creation and it is all right to call it the Word, the unspoken language, original music, the unstruck music, or the Om of Brahma. We can use many words to describe the sound that can be listened to very deeply and creates this experience for us. It is the spiritual force that links one spiritual level with another.

As a child, I used to worry about God. I thought to myself, God is sitting up there and He created this universe. He must have come down here to experience the universe, since there was no one else to experience it. How would God manage this? There could not be a divided God who kept a part of Himself in two places, for if He did so, He could no longer remain total. Therefore, if Total God were to experience this world that He created, He must come down. I then thought that the best way would be for God to enter a dream state and experience this world in a dream level—but that would produce the risk that God might go

to sleep and never awake. Perhaps then He must have left His home to visit our world to experience His Creation in the form of a living being. He would have locked up His home and come here. But suppose that He lost the key and would not be able to return to His home? Did He make the mistake of permanently locking Himself out of His own home? And if He remained only in His home, why then did He create this grand illusion? The problem was then how could the Creator prevent losing His hold on the reality and yet enjoy, in consciousness, the illusion of the world? This bothered me for a long time, until I discovered that the spiritual force which He used to create was itself the key which linked this illusion with reality. This force, *bonhe*, *shabd*, *nad*, *kalma*, music of the spheres, celestial music, holy music, or that spiritual force we now call Sound was the link between each level of awareness. So long as He maintained this link, there was no risk of God's being lost. He could return home when He wished through this link, or Word. For many, this remains a difficult concept to understand, and many have

stopped at this level, saying that there is a power or link between us and the Father, but that they do not know how it operates. It is either the Word, Holy Ghost, Logos—but they do not know how the Father and Son can be connected. The truth is that the Father must become the Word in order to become the Son. The true form of all beings is the Word. In John’s Gospel, it says, “In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God.” The true form of God is the Word and the true form of man is the Word. The true form of self, of soul, is the Word and the same for all of creation. What then is the nature of the Word, which can create everything we see and yet remain the true form of God?

The nature of the Word is consciousness, or awareness. We find that we can have no creation that we are not aware of. Awareness, therefore, brings into existence all Creation; and this world, in its nature, is consciousness. Consciousness is the Word, the spiritual force that links all levels of our awareness. At the top or higher awareness, it is total consciousness or God. Though total

consciousness is a very high consciousness, it is not the highest level. Understand that if we attain total consciousness, we must have something to be conscious of. Total consciousness, in order to exist, must create something. That which total consciousness is conscious of must be the Creation. Even within total consciousness, there is a realm of experience of illusion. The first grand illusion placed upon total consciousness is that of individuation. This then provides more than one consciousness. The illusion of individuation destroys the reality of totality.

The shift from total consciousness to individuated consciousness—the belief that there can be more than one—is generated through the illusion of individuation. And this is accomplished through the Word, the same conscious power. Total consciousness itself consciously creates the illusion of there being more than one, and so we come to the creation of the soul. When the consciousness of the soul consciously undertakes a transformation and places its experiences in time, space

and causation, we believe it is the mind. Mind consciousness is a deliberate creation of individuated consciousness, a function of consciousness itself. Again, it is the same Word, original consciousness, which creates the framework of our experience in time, space and causation. Further removed from total consciousness—at the level of the sense perceptions—is the same consciousness that makes the Word operate as if it were necessary in the time and space framework to have a different function of perception to handle that experience. In order to make even this illusion perfect, another cover is added—the physical wrap is put around this consciousness. It is a deliberate act of consciousness that provides the development into grosser forms of experiencing consciousness and more dramatic situations for consciousness to experience. The link of one level to another remains through this function of consciousness to create the next level. The higher level of consciousness continues to function at the lower levels at all times.

The concept of self in the Eastern philosophy arises from the fact that there is only one self. When we talk of a higher self or the higher being that we wish to discover, it is actually the same self at a higher level of consciousness. Eastern philosophy states that there can be only one self. Depending upon the level of consciousness that the self creates, different regions of experience are created. The spiritual force is the great link, the conscious link between one level of creation and another. In Eastern philosophy, this concept is considered to be very high philosophy and often beyond the grasp or understanding of the human mind. Please be patient with these things which don't immediately come to intellectual comprehension.

Now we will discuss the experiencer. When consciousness goes down and creates all levels of experience, how do we preserve self-identity throughout the descent? It is preserved in a manner which can be listened to. We have understood the experience and the experiencer. At our wakeful state of consciousness, we talk of the real consciousness as being inside or within

ourselves and the experience outside. The experience outside is easy to identify. We can see it, hear it and sense it only through the experiencer inside. If we then withdraw to within our self, how will we know that it is the self? The experience outside, even though an illusion, is manifest. We can perceive it. There is also a counterpart manifest necessary inside. To have the ability to withdraw our attention from the world of experience to the reality of the experiencer, there must be something manifest in the experiencer.

Our consciousness within us today is getting all of the feedback, all of the information, all of the experience from the outside. If we cut off all of this experience, what experience will we then have of the experiencer? Are we then just getting into nothingness or will there be something to experience? Can we experience the self without experiencing the experience from the outside? If the self were only an outside experience we could never experience the self; then, the reversing of attention—meditation, returning to the self behind the eyes—would

be nothing, of no value. If all experience were on the outside and then withdrawn, we would vanish or disappear. Fortunately, the experiencer within, the conscious being within, is the one having the experience manifest on the outside. What then is the being which can be recognized and experienced? The form is of light and sound—or the Word, the spiritual force. When we withdraw to within, we can experience an intense light and a distinct and beautiful sound. Very few people notice this, but the light is shining from the self or the conscious being within us all the time. The sound and melody emanates from the same self in resonance. Many talk of vibrations. What are vibrations except the resonance of self? This resonance is the manifestation of the self—the spiritual force in manifestation at all levels of creation. Not only will the resonant sound be there at one level, but it will be there in the astral plane, the causal plane, the spiritual plane—therein is total consciousness. It is this resonant music that enables us to listen to something of ourselves. It will enable us to withdraw our attention to

ourselves. Without this inside manifestation, we would be unable to withdraw our attention to ourselves and we would only withdraw attention to our imagined self. If we sit quietly and listen, we will hear the resonance of our self. Some people imagine that they are becoming mentally ill when they hear the sounds of bells from within. There is nothing wrong with them; we all experience these sounds, but our attention is not there.

Have you ever noticed that many places of worship, particularly those created centuries ago, were constructed with shapes of domes much like those of a head? Others resembling a head with the hair tied up? A remarkable coincidence that many of these places of worship of the various religions, shape the place of worship in this manner. All of them have light and sound as well. We seem not to understand the symbolic reminders of the real temple. The real temple or church—the real house of prayer and house of the Lord—is this body with the light and sound of our being. It was thought that if we could hear the church bells ringing, we would be reminded of

our own sounds. We did not, however, and continued to listen only to the bells of the outside temples.

When we withdraw our attention from the world about us and this physical body, we can listen to a number of sounds within us. Many of the sounds are below the level of our wakeful state. The process of using our attention inwardly allows us to listen to these sounds. The lowest manifest sound of self that we hear is that of the ringing of bells. The sound of self begins with the back ground ringing of very small bells. Other sounds then merge with the bells and are heard to resemble chousing, singing, the sound of a thunder storm or a train passing over a bridge. These sounds are emitted by the self and contained within. These have been called the Word. These sounds which we first hear do not have the power to pull us further within, so we must use other methods to avoid distraction and return to our wakeful self. When we come to the real higher self, the sound is of the pealing of a large and powerful bell. It is so powerful that it can pull us out of the body within minutes. When one hears the sound of the

bell within and behind the eyes, one need not do anything else to remove attention from the outer world. The sound of our resonant self then changes. As consciousness rises to higher levels of awareness, the sound and light change. The very strong bright white light accompanying the first sounds then will develop into many forms. With other sounds, we will often see colors flowing like waterfalls. Sharp, distinct colors of purple, red, blue, green and yellow flow along with the sounds. The higher sound of the bell pulls us with great intensity and we can see an immense white light emanating from the sound. The sound is the same consciousness and a manifestation of the self. Thereafter, as we go along with our own self and the resonance of self, we rise to higher levels of awareness. As we continue to higher realms, we observe different kinds of light and sound. The change takes place very smoothly and beautifully. For one will not see God but will become God. It is a process of becoming, not that of seeing. You can see experience, you are consciousness. When we wish to see the experiencer, it will always be the

self. The ability of the self to perpetuate itself, to remain the self at all levels of consciousness, gives us the beautiful experience; otherwise, we would never be sure of who had experienced it.

There is an error made in comparison of the self to a drop of the ocean. Neither are we a piece of God, separate and seeking return. God is not like the ocean and we are not the drop of ocean. The ocean is so full of drops that it would gain nothing in the return of a single drop. The drop would gain nothing in merging with so large an ocean. The spiritual journey is not made for merging with the Lord. If one leaves the source, he does not remain total. No drop ever leaves the ocean and nothing ever leaves this total consciousness. The experience of the drop occurs within the ocean. And how large will this drop be within the ocean? As large as your awareness would make it! The size of the drop will be dependent upon the awareness of the ocean. If the ocean was our conscious being and decided to restrict its awareness to a part of itself without any part going out, it will then become the drop. If that

drop then regains its total consciousness of the ocean, no drop leaves and no drop returns and no drop merges. It is only the individuation of consciousness and the expansion of consciousness to totality. Consciousness has never been separated nor has self ever been separated. The experiencer has always been one.

