

Part 8 (Chapter III continues...)

1. How bondage happens

Thoughts arise in the mind on their own accord. When consciousness is aware of these rising thoughts, it is known as the mind.

The substratum and essential substance of all that appears in consciousness is consciousness only. Since consciousness is the all in all, which is omnipresent and omnipotent—the activity of throwing up thoughts expands immensely and instantly.

Consciousness is continually self-aware and so, it does not matter if these thoughts or notions arise in it. We however, find ourselves riveted to the appearances we find ourselves amidst—forgetting our essential nature as pure consciousness. There is then a further fall from our original nature when we start conceptualizing ourselves.

When our awareness or attention is disengaged from the inner sense of self and is completely outward, awareness is lost and bondage happens.

The mind is bound by its complete identification with what it contemplates and freed by a return to its original nature.

The firm conviction “I am different from the body, I am the supreme being” destroys ignorance, and one is freed.

2. Mind is the doer

Whatever the mind contemplates, the senses pursue. This is why one has to be very careful with ‘the pursuit of pleasure’ as the mind will pursue them vigorously. There is a difference between what comes and goes naturally and the pursuit of something—especially if we feel that the object is the source of pleasure. The mind at once registers these forms by itself, within itself and then, pursued—all within itself. We may feel that we are in pursuit of something outside but it is the inner fragmentation that is attempted to be restored to fullness again—real jugglery by the mind within itself.

The solution is to do what needs to be done, wholeheartedly, but as duty—this keeps the twin currents of rāga-dweṣha or infatuation or aversion out of action and thereby, out of consciousness. The mind stays whole and undivided and it is in this wholeness that the sense of fullness and joy are experienced naturally. The happiness felt by fragmentation and an apparent

recovery so to say, is riddled with unhappiness and restlessness before, during and after its attainment.

Vāsiṣṭha tells us that that the mind alone is the doer of actions and the mind alone experiences the fruits of actions—not the body.

The objects pursued are forms taken by and in the pursuer in the confusion of their experience as pleasure and pain. Hence one should destroy pursuit of pleasure with all one's might.

A good way is to remain engaged in one's activity, but as duty—without infatuation or aversion, just as a crystal reflects objects non-volitionally.

3. Liberation and delusion

Being established in one's true nature attained by direct experience is liberation. Losing sight of one's true nature by awareness of 'the other'—is delusion.

Let us take a slow down a little and look at how we can establish the sense of self in our true nature.

- 1) The self can only be experienced by the self so we have to first keep any redundant self or ego out of perception, action and fruition. This is done by first really wanting to break free from the ego, and, ongoing vigilance which is non-selective and fully empowered to do what needs to be done in all situations. For this, a life of discipline which enables one to do one thing at one time while disengaging from all *non-essential* or *counterproductive* mental and physical activity is needed.
- 2) All inner activity has to be brought into the same field of awareness as outer activity as they are happening non-selectively. When one sees the outer, one is also aware of the inner and this awareness watches the rising inner thought waves till they fall back into themselves. This vigilance does not involve any suppression, it purifies itself by awareness staying awareness so that it can be self-aware instead of aware of something as other than itself.
- 3) The gathered rays of the mind have to be turned on their source in meditation or self-inquiry.

4. The unconditioned state

The conditioned mind goes from one object to another, whereas the unconditioned intelligence is between 'this' and 'that' and always steady. To see your true nature, you have to first live in such a way that the one significantly reduces the unnecessary activity of the mind as much as possible. Without reduced activity of the mind, it will be very difficult to observe the mind and you will find yourself constantly mixed-up with rising thoughts.

When the mind's activity is able to be observed relentlessly, one can do what needs to be done instead of what the ego would like to do and further weaken the mind.

Then, is it possible to begin direct observation of the mind and self-inquiry.

That state in which there is absence of all concepts and when the consciousness remains motionless but in which there is neither dullness nor inertia—that is the unconditioned state. In the unconditioned state, the 'I' notion, as well as the vision of division cease to be.



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