It is in this sense that we can see how the bird flew in the dream and awoke to find himself human. The dream remains a dream with feathers and flight, but the bird—the experiencer—awoke. From this human being, we will awake further to higher levels of consciousness and awareness with the same link of the self. When a higher level comes, we do not see anyone at a higher level. This very self gets out of the illusion of the lower level and becomes the higher self. But still we use the word self. The self persists with the self as an identity. And in this manner, if we hold onto the self we get to the higher self. The resonance and music of the self is the key to rising to any level.

In meditation, there is a struggle between the mind and the meditator. The mind takes you outside. A set of thoughts comes and takes you out. You try to stop it and return to self. You start again and another thought comes to take you out. You beat it back, bring the mind back, and then it again goes out with another thought. Even five minutes of this can appear as hours and is very tiring. Some say, “Well, at least we did something. We beat back the thoughts and won the battle.” Little did they realize that in the process of winning the battles they lost the war. The mind was not engaged or interested in winning battles. They would finish their meditation without gaining anything. The mechanical methods used in meditation are not helping us in any significant manner. The only real way is to go to the manifest form of the self. Listen to your own resonance. Meditation should be easy and effortless. The resonance of the self has the power to pull you up—you needn’t do anything else. The spiritual force is more than a sound, yet cannot be heard. The spiritual force can be felt, but it is not a vibration. The spiritual force can

create, but it is not the mind. The spiritual force is consciousness itself—it is the essence of both Man and God.

I have made it sound very easy in describing the shifting of consciousness from here to there, crossing the boundaries of the mind. Consider how we would withdraw attention when the mind itself is being transcended. The mind directs attention, so how will this attention be withdrawn when transcending the mind? This entire process of withdrawal of attention finishes at the mental realm. The only way to go on to higher spiritual experiences beyond the mind is through the spiritual force, the audible life stream. The audible form of our own consciousness is available to us at all levels of creation. Hanging there like a rope for us to climb to reach the higher levels.

We hear and read of Masters and we entertain many ideas of them. I would like to tell you that the real form of the Master is the spiritual force. When the Master shows us

His form within and says, “Symbolically, I assumed that face and appearance in a physical form outside but that was not me,” we need not be surprised. The physical appearance was part of the illusion. “It is the spiritual force which has pulled you and that is me, the Master.” The Master is, therefore, the spiritual force at a higher level within us. This is the real form of the Master. It is the spiritual force that stays with us at all times and helps us at all times. It helps us not only in going within, but in all activities. This force helps us in projecting experience, rearranging experience, and in our obtaining experience in such a way that it becomes beautiful. If we ignore the spiritual force and guidance, our life can become hell rather than heaven. There exists in our world now, sufficient joy and happiness if we are guided by the spiritual force. There is also sufficient deception, pain, agony, misery, worry, and the feeling of loneliness if we should ignore the fact that the spiritual force operates on the physical and mental levels.

The mind also operates on various levels. The mind operates at the levels of the physical body, the astral body, and the mental body. In the physical body, it is called the physical mind. In the astral body, it is called the astral mind. In the mental body, it is referred to as the universal mind. We rely on the physical mind when we are in the physical body. We have no access to the astral or causal mind. Listen to the physical mind and ignore the spiritual force or real Master within, and this world becomes hell. Conversely, if we listen to the spiritual Master in this form of spiritual force and do not listen to the mind, this world becomes heaven. Heaven and hell are right here around us.

We sometimes hear of a Master initiating us. What does this mean? What does a Master do when He initiates? When the Master initiates, He establishes a connection between you and His higher form as the spiritual force at the next higher level of consciousness. The spiritual Master never initiates a disciple or seeker at the physical plane. Although the Master may appear much like

ourselves as a physical person, He is only a symbol in the physical world. The initiation is invariably at the astral level, within His operating level. When the Master operates as the spiritual force within, connecting with us, He tears us apart from the mental realm and the law of action and reaction, the law of karma. If the Master is a Perfect Master, He will end all karma for the initiate at the time of the initiation. Thereafter, the follow-up karma pattern is preserved for creation of mock karma. There is no new karma. We get out of the realm of karma. The initiation is not an external matter. A guru may tell us a few words and say, “This is the mantra. I have given you initiation.” This means nothing if He has not linked us with His own spiritual force within and has severed our connection with the negative power of time, which makes us come and go in the cycles of birth and rebirth. Initiation is the greatest thing that can happen to us in this world. Initiation by a Perfect Master is something which angels, rulers of higher realm, souls in high authority in the higher realms also seek. Those who govern the higher realms—

the astral and causal regions—are waiting for a chance to become human and receive initiation by a Perfect Master. Initiation is the connection with that spiritual force which has a direct connection to the top or totality of Consciousness. The spiritual Master then picks up the chosen and initiates. Once initiated, there is no way out except to be with the Master in reaching the totality of consciousness. At this point, we may or may not try to attain totality. We may or may not meditate. Once we have been initiated by the Master with that level and He connects us with the spiritual force, He only laughs at our effort or lack of effort in meditation. We then are doing meditation out of habit and trying to find ourselves. The Master, though, has seen the validity of all that we have done. Through the process of love, He then draws us within to hear the spiritual force, the resonance of the self, and the resonance of the Master as we travel through our journey to total consciousness.

The spiritual force is not the ability to do things, to see things, or energy fields to heal or help. These are much

lower energies that exist at different levels of awareness. It is only the spiritual force that can take us to totality of consciousness.

Questions should arise in your mind. “The powerful Master who is the spiritual force at the highest levels can come to the astral plane to link us, the marked sheep, with His own form when we are ready. Why then does He not come all the way to our present position and take us with Him? If we are ready and are the chosen, the seekers, can He not take the extra step?” The Master is very much like a friend who wishes to take us on a vacation. He says, “Look, I wish to take you on a vacation. It will be an easy vacation and we shall go by railway. We will enjoy ourselves and I will buy your ticket. You come to the railway station, and I will meet you there with the ticket in hand. We will travel together.” And now you say, “Certainly, I would like to take the journey” but you remain at your home. You read the time schedules and study the guidebooks over and over again. You say then, “I don’t know. He says He will take me on a vacation, but

I have never gone on a vacation.” The friend phones you and says, “Come to the railway station. The vacation starts from here. Take this one small step—it will show that you are keen on coming. I don’t want to force you, but I have made reservations, come, it is not too far.” The spiritual Master has similarly booked our passage on this particular train. He has our tickets and initiation. “Come to the railway station behind the eyes and we will begin our journey from there,” says the Master. If you cannot come to this point, what is the point of seeking? What is the experience of seeking, of finding, and of knocking? We seek and we find. If the purpose of having a human life is to have the ability to be a seeker of higher awareness, when will we seek the experience? If we do not seek, nothing will happen. We can continue to study the routes and the guidebooks, but we must also go to the railway station on our own. The difference or gap is necessary to provide the kind of experience for which we created this level of consciousness.

Even then, when it appears that we will not start out for the station, He will send a cab or He might even come to the back door to give us a push and shout, “Leave!” If we have problems, the Master will assist us in unseen ways. He still expects us to follow the rules of the game though, and come to the railway station.

The spiritual force then is the real form of the Master. It is the real creative power which created the entire world and has been described as the shabd, bonhe, nam, nad, sibuk, and the logos. In so many ways described, it means that which can be heard. It can be listened to because of its resonance, music, and light. And this Word sustains experience from one level to another—it is the ultimate essence of our soul. Spiritual force is the essence of the Lord and the force that brings us back to the highest forms—God realization and total consciousness.

THE KEY TO HIGHER CONSCIOUSNESS

You may have noticed that, although the subjects of my lectures are different, I bring the subjects around to the same point. The point is that all answers to our questions lie within ourselves. The answers to questions, even of problems outside of ourselves, lie within consciousness, and we must seek them within the self. Yet, I am not sure that we are really going to look within ourselves for the answers. Lectures, like books, however good they may be, are outside and not within the self. The consciousness that is the Creator of all experience is inside of us and all answers must come from there. Our teacher, our guru or Master, is within ourselves. We have to discover our Master within. So much are we looking outside instead of inside that even our Master within can do nothing more but to then come outside as well. He comes outside to talk to us—not because the truth is outside—because we will look nowhere else. The Master says, “I have waited for you for a long time within you, but you never turned your

attention within. What was I to do? I have come outside of you to speak to you but I have not come to draw you outside. I have not come to tell you to remain outside with me. No, I have come to tell you that I am not the teacher, but I am the image of that teacher. The teacher still remains inside of you. My role is to push you back by reversal of your attention to your own self and to discover the teacher within.” It, too, is a different matter that when we go within and look at the teacher, we find that he is the same person who was outside.

What is this process of going within? What is the methodology, if there is any? Can there be methodology to a thing like going within? One can think of methodology when going somewhere, reaching something or achieving something, but here we do not go anywhere, reach something or achieve anything. We just become what we are. Why should there be a methodology in being what we are? Today we seem to be anything but ourselves, we have lost touch with our own selves and we are identifying ourselves with everything else but

ourselves. We associate ourselves with those things that belong to us and the things that we use. Please remember, that which is mine cannot be me. This surprises us sometimes—to hear that a sound can be the creator of anything. The truth is that sound is the Creator of all things, including God. It must be a very delicate sound that can be the Creator of all things. It looks very gross when we look at the sound with all its colors, but it can be quite sharp, quite creative. Let us see how sound can create all things and how sound can be used to discover the cause of everything.

What are the illusions about the self which we want to overcome? The first is the illusion of the human body. We are carrying the body about and saying, “This is me.” This is the first and biggest illusions and this in turn leads to thousands of other illusions. The relationships of the body are regarded as our relationships. For example, “My wife” is not a correct statement. She is my body’s wife but we don’t say that. We do not give it any thought, we are not conscious of it. We have identified ourselves with the

body which just belongs to us. The body is ours, but it is not us. How do we get out of this illusion that leads to other illusions of relationships?

It is said that there are two approaches to solving the problem of identification with the body. One approach is through energy and the other approach is through awareness. Many people do not know the difference. In the West, and particularly in the United States, people talk of consciousness, awareness, energy, energy forces, and other things—interchanging the words without realizing that they are talking of totally different concepts. Let us look again at the definitions of the words consciousness, awareness, subconsciousness, attention, and energy force.

Consciousness is the potential for awareness, the ability to be conscious. Consciousness is the everlasting reality of being conscious, of when we can be or were conscious. Consciousness includes the consciousness of the past and the future, as well as subconsciousness. It is the ability of

being conscious, whether we are immediately conscious of it or not.

Awareness is the alert consciousness or immediate consciousness of which we are now aware. It is what is happening within our awareness now. That which we see now is within our awareness. Even mentally, we are aware of our automobile standing outside. Whatever we are aware of now—that is our awareness. That, which we are not aware of now but can be aware of, is consciousness.

Subconsciousness is the area of consciousness into which we throw away things for storage when we don't need them in awareness. It is the storage area in which memories are stored and from which they can be retrieved.

Attention is the whole, or end point, of awareness—a focal point about which we move around to become more aware of a certain part of the experience of awareness. We can be aware of this room as a whole and we can see the furnishings in this general awareness. We can then use attention to focus this awareness upon a single small

object. Attention is the narrowed beam of awareness placed upon one area of awareness to make it of greater significance to consciousness. Attention can be used to achieve another result as well. Attention may be used not only to concentrate upon one thing, but also that we may be less aware of other things. Attention is a double-edge knife—it cuts both ways. Attention, then, increases your power to be aware of something and enables us to stop or cut off awareness that we don't need. The second aspect of attention is even more important than the first. The ability of attention to pick up some part of awareness for intensive experience is important, but the ability to shut off some part of experience is even more important.

Energy force is the flow of currents from outside of consciousness, generally through a physical mechanism of the body, in order to give a vibration to the experience of which we are aware. Energy flows on that part of consciousness which operates through energy centers in the physical body, allowing the experience to flow

outward and inward. Now, let us use these brief definitions in reverse order.

The body has continuous energy flowing through all parts of it. It is this body energy that flows out into relationships and attachments. Energy flows outward through the sense perceptions. All experience that we have through the body involves the participation of the energy process. These energy forces sustain some of the physical experiences and make them closed circuit experiences. They are closed circuit in terms of relations of time, space, and causation. These energy flows from the human body seem to flow from fixed points in the body which act as focal points. The locations of these points are: behind the eyes, at the throat, in the region of the heart, from the area of the naval, the genitals, and at the rectum. These six points in the human body are the model or focal points for the energy that derives its strength from awareness. They provide functional distribution of the energy. It is the assertiveness of the self which says, “This is my body, this is my house, this is my child,” and this assertiveness of

the self is done through the center behind the eyes—the third eye center. It is the center where we believe we are and consciousness initiates. We believe that the rest of the body is being used by us through energy forces because we are here, using it. We are the owners of the body—possessor and advocator of the energy centers.

Awareness, that which we call present awareness, flows from the eye center located behind the eyes. Reasoning occurs here, thinking occurs here and memory and logic are stored here. Retrieving from memory occurs at this center also. Most of the process of awareness in the wakeful state occurs here, behind the eyes. But we do not hold ourselves together from behind the eyes. We are scattered. Even the awareness of the eye of the self, behind the eyes, is scattered. Our attention is distributed from here to the other body centers and from there to the rest of the body. Our awareness is then scattered from the body to the rest of the experience of the world around us. This scattering of attention makes it ineffective, like the scattering of light and that of attention except that

attention is more powerful. There is light shining in awareness but we cannot see it. This light is more powerful than 12 of our suns of the solar system put together. When light is focused or concentrated into a thin beam of light, we call it a laser. This can cut through things, but when light is scattered, it can do no such thing. When awareness flows through attention and is scattered, it has no power. When awareness is concentrated into a single beam, it can cut through anything. Those who have practiced the concentration of attention at the center behind the eyes, know how powerful that beam can become. There are but a few pieces of evidence which we regard as empirical evidence regarding the power of attention when it is concentrated. It is unfortunate that most of this evidence is related to accidental concentration of attention and not a cultured or trained concentration. Those who have trained their attention have been using their attention for other purposes; therefore, we do not believe there is enough empirical evidence. But the fact that such power exists is known to those who have

practiced the art of concentrating the attention behind the eyes at the eye center. This is the center from where attention flows and can be used as a very strong instrument and experience.

The center at the throat is the center into which awareness goes when we fall asleep. It is called the power center where the goddess of power, Shakti, resides. All power comes from the energy flow from the throat center. People who have power over others, over money, and over nature have this power to perform miracles. People have this power to control things. All of these powers are related to the energy flow from the throat center.

The next is the center at the region of the heart. It is this center of which we are most frightened. This is the center from which we can leave the body in astral projection. People talk of going somewhere else while the body remains behind and they can return with the silver cord. They are speaking of the power to leave this body that exists in this center. It is the heart center where we can

practice dying while living. From this center, we can forget the body and view it from outside the body. In this center lives the lord of death and destruction. Lord Shiva is lord of all endings and resides in the heart center.

The center of the naval is surrounded by body equipment and facilities for sustaining the body and its activities. It is called the sustenance center and provides the middle in a context of beginning, middle, and end. It is the God Vishnu who resides over this center.

The genitals are the creative center. From this center, procreation takes place. The creative energies flow from this center and so it is called the center of the beginning. It is Brahma, Lord of Creation, who resides there.

Ganesh, the deity-god, resides at the rectum center. This is the center of evacuation or of clearance.

These are the six energy centers that control the whole gamut of human experience. All energy flow takes place through these centers. From the center behind the eyes, we

can travel to any of these centers by the simple process of concentration of attention. There are two routes available to travel to these centers. The first is a direct route of going from center to center through a deepening sleep or trance state. The other route is an indirect method of coming along the spine, behind these centers. This route has a junction at the genital center where the return route takes another path. The round trip of the centers may also be reversed then. This wave of movement of the attention from the front to the back of the genital center causes the awakening of a further energy often referred to as the kundalini energy. It is the awakening of the energy of the coiled serpent. These six centers can be visited on a single breath—a single stream of our breathing of prana, the life breath. The life breath of prana holds consciousness as we journey into these centers. People who perform the yoga of the six centers are able to awaken the great potential of energy forces of all of these six centers. But these are lower energies and are devoid of any sound of their own. There is a higher awareness and a higher consciousness.

The higher consciousness does not live in these centers. The centers are created by one sound—the sound of the self from behind the eye center. The mantras we introduce are required to generate power in these centers where we can hold our attention. The yogis have evolved appropriate mantras or words which will strike our association of ideas to provide the necessary connotation. Higher consciousness does not live in these centers. They contain energy forces, but not a higher awareness. In fact, if one is interested in high awareness, one may not go down all the way of the centers and come up again. If we want to see what is happening from the eye center above, we need not go down to these centers. The eye center and above are centers of higher awareness and higher consciousness. There is a complete replica of these lower centers within the eye center. When we reach these centers, we find that these six energy centers are reflections, modifications, and only gross representations of the higher six centers. There are only six centers of the physical body, whereas the six higher centers represent

that area from which the birth of the lower centers took place. One can think of laying aside these six centers if one is not interested in energy fields or interested in examining the root cause of all energy. If we wish to examine energy forces not of physical matter, then we must move to higher consciousness. If we wish to find experience of high energy, we must seek a higher consciousness and not let our consciousness slip down from behind the eye center.

Each night when we go to sleep, the focal point of our attention drops below the eye center. At this time, if we were to ask ourselves where we are as conscious beings within the body, and if we were to locate ourselves or feel where we are, we would go around the body and ultimately come to the head. With the eyes closed, we would feel that we are behind the eyes and looking at the eyes. Our hand, if used to indicate, would come to our eyes. We do not feel that we are in the fingertips, although we are aware of the fingertips. We are alive in the fingertips because we are aware of the fingertips. If we are

one single spark of consciousness spreading out, that spark is behind the eyes. Now when we go to sleep at night and are halfway asleep and if we were asked to point to the area of our conscious being, our hand would point to our nose. Were we then to look out of the body from the location of our consciousness, we would see our nose before us. If, on the other hand, we go to sleep unaware of the body and cannot relate to any particular center, our consciousness will go to the throat center in a deep dream state. It is further possible to drop from the throat center to the heart center while sleeping. It happens every night and we become unaware of the body.

Higher consciousness cannot be achieved if the focal point of consciousness drops below the eye center. To hold the attention or focal point behind the eye center, and not go to sleep while concentrating attention upon self is the key to higher consciousness. If we slip into a trance state, we will go into energy forces and not to higher consciousness. We must sustain our wakefulness and concentrate our attention upon ourselves to open up a new

experience of high awareness which is not the experience of the body. Once we become unaware of the body without sleeping, without anesthetics, and without being bumped on the head, we can find in our meditation an immense power and energy which we are not now aware of. The ability to concentrate attention upon oneself at the eye center is not unique or for only gifted people. It is possible and available to everyone. Each of us can have the experience. It requires only that we concentrate our attention on the conscious being within, behind the eyes.

There are many distractions to going within, of course—we have created them ourselves! We have created the distractions with attachments. What we have called my body, my wife, my children, my friends, my lover—these my, my, my's have created all the attachments. The results of which is that when we wish to concentrate our attention on the point behind the eyes, we will find these my, my, my's all returning to us. They call us out of the body again. There is no problem in meditation or going within oneself. The problem is the outside attachments. There is no

problem with our methodology; the problem is in working out what to do with our attachments. Some would attempt to kill off any attachment with a big hammer or something, because the attachment is standing in the way of our meditation. It doesn't work. An attachment that is suppressed is still an attachment. In India, people have tried many ways to tackle the problem of attachments which did not let them go back to themselves. Some have run away to the Himalayan Mountains and into the caves and the highest peaks of Tibet. They sought to get away from civilization and their attachments. They believed that they could then be out of attachments because none existed in these remote areas. They found out, however, that when they sat in the cave far away from us, they then missed the food store or the face of the girl they had left behind. They quickly discovered that physically going to the Himalayas made no difference to the attachments. When they tried to tackle the problem of going behind the eyes and remaining there, they found the attachments as strong as ever. Stronger indeed, because there was no way

of fulfillment. They grew more and more attached as they struggled to secure detachment. They found that detachment cannot be practiced. Others have worked for centuries on this problem and had come to the conclusion that we cannot avoid attachment by detachment. The answer found after all of these attempts was that only attachment can dislodge other attachments. If a child is playing with a toy, a beautiful toy, the child will not wish to leave it. He will continue to play with the toy and would not hear or respond to his mother calling. The child is so attached to the toy that you might practice everything possible to detach the child from the toy, but without success. The child can sit down for supper and he may cry. His mind is still upon the toy. It is not detachment that will take the child to supper. But if you placed a better toy in the hands of the child, the child will throw away the first. Therefore, an attachment to something more attractive is the only way of securing detachment. This is a great key to holding the attention within. You cannot go within yourself by practicing detachment with the world outside.

You must then attach yourself to something more attractive than the world outside. Since we are going within, to what can we seek attachment in order to break attachment from the outside? Outside experiences draw us back out. In order to attach within, we must attach to someone in the world or outside who would push us back to within ourselves.

In my travels, I have heard it asked, “If we are to withdraw from this world of illusion and bring ourselves to the reality within, why would we form an attachment with one of the outside world of illusion? Why should we even come to listen to you speak and listen to your teachings?” Your worldly attachments are both illusions and distractions. The physical Master or teacher, too, is an illusion but his unreality, when we are attached, pushes us back to within ourself. Both are real and both are illusions, but the clash of difference of the two illusions leads us to reality within. It is important that this person who will lead us to our reality within will have, himself, practiced going within. He need not be a scholar. He need not have a

degree or be of a certain height or race or nationality. He need not wear any particular clothes or observe a particular national custom. He must, however, have one qualification which is absolutely essential. This person should have personally practiced going within. If he has done that, then he is one whom we can form an attachment and go within. All experience of higher consciousness rests upon this key—that we need one who has practiced going within.

We are listeners and we have used mantras from the energy centers, but we suddenly find that at the source of our own consciousness in the wakeful state there is an automatic mantra which creates all of the energy centers. It is a sound so beautiful that there is no equivalent on the outside. This is the sound of the Creator and has been given many names. In all languages of the world, it remains the Word or spiritual force. The resonance of consciousness—that sound has not been created by anyone. Like the world has form, appearance and color, the one who created this world has a form, appearance and

color. It is of sound and light—full of beauty. The sound becomes important to us because we are listeners. We think we can do many things, but we can do nothing but listen. We cannot concentrate attention at any of the energy centers except by listening to mantras which we repeat. We repeat words while concentrating attention behind the eye center. We cannot see anything without listening. Being sophisticated animals, we use words. When we see something, our brain tells us what it is that we see. We see through listening, taste through listening, and all experience has been reduced to listening. Human consciousness is the listener, but we don't realize it because we have never been ourselves. We have been out wandering with the experience. All of the data and information is being fed into human consciousness through the listening devices. No other devices are necessary to have all perceptions. All energy forms can ultimately be brought into the form of listening. When we listen, we get back all the energy and become strong by listening. We can also grow weak by listening—listening

to the sounds outside. When we listen to the sounds outside, our attention goes outside. We have to listen to the sound within ourselves to discover the sound comes from our core of consciousness. We might start by listening to whatever sounds are there within. If there are still no sounds heard within, we can make the sounds. We will use words called mantras so we will not listen to stray thoughts which would take us outside. Words are sounds—they are phonetic symbols. Our words get their meanings and connotations depending upon our personal association of ideas with them. Whatever experiences you have had with these words will determine the basis for the meanings of those words. When words are spoken, as in thoughts, they take us to where the meaning belongs—to the outside world. Therefore, we go to the guru or Master who has practiced the art of going within. We tell him that each word that we can think of has a meaning related to the outside. We will ask him for help and he will tell us, “Yes, I will give you words which will have a connotation inside.” You might ask, “How can his words with his

connotations become my words? We don't have any common experiences." He would answer you by stating, "That is what you think. You think our minds are separate and, therefore, we have separate meanings of words. It is true where you are, but it may not be true where I am. If you raise your level of awareness to the mental state of experience, you will discover that minds are one." There is a universal mind operating. When we have access to the universal mind, the meaning of words given by one who has access becomes the meaning of words of our own. The words then given by one with access to the universal mind become magical and have meaning connected with experience within, not outside. One can then listen to these words.

TIMELESS, SPACELESS, CAUSELESS CONSCIOUSNESS

There is no way in which the human mind can ever conceive of something that is spaceless, timeless, or causeless; it is just not possible. We may hear any number of talks and lectures, but the human mind does not have the ability to conceive of—intellectually or otherwise—a timeless, spaceless, or causeless situation. The reason is simple—the mind itself is time, space, and causation. When experience is placed in this framework of time, space, and causation, we call it experience through the human mind. Therefore, if we have any experience within this framework, it is bound to be limited by these ordinates of time, space, and cause and effect relationships. How then can we understand that which is timeless, spaceless, and causeless? The mind cannot understand but, fortunately, human consciousness or awareness is not limited to the mind.

Since we are more than our minds—thank God for that—we can have an experience within ourselves of that which is timeless, spaceless, and causeless—and yet that experience will not be of our minds. For example, let us say that we are not our minds. What are we then? If we are not the mind, what is the mind? Is it possible to have a mind which has no experience? An abstract mind or absolute mind? There is no such thing. There can be no space without things to fill it up. The mind becomes filled with experience—it is like space. If we withdraw all matter and energy from space, there is no space left. If we say, “It takes so long,” what takes so long? If that which takes so long is not there, no time is then required. Time does not exist by itself.

What is causation and the law of causation or the law of cause and effect? If there is no effect, there is no cause. We cannot have a cause by itself, nor can we have an effect by itself. If, in the absence of cause and effect, there is nothing to fill time and there is nothing to fill space, we would have no human mind. Emanuel Kant, the German

philosopher, said, “Not only are cause and effect the attributes of time, space, and causation, these constitute the human mind. Experience placed in these ordinates becomes the human mental experience.” Of course, mental experience is not the only experience that we have. The mind is not content with a mental experience or an abstract experience, the mind wants to push it down to a level where it becomes more sensational, more dramatic, and the sensational part of the experience comes from the senses.

The five senses of man are those of sense perception: of seeing, hearing, touching, tasting and smelling. These lowest of senses do not distinguish man from other created experiences. The sixth sense is that of intuition. The seventh sense is very subtle—it is called common sense and is very uncommon. It is the eighth sense which belongs to us that is the highest—and that is the sense of humor, the ability to laugh. The senses divide experience into seeing, hearing, touching, tasting, smelling, etc. The mind has the ability to have total experience without

having to break it up, but the mind instead employs the senses and thus we say, “We can see something, but cannot hear it.” We confine experience to the part which can be heard, seen, touched, tasted, or smelled. We artificially and unnaturally classify life into that which can be seen and not heard, or music that can be heard and not seen. We create these artificial illusions to prevent the mind from having direct and total perception of these experiences. It is not enough that senses create sensations and divide experience into these categories of sense perception—we take it even further and we build that experience into a solid mass through the physical body, and we then say that we can see only that which the eyes in the body see, we can hear only that which the ears can hear, and we can touch only that which the human hands can touch. We confine ourselves to the solid physical bodies, physical organs, and physical material world to have our sensations. That makes it even more dramatic and gives us the experience of a real solid world existence into which we have come for a very short while.

The sensation created by this strange habit of perceiving experience through these channels of the mind, the senses, and the body is that of a world which is real. We explore this world rather than explore how the experience originates. We become removed from the experiencer—the conscious experiencer within us—and become confined to the experience through the body. Nothing could make it more dramatic or more sensational than this procedure of placing human conscious experience in these frames—the perception of the physical body.

We don't stop at that. After placing our experience in the physical body, we make contact with other physical bodies that are created through this physical body of our own. The experience spreads around us and is taken for granted to be a real solid world, and our relationships with that world occur through this physical body. This is my father, that is my mother, my brother, my business, my car, these are my things. Whose things? Of the physical body? Whose father are we talking of except the father of the physical body? The entire world comes into being only

as a relationship of the physical body. How sensational and dramatic we make this experience by placing it within this framework and taking it for granted as a natural thing. We then believe that there is no other experience except the experience of this solid physical world. We believe that consciousness is nothing else except another function of the physical body. We take the physical body to be more real than our conscious experience—and nothing could be a greater illusion. But we have created it and continue to support it. Illusion is what makes it dramatic, but illusion does not mean unreal. Illusion is that which appears different than what it is. We create pain and pleasure and we create all experiences through this illusion that the physical body alone is real. We mistakenly believe that consciousness is only a function of the body and that it came into being when the body was born and will perish when the body dies. Many believe that we have come to this world for a short time and that when the physical body is gone, we are gone. We won't pause to look at things which we call common sense—we

don't even study the obvious. For example, here is a big physical world and a human being, a conscious being. The being comes into this world, experiences it and goes away? Suppose the being did not come—would the physical world still exist? How will it be there and what will be there? What physical world do we know except through the conscious being? Then what world does that conscious being see? If this person does not know that another part exists, it does not exist. When we increase our frontiers of knowledge, we say, “Oh, the world is much larger than I thought.” We explore space and see bodies beyond our knowledge and say, “Oh, space is much larger than we had thought.” Look at the size of the world as perceived earlier and what it is today. It is too small for what it will be tomorrow. Human beings will say, “This was not the world, the real world is more than what we saw.” Then when do we see the Real World? If the size of the world—what this world is—is dependent upon the consciousness of the observer, what would happen if there were no observer? There would be no world.

Consider the world that we create ourselves. We can have hallucinations; we create things which are not there. We can create through fear a world which does not exist and we create through doubt a world which does not exist. We create through inter-relationships with people a world which does not exist. This world exists in our minds and we think that this physical world exists outside. What will happen to that world? If the conscious experiencer were not here, where would this world be and what would be the nature of this world? Indeed, the world that we have known would disappear if we were not here, and only that part of the world is here of which we are conscious. So, consciousness has played a very dramatic role by descending to the point where an observer creates a world and thinks that the world exists more so than the observer. The observer alone is responsible for the dimension, size, quality, quantity of this world; yet the observer is under the illusion that the world exists in addition to himself. How do we experience this world in the physical body?

We claim to experience it through the physical senses. Let's move backward now and see how they operate.

We see things of this world because we have physical eyes. How do the physical eyes see? When light from an artificial source falls upon those things which we see, the light is partially absorbed and partially reflected. The reflected light rays travel in near parallel to our eyes and when it reaches the eyes, it makes an inverted image on the retina behind and through the lens. The retina is nothing more than the optic nerve spreading its tentacles or receptors out through rods and cones which see color and form. These rods and cones take that image which is imposed upon it by the reflected light and carry the message of that reflection through the optic nerve to the brain center. In the brain, there is a specified area which functions for sight. In this specified area of gray matter—which is designated or reserved for sight—this message will be received from the optic nerve. When it is received there, if we happen to be conscious, we will see the object in front of us.

What would happen if the object were not there, but the Lord had given us a natural gift of making the inverted image of the object at will? We would see the object exactly as we see it now because the rest of the process of seeing is identical. And what would happen if the retina makes no picture, but the optic nerve itself becomes excited in a manner which we claim is excited by the object? We would see the object exactly as we see it now with the retina. There would be no difference. And what would happen if the optic nerve played no role and the gray matter in the brain had the capacity to have these movements which make us look at the object? If this were the case, we would see the object exactly as we see it now. Now what would happen if the brain performed no function and consciousness itself had the capacity to create that pattern? We would see the object exactly as we see it now. Where is the proof that the object exists and that this biological process occurs and causes an effect in the consciousness? Why is it not possible that consciousness has the power to create the object and, by

working backwards, give those vibrations to the optic nerve, creating an image on the retina and making us see the object? Which is the cause and which is the effect? Is the object the cause and the seeing it the effect, or is the seeing the object the cause and the object the effect? What is the causal direction of experience, of sense experience? And what is the proof, what is the causal effect, the causal direction? Is there any way in which we can determine this? The difficulty in determining it, is that the consciousness picks up the object and the object is there. They are simultaneous—there is no time lag between them. We see the object identically because we are conscious of it and, when we are not conscious, we are not conscious of the object. It does not exist. Because the two things are happening simultaneously, how then do we find the cause and effect relationship?

Some would offer the naive method of judging what is cause and what is effect. They would say, “It is very simple. You take the object away and you stop seeing it, therefore this is the cause. This solid material object was

the cause and the seeing was the effect.” If you put a chair in front of us, you will see that chair. Should someone then move the chair away, the chair disappears; therefore, the solid chair is the cause and the seeing is the effect. There is a fallacy in this rationale. The person who picks up and takes away the chair is made up of the same stuff of which the chair is made. How can we use part of the same experience to judge whether it is cause or effect? Suppose that we then go to sleep and dream that we see the chair. Does the chair exist and therefore we are dreaming about it, or have we had a dream of a chair and therefore created the chair? We know from our wakeful state that there is no chair. The chair that we saw in the dream is from the mind, but it appears to be outside. In the dream, we see the chair as outside and we can go and sit on it. If in the dream, the question arose, “Is this chair real or is it being made from here?” Would it be because the chair is actually there and therefore we are dreaming of it, or because we are dreaming of it, the chair has come? Consciousness created the dream. How then can we be

certain that what we are experiencing now is an effect or a cause; whether the things which are outside and which we see are illusion or reality? Whether the theory of idealism or theory of materialism has validity? And how do we prove it to ourselves?

Is there any definite and certain proof? If there is, we can easily find the answer. If there is none, we will continue speculating. If we do not want to find an answer, we will go on speculating. If there is a proof, it lies within the dream episode that I spoke of. We must wake up! If we awake from a dream, we find the answer and the proof. Upon waking from the dream, we find that the dream chair was not real—it was created by the dream, by the dreamer and his consciousness. The only way to know if the chair is the cause or the effect is to wake up and see if at that level of consciousness, the chair experience is real.

We can test whether the experience we are now having is the nature of a dream and things are being projected

outside from a consciousness where the pattern exists, or if we are to wake up and find they would then disappear.

Fortunately for mankind, it is possible to awake further from this level of consciousness and to validate for ourselves by personal experience and to our satisfaction, that what we are now seeing is of the same nature of the dream. What we now see is being projected from an experience held within consciousness. It looks as real as a dream looks real. If in the dream, we came to know that it was a dream, we would still not know that it was a dream. We would say, "This is a dream." We would run about telling everyone in the dream, "This is a dream. I have found out that this is a dream." Who are we telling? We are telling dream creatures that we found it to be a dream. If we really knew that it was a dream, we wouldn't go about telling others that they too are from our mind. We have created them. This illustrates that even if we know the truth, even if we speak out, it does not mean that we have realized the truth. A person who shouts in this dream to others that he has found the truth, that he has had a

knowledge that it is a dream, does not realize that it is a dream still. There is a difference between knowing and realizing. When the person wakes, he does not tell anyone that it is a dream—he knows it, he realizes it was a dream. In the same way, if we awake from this level of experience, this level then becomes the dream and we discover all that we were seeing at this level disappears with the wakefulness. This includes this old earth, universe, time, the endless space, and all that now looks so dimensional and permanent. The reality does not lie here. All of those solid things that looked so real—that gave us all the problems that we related to our bodies—were a dream. We find that they were neither here nor was this body. Our real self was sleeping and we acquired this body for the dream. When we awake to a higher consciousness of our own self, then we will realize that this body, which we thought to be our self, was used as a form to experience the dream. The physical body is being used for a dramatic, sensational experience. But how, then, will we know when we are awake? How can we

awake from this drama? If a person is sleeping and dreaming that he would like to wake up, what can he do?

The person in the dream state cannot wake himself up, even though he knows he is dreaming. Had this person set an alarm, he might have awakened—but then he will voluntarily awake from the dream. There is only one way that I know of for this person to awaken from the dream—one who is already awake can give the dreamer a nudge and tell him, “Get up.” The person who was sleeping may then think that something else is happening and the friendly nudge will take on a dream pattern. The dreamer may be at the grocery store in his dream and, when nudged in reality, he will continue to dream thinking that the nudge was his being hit by a grocery cart. When the friend says, “Get up,” and the friend also says, “Do not worry, I will carry the groceries for you.” And with this, the dreamer will awake. The friend did not lie nor did he ever carry the groceries. He merely participated in the dream of the one who was sleeping in order to wake him up.

So it happens, that if we seem to be sleeping and dreaming in this state and there is a higher wakeful state, a friend in the higher state can participate in this dream of ours to give us a nudge, hold our problems, and make us wake up. Of course, once we wake up, we don't then ask for proof of awakening nor do we ask for the groceries back. We don't ask, "What happened?" Because we then know that we are awake. Many continue to ask though, "How do I know for sure that I will awake and know that I am awake? Could I not think it to be just another dream, a fantasy? Maybe it will be only another experience of a lower level." The dream world too appeared to be real, so what kind of proof do we need? If the world marched to our bedside and told us that we are still sleeping now, we would not believe them, so what gives us that feeling of certainty? The reason is that when we wake up, we can remember going to sleep. That is the proof we need—the change in consciousness. In certain cases of mental illness and amnesia, it can happen that we could forget what had happened and would not know with certainty whether we

were asleep, dreaming, or awake; everything would be mixed up. But when we have memory which can establish the fact that we went to sleep, we will realize that the dream was sandwiched between two experiences of wakefulness. When the friend who is already awake to a higher level than this level gives us a nudge in the body in which we are sleeping, we will experience a shock. But he will participate in this dream and then we will realize that we were there before our present experience started and our former experience did not require this physical body. The body was being worn for this dream sequence.

It is then that we come to know which was the cause and which was the effect. That consciousness of a thing is the cause and that the thing that was experienced is the effect. Anyone of us can prove it for ourselves. It is not something only a few or select people can do. Of course, we will need the friend to give us a nudge—and there are problems in finding that friend, but we will come to that presently.

If a higher state of consciousness is the state of wakefulness and the lower state is the dream state, it would explain how the lower state is created by the higher. If the consciousness sees things, things therefore come into being outside. It is this reality which Eastern mystics found and have said, “This is illusion. Do not take this world as real, solid, everlasting, or permanent. We are creating illusion. The reality is within the self which is seeing the illusion.” One of our Eastern mystics spoke in Chicago many years ago on this very subject of illusion. Swami Vivekananda said, “The experience of this world is illusion and the experiencer within is the only reality. If you wish to see what is real, go within and wake up. Otherwise, you will stay with illusion.” The Swami also raised a very important question. He said, “If whatever you are seeing is illusion, then I must also be an illusion and unreal. And if I am unreal, then so are my words and my speaking to you is an illusion. How can I condemn this experience as unreal in trying to tell you the difference? Yet, you want to listen to me, and why would I want you

to listen to this unreality?” He then answered himself by saying, “It is true that I am also as unreal as any other experience and you are seeing me and listening to me—it is your creation. I am equally unreal, but with one difference—the other unreality holds you to itself and does not let you wake up. This unreality pushes you back into yourself and enables you to wake up. This unreality clashes with the rest of the unreality—that one putting you further to sleep and keeping you in the dream state; my unreality clashing with that in making you think inward and waking you to a higher state. Both are unreal, but they are performing different functions.” When you wake to the higher reality, you will find that your power of seeing was something different from seeing with these eyes. If these eyes, retina, and apparatus of the brain were responsible for seeing, you could not see a dream and you could not see imagination. We close our eyes and in imagination we see everything that we wish— seeing is the same, the perception of sight is exactly the same. But we believe that this is imagination and real seeing is done

with the eyes. We should realize that this physical body and these eyes don't help us to see; they restrict our sight to what is before us. We could see much more if we did not think that we are the body. We could hear much more if we did not think that these ears are responsible for hearing because we can listen to our thoughts. The power to listen is something different from the eardrums and, yet, this is the illusion that we are seeing, hearing, touching, tasting, and smelling. We are having this illusion because of these physical organs.

If we get away from the consciousness of the physical organs, we would hear more, see more, touch more, and have a greater experience of reality, of the higher wakeful state. We can reach the state where we can have the experience of senses without having the experience of body in systems of meditation. What does meditation do? What is meditation? Meditation is the art of withdrawing our attention from experience to the experiencer. It is as simple as that. The experiencer should be aware of one's own self to discover one's self—and that is meditation.

When we withdraw attention from the experience of this world, we enter into our body and we confine ourselves to what we think is ourself—the body. Then we further withdraw attention from these parts of the body—which are an extremity of where we are thinking, knowing, realizing, and experiencing consciousness. As attention is brought to the eye center, the extremities of the body leave our consciousness and we become segregated from the entire body. We become unconscious of the body. The ability to concentrate attention also means the ability to withdraw attention. When we can concentrate our attention upon one thing, we automatically withdraw it from other things. Today, our attention is scattered, so we have a scattered experience of the world around us. When we withdraw our attention to the point from where we are experiencing, then the withdrawal itself gives us a heightened experience of ourselves and takes away the experience of that from which we are withdrawing. When the attention is withdrawn from this world and the body to the point we are conscious from, behind the eyes, our

senses become more acute. We lose the consciousness of the body, yet we realize that we can see more and hear more at this point. This capacity to have experience with the senses alone and without the body increases rather than decreases. For the first time, we realize what we are doing rather than limiting experience to the body. We had placed those limits upon ourselves.

When we can function with the sense perceptions and without the physical body, we are functioning in the astral body—we perceive directly from the mind. The mind is capable of perception without having to break up experience into bits of senses, and the experience is heightened and much clearer. Past, present, and future can be grasped at once. This capacity of consciousness to perceive without the senses of the physical body is called direct mental perception or direct causal perception. The causal perception is the cause of all of the perception below, causing a dream within a dream. Though it has no body, per se, we call this the causal body or direct mind function. We give it this name because the causal body

can create things of which we are conscious, and it can perceive. Those things of which we are conscious are created by the causal body—by the mind. At this level, all space, all cause and effect relationships come together before us. The beauty of this entire creation can then be appreciated. As it is now, we don't appreciate the beauty because we have broken this experience into bits of todays, tomorrows, heres, and theres. The scissors of time and space are cutting this total experience up and making it ugly, much like cutting up the painting we spoke of earlier. Look at the totality of things and we see the beauty of this painting. When we cut this experience into days, minutes, yesterdays, and todays, we are using the artificial device of time to do this. Why do I call time artificial when it looks so real? It is artificial because it is one of the biggest illusions, bigger than the illusion of the dream. What is time as we know it? Today we say, "Oh, we don't have enough time." What does it mean? What is the nature of time as our consciousness at this wakeful state knows? Look at our present state of wakefulness, what is the

nature of time to us? We cannot see time; we can only see the clocks. We can feel time passing, but we cannot see time. How do we then feel time and how does a clock make time? What is the actual experience that creates time? The experience is the experience of something past, of something present, and of something future. The experience of past, present and future is creating the experience of time for us. Let us analyze these three and see what time is. Let us start with the present.

How much time is there in the present? None, whatsoever. Present has no time at all, so we have to keep it out of time. Before I used the word “now,” it was in the future. The moment I used the word “now,” it becomes the past. When is the present? It is completely without dimension of time. A nanosecond is a billionth of a second, and even a billionth of a nanosecond does not exist in the present. Then how is it that we all talk of the present? We are seeking now; we should do it now—why do we use the word “now”? We use it in the mistaken belief that the immediate past is called the present. When I say the word

“now,” it is the now that is just past. Nothing can occur that will cause or require time to stay in the present. So, the present is in fact, the past. Let us see what is the future? The future is simply the human ability to hope, to fear, and to anticipate. Supposing that consciousness lost these abilities, suppose that human awareness lost the ability to hope, to be afraid, and lost the ability to anticipate. If it did not have these three functions, there would be no future. The word future would have to be written out of the dictionaries. When we talk of the future, we are talking of these things, and we say something now to create the future. What we say now, what we hope for now, what we fear now, and what we are anticipating now, creates the future. If we cannot do these things, there is no future and we can do these things only in the immediate past. Examine it carefully: what we call the future is also the past because these things have to happen in the past—there is no now in which it can happen. In truth, this experience of our present wakeful state can occur in the past, although we call it the present and future, as well.

Surprisingly, if things are in the past, there is no way to experience them except through memory. You cannot create the past before you, you can only remember the past. It is a startling truth which will come to you if you contemplate exactly what I have said. If then, we think that we are living in this world, we are only remembering this world. The whole of the world experience in this time frame with the past, present, and future is all really past and is being experienced through memory. And if we have no memory, we cannot experience the past. That is the illusion—memory is being made to look like it is happening now. That which is already in the past is being made to go through our awareness and consciousness as if it is happening now, and we further create a present and future of it.

We cannot recall that which has not taken place. Where has it taken place? Where have the events of this world really taken place for us in the wakeful state to recall? Examine it intellectually and you will be left with no conclusion except that there is some level of

consciousness where things must happen so that in the wakeful state you may recall them at the astral level—which is a higher level of wakefulness. Indeed, things happen there and when we drop our attention away from this present wakeful state, we can recall. That is why many people say that everything is predetermined. Of course it is. You cannot create something in the past, you can only recall what happened. This entire experience in the physical body has been predetermined, otherwise you would never have it. Where has it happened? It has occurred in the higher wakeful state.

When we awake to the higher level of consciousness, the nature of time changes. Time then becomes available in both directions. There is a real future to see, a real past to examine, and the present can be held in a single frame like a movie frame held for viewing. We cannot do that here in this state. We make such an illusion for ourselves that if I wait for a friend, it may look like I have waited for an hour. We go through the hour of waiting and then look at our watch to find that we have been waiting but ten

minutes. We accept our watch time, but not the experience of waiting. And if we are in good company and time flies, we might well say that it doesn't appear that we have spent more than ten minutes with friends. We look at the watch to discover that we have actually spent two hours, and we will believe the watch, not the experience. Look closely at the illusion of a solid reality of this experience we are creating. We awake to a higher level of consciousness and the nature of time changes. We cannot now hold a single frame as in the movie going on in this state, but at the awakened astral level we can hold time when we wish. We then realize that the new wakefulness is not a fantasy or dream, but a new way of experiencing consciousness, of knowing the reality of this world. Awaken further from the astral level reality to the causal, to pure mind, and we can not only hold time, but we can move it either direction. Backward and forward, we can make time move and see the history of experience of all times at the causal level. People call it the universal mind level, saying that all experience is stored there. It is stored there because you

can move on time to either side of it. Others have called it total time because you can stop time at any time you wish. You can see the totality of time. Don't forget, though, that it is still time and that consciousness at the mental level is still conscious in time—not a timeless experience. But it is not the higher level of wakefulness either. Even after reaching the beautiful cause of all experience, friends who are awake to yet higher levels will nudge us from there. They will nudge us from the mental levels to the spiritual level—to the level where consciousness itself originates. At the spiritual level, we do not have to bind down experience into time, space, and the causation framework. The lower three levels of causal, astral, and physical bind experience in different forms of time, space, and causation. When we rise above the level of the mind into pure spirit, we cross the boundary where we can experience timelessness, spacelessness, and causelessness. To rise to this level, we must cross our minds. We don't even now distinguish between ourselves and our minds. We are identifying ourselves with the mind

and we think that we are the mind. When we cross the mind, we will not have crossed ourselves. Consciousness is not the mind, but it uses the mind. Consciousness can exist without the mind. The human mind performs the functions of picking up sense perceptions, interpreting what it is sensing, and reasoning with logic, words, thoughts, and creating new patterns. We have the sensing mind, the reasoning mind, and the creative mind; and they function in time, space, and causation—yet there is a part of human consciousness, human awareness, which is not confined to these frames. We call that consciousness the soul or the spirit of man and it transcends the mind.

What functions does the soul of man perform? They are three: intuition, love, and the purely aesthetic function of beauty. The intuitive hunch or flash is a knowledge that comes suddenly from nowhere—without words, without time, and without cause. Suddenly you are aware of something you did not previously know. The intuitive flash has no duration of time at all and comes with certainty of knowledge. All of the mental thinking cannot

come to the same conclusion that the intuitive flash gives to us. It is not a function of the mind, but a function of the soul—of a much higher level of consciousness or awareness. Of course, when the intuitive flash comes, the mind begins thinking about it, “How can that be? Is it right? No, maybe not.” Most often, doubt is created by the mind, and we generally extinguish the intuitive information. The functioning of the soul is being overwhelmed by overuse of the mind.

The second function of the soul level of consciousness is the function of love. Love functions without the use of the mind and is the experience of identifying with another. The love experience causes us to experience the forgetting of the self or the “I.” It is the experience of having no ego. We cannot think our way into love. Love is an experience of the soul. What is called love in the Western societies is really attachment. The concept of, “I love you” gives “I” more priority than “you.” The idea of a lover and a beloved is a complete identification with the object of love. The distinction between love and attachment is that

in attachment, there are always two. A mother, for example, can say that she loves her child very much—this is not love. When a mother has no need for words and only holds her child, that is love. Love is oneness. The mind cannot have love, but human awareness can and does have love. Love, too, comes suddenly from nowhere. The experience of love does not follow any laws of time, space, or cause and effect. Like intuition, love comes and the mind thinks about it, "Maybe it is not real. How can I be sure?" The doubts are created by the mind and the experience of love is extinguished at this level. It continues somewhere else when it is experienced.

The third function of the soul is that of aesthetics, or the ability to see beauty and experience joy. When the soul sees beauty in something, it comes as a flash. Again, if we start thinking about it and analyzing it with the mind, we destroy the beauty also. We have, in human awareness, the same functions occurring all of the time, but we keep them at a lower level because of the use of our minds. When we awake to a level above the mind, we will come

to the experience of a pure spiritual experience of the self. It is when we can remove the cover that we wear, the physical body, that we discover the real self. We can then shed the paraphernalia of the grosser experience to experience the timeless, spaceless, and causeless consciousness.

THE TOTALITY OF ONENESS

Consciousness, awareness, illusion, and reality—we have spoken of many things. And who is the dreamer but the one who looks at the dream from the point of view of the self? When we sleep and have a dream, the entire dream is unreal but the dreamer is not so. I have given you an example of a dream experience wherein even your form can be completely different. When you dream that you are a bird and can fly out of the window into the sky, you would not feel that you saw this. You would know that you flew, that you had feathers and that even though the feathers were not real, the you who had the feathers was real. Suppose that in a similar dream we see a dot of light in two dimensions—we know that we are not the dot itself but are only seeing the dot of light. Conscious experience—consciousness—is always real. In fact, it is the only reality. Consciousness—that which perceives experience—is always real. The entire perceptive experience is real, but not those things which we feel have

been created because of experience. This means that some part of reality is percolating down into the lowest level of awareness, into the deepest illusions. Why can we not have a deep illusion with no reality at all? For the simple reason that if there were no reality, there would be no illusion. If I were to stand in front of a mirror and make an image, I will see it. The image is the illusion. And if I walk away from the mirror, the illusion cannot remain and I am not there. The reality has to be there for the illusion to be an illusion. It will happen at all levels—the illusion-reality does not require levels of awareness. What is it that is continuously going on at every level of experience? Any experience—energy, local, psychic, wakeful, higher wakeful, astral, causal, or total—what is in common to each of these? It is the conscious experience, the conscious experiencer, who does not need any form. If the experiencer is not there, you cannot have any experience. When we become the conscious experiencer who takes this persistent line at every level of illusion, we show up the nature of the illusion. The illusion is made only to

sustain the experiencer. God was not bored and decided to do some creation—illusion was not created just for fun. It wasn't like that. The illusion alone makes the reality just as the experience makes the experiencer. The objects of consciousness alone make consciousness. Reality and illusion are the same; you see illusion only because of the reality. And you can experience as much of the illusion as there is reality. The illusion, therefore, can last only to that extent to which there is reality. This is the nature of reality and truth. Truth is that which never changes—it is the illusions that change. All levels of awareness, experience, words, cosmos, astral planes, causal planes, and mind planes—they all change. Nothing is permanent except the experiencer who receives all of these differing experiences. The experiencer is consciousness and consciousness never changes—consciousness alone is the truth. Therefore, consciousness does not exist without that of which it is conscious—the illusion. It is an intimate relationship, and you cannot have one without the other.

It is, if you recall, our attention which is withdrawn and concentrated upon the self. It is a very simple prescription that I have been giving—to withdraw from the illusion and to reality of the self. It is by attention that we shall attend to the withdrawal from illusion. We use attention for our meditation—to listen and attend. Please understand the illusion of attention and the reality of attention—it is so important. When attention is identified with that to which it is placed, it becomes illusion. When you are attending to it, attention is consciousness and it is real. When the attention is identified with consciousness, which is picking up the object on which it is placed, it is then real. Things and objects are illusions, and we are the reality. Your attention is much like the blind man's long stick—a probe. You, the experiencer, must use your probe of attention to see illusion. If the stick is with the object, it is unreal. If the stick remains with us, it is real. Attention is the secret to meditation. That is why we sometimes place attention on a thing and we think that our awareness of the thing is the same as our attention to it. We then don't

make any progress in meditation. When our attention is placed upon something and becomes the thing, it is illusion and does not give us any results in meditation. Attention, per se, does not determine whether you are meditating or not—it is the direction of your attention. Do not let your attention go out to the object, but let attention remain with us and pick up things to bring them to the eye center. If your attention flows and becomes part of the illusion, it is not meditation. Meditation is the art of reversing the direction of attention from the illusion to the reality of consciousness. If you reverse the direction of your attention to bring you back from things rather than to take you out to things, then you are meditating. There are many methods of meditation. It matters not if you do it by focusing attention upon itself or if you see it as throwing out the thoughts that come to you—it is the reversal of the direction of attention that matters.

Suppose, for example, that I have a problem with the boss in the office, and he is very nasty. I say that because the boss is lacking in proper human relations, I cannot

meditate—he is a problem for my concentration. Understand then, that the problem is here with me, while the boss is elsewhere. The boss is not distracting my attention—it is the problem that is distracting my attention and the problem is with me. Notice that all distractions are within the consciousness here and they should be dealt with here within by using our attention. The problem will manifest within by way of thoughts: Always the thoughts. If there were no thoughts, there would be no distractions. All of the experiences of the world mean nothing—they are not distractions, but that we have thoughts of them. It is whatever you think about that is the distraction. Should a person reject you and you feel badly—feel jilted—the problem is here within and not with the other person. Also, should you like something very intensely, the thought of it is the distraction. That is how distractions pull your attention out and away from you.

Thoughts come to us in two forms. Ninety-nine percent of our thoughts are the verbal thought types. In meditation, you are handling the obstacle of verbal thoughts—they

come in words. When verbal thoughts come, they move in a linear stream, a channel before you. When I speak to you, whatever you think of is spoken inside your head and you hear it. You hear what the mind speaks. It is your consciousness that is listening to the mind speaking. Sometimes, in addition to speaking, you will write also. You can visualize the same word with an image. A majority of these thoughts are accompanied by a form. If you think about a dog, you have both the thought words about the dog and have, as well, a picture of a dog before you. Meditation is the process of taking out these words, thoughts, and images. There is also a one percent chance of having non-verbal thoughts. Non-verbal thoughts are without either words or images. A mental concept can be your thought—for example, jealousy. You may at first hear the word, but you can only know the concept without an image of jealousy. The majority of our thoughts are the verbal thoughts, so let us tackle them. Almost all practitioners of meditation have used the mantra, a repetition of words, to squeeze out thought words. The use

of just a repetition of words other than the mantra becomes just more thought. The repetition of the mantra is, therefore, the first step in meditation. When these words are used, they don't have any meaning for us which will then not allow our attention to be taken outside. The mantra quiets the distractions in replacing the thought words. The mantra words must not have an association of ideas or anything that would distract us. We cannot use our own mantra, one of our own origination, because the words we know all have a meaning or association. You must be given your individual mantra by a guru or Master. If the mantra then has any meaning or association, it is because he gave it to us and it will take us to him. If he is a real Master, the words will take us within.

Some would say there is a magic in these words from the Master, a tremendous magic. There is only as much magic to these words as there is the power of the Master who asks you to repeat these words. How can a Master put magic into some simple phonetic symbols? The Master knows the meaning or association of the words with ideas

and this is the magic. He is using words that relate to an experience He has had at the higher astral or causal self. The word association is within and He goes within. This helps us because of the association of His words, of ideas which give a meaning to the words, then occurs in the mind. The mind in the causal stage is the one universal mind. If the words given have association of idea with the universal mind, then they will have the same meaning for us, although we may not know when we use the words. The same meaning for us and for the Master when we are universal mind. The magic is discovered when we rise to the level of the universal mind. The word association is one of which we are not now aware, therefore, we do not know how the words are magical. What does the Master expect of you? There should be some magic that He expects. He doesn't want you to stop planes overhead or use the magic to know what the other guy is thinking. He wants you to draw your attention within. He wants you to reverse the attention and do meditation and to use the words for communication with Him at a higher level than

the physical. If the Master communicates with you and you get the experience of the Master, you may say, “I had a dream or maybe I visualized the Master.” Even then you may not be sure if you saw the Master or if your mind projected the image of the Master. If you are using the words of the mantra, the image cannot be projected by the mind. That is the magic. You can then remove the mental processes from coming in the way of your withdrawal of attention. They are given that power and they are called magical—not for use outside.

Further, this means that if any negative power comes and speaks to you as the voice of God and says, “This is not your mind, this is the voice of God. Don’t you recognize it? This is your Master’s voice. See His face.” If this happens and you are in possession of the mantra given by a Perfect Master, repeat the words and the voice will disappear. All negative powers then fail. Kal cannot assume any form to deceive you and the words become doubly beneficial when we use them as the grand words

for squeezing out the words of thought as well. That is why the mantra is given by the Perfect Master to be used.

The repetition of words does not always lead to the exclusion of a thought because thought may take another form or mind channel. It is possible for some to have what is called polyphasic or multiple thought channels simultaneously. A yogi from Boston once said that he knew how to stop thoughts. In one minute, I demonstrated to him that when he thought he had stopped thinking, he was only thinking in the higher self. In the same way, when we do our meditation by repetition of words or grand words given by the Master, although we hear these words, the thought channel will jump up one level and begin to comment upon the first. How often have you found yourself thinking of something and then heard a second voice comment? Those of you who repeat words in this manner have likely heard yourself saying, “Now that’s going too fast, now maybe it is time to stop.” When you are trying to still the mind by using the words or think any other thoughts, you’re still bringing in thoughts in a

higher channel. Or it can do another thing. You perhaps have silenced your thoughts and then it may look like your wife or someone else comes as an image. She may begin to talk to you and you don't think that her voice is your thought. It is also your thought. The mind can not only jump from one channel to another, but can create an image and additional thoughts in another channel. It could be misleading, but it is your thought. So the process of gathering your attention back, even with the use of words, is not free from difficulties. You may forget the words and then forget the thoughts; forget the thoughts and then forget the words. With more practice, you will hold onto the words and they will then be joined by thought-words in another channel. Then you can do what is called "mass repetition." This means simply that you fill each and every channel with words as you discover the channels. Fill the channels with the same words. When you are in the process of meditation, repeating the words and you find that there is a commentator in another channel—don't stop! Don't fight with the mind. Make the commentator

also pick up the words that you are repeating. So then you hear two voices. And if a third one comes, make the third one join the words also. Ask the fourth, fifth, etc. to say the words, if necessary. This is done only with the repetition of the words. If you see other people or other entities coming into your thoughts and speaking, make them speak these words of yours also. Have everybody join in and don't stop. This is the art of successful meditation through the repetition of the words.

A second part or stage of the meditation is called Dhyān, or the contemplation of a form. As you would squeeze out words by using other words, so can you eliminate images by fixing on another image. Constantly imagining, visualizing, and contemplating this particular image can take the other images away—this is why a Living Master becomes so important. Other images take you out, take your attention away. The only way or guarantee that we have is that the Living Master, who operates from the third eye center, has an image for us in the outside, physical form that may be useful to us. Therefore, visualize the

image of the Living Master as you have seen Him and concentrate on His image to wipe out all other images. These are the two basic processes to use in order to get back to your attention within. It is then that you can be able to successfully meditate and move to a higher awareness of yourself, of consciousness, and a higher awareness of the illusion outside.

It is here at the third eye center, through meditation, that the journey to totality begins. When you can withdraw your attention fully to the eye center and stop all distractions of either words or images, you will open up a light of the tenth door. You may see beings and entities as you progress, but if you are functioning under the Perfect Master, then you will see the Master in His radiant astral form in which He has initiated you. You will recognize the Master as the same face seen outside, but now He will be much more luminous, more radiant. There, at the astral level, you can talk with Him, walk with Him, and the spiritual journey begins. Your hardest job ends, meditation ends, and the journey begins. The spiritual

journey begins with meditation, and meditation is to go to the railway station. It is the Master, a friend, who says, “Look, I want to take you on a vacation. I will buy the tickets and I have made the reservations, but you must come to the railway station. From there we will go together.” This is the most difficult part for you—to leave the home and come to the station. The rest of the journey is beautiful. It is a long journey to the highest level of consciousness.

Let me tell you this: a Perfect Master does not descend below the astral level. He does not lose awareness below that level. When you see Him in the physical form, He is within you at that time and operating from there. Mechanically, like a puppet, He speaks the words you hear outside. He speaks to you from inside through an image to make you come to the railway station to meet Him. Since we don't have company, it is sometimes difficult to resolve our doubts, fears, and distrust—all of our problems. Once inside, you can spend a lifetime there.

Common sense is very uncommon. We don't move—we don't even start for the station.

There is a story of a man who fell into a well and was stuck there in the water. He didn't drown as he was able to swim, to hang onto a ledge on this side. Then a man came and heard the groaning from the well. He peeped in and saw the man inside the well and he said, "I am going to send you a rope. You take hold of the rope and I will pull you up." The man in the well replied, "But first tell me, why did I fall into this well?" The stranger asked, "Look, don't you think the best time to talk about it is when you are out of the well?" The man inside says, "No, you must first convince me. Why did I fall into this well? How are you sure that I will not drop in again as I am catching the rope?" The man outside said, "Look, there's plenty of time. If you don't like being outside, jump in again, but please catch the rope, as I must be going." The other man had no choice but to say, "OK, stay where you are then. I am going." And so it is with us—we have the possibility by simply withdrawing our attention in

meditation, and there we find the Master or we do not. If He is there, that is fine; and if He is not, we can come back to what we were doing and try again, we are missing out on the whole spiritual journey because we don't try. Once we get on to the company of the radiant form of the Master, we begin a beautiful journey in companionship, rather than loneliness. The Master will then be with us throughout each level of awareness. Not only is He here with us, but He takes us with humility. He will be your friend and companion.

When you reach this stage and the journey has begun, you will find that the lords of other regions which you pass with the Master will pay homage to you with the Master. These lords and kings, rulers of these estates, pay obeisance—and you might then ask, “Why do they honor us?” You might then come to know who you are traveling with. And so, the journey goes from astral to the causal, causal to the spiritual and on to the absolute truth—totality. It is at this last stage of the journey that the discovery is made that the Perfect Master who

accompanied you was not a Master at all—He was God. If God had not decided to become man, He wouldn't have taken us back. Then it is possible to know that we are also God. It is God's own drama of individuation and illusion which created the whole thing. With experience of totality, we then know that there was no Master, there was no seeker, there was no God—it was all one consciousness. The experience of oneness shows us that nothing really ever existed; there was nothing of existence, except one consciousness and its experience. The experience of oneness is that of total consciousness. There is a slight difference between the oneness and totality. Oneness means that there is no other consciousness, only one to experience. Total consciousness means it is a oneness experience in its own unique total experience. We have said that experience and consciousness come together. It is when we find the oneness of the experience that we find the totality of experience. That is how the two words are reconciled. The oneness of the experiencer and the totality of the

experience. The oneness of the Creator and the totality of the Creation. Totality is not a level above all others, above the pure spiritual level. No. Totality means all spiritual regions, all physical regions, all encompassed, all everything. That is why it is total. The total experience of illusion and reality all comes together and there is no experience that is excluded from the total experience. There is no consciousness that is excluded from the oneness of consciousness. It is the totality of oneness—the experience of oneness in totality, a total experience. All experience ever known or ever possible comes together in one consciousness at the same time—which is timeless. When this happens, you have achieved the highest goal that the Masters have promised.

I was initiated by my Master at about the age of ten. I was very young, but I remember His beautiful words. He said, “You have to go within to see where I have initiated you.” He said that He was sharing with me what He had received from His Master. He said, “It’s quite possible that this is not the best way or the way that will take you to the

highest level of awareness. If, in the course of your life, you come across any path or any Master that gives you a better way to take you to a higher level than where I can take you, don't come back here to ask my permission; immediately accept the offer and go ahead, then come back to me to tell me so that I might accept that, too." I have not, in the many years since then, found anything better. I don't say that it's the only way. This is the way I have learned and I am sharing it with you.

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plus a long list of other subjects which cover the entire scope of human experience. The delivery of each presentation is eloquent, motivating and enlightening. By them, we are encouraged to know and understand ourselves in the truest sense of the Socratic theme “KNOW THYSELF.” And the higher knowledge, which results from self-realization, permits us to better understand other people and the world in which we live.

As founder and principle speaker for the Institute for the Study of Human Awareness, Ishwar Puri continues to donate his time and resources to others through this nonprofit organization.