

## *Self Revealed*

*T*he one Self alone exists eternally. It is ever existent and never nonexistent. It neither begins nor ends, neither expands nor reduces, has no phase or condition, and ever is just as it is. It alone is present always. This is the significance of the Silence of the Maharshi. This is the Silence of Absolute Reality.

The Knowledge of the Self is based upon the seeker of Self-Realization having a firm conviction in the identity, or non-duality, of That and Thou, as expressed in the wisdom of the Upanishads and the teachings of Adi Sankara in such phrases as, “Thou art That,” which reveals the identity of the Self and the Absolute. Therefore, it is imperative for the seeker of the Realization of the Absolute, Brahman, to realize the Self as it truly is. The Realization of the Self is Sahaja, “the natural, effortless, innate,” state. This is our only true state. Any other state is an illusion and the product of delusion. The ultimate nature of illusion is nonexistence.

There is a teaching, which when received, meditated upon, and experienced, results in the destruction of all delusion and all illusion and in the Realization of the Self. It is what unfailingly puts to an end all of the imagined bondage. It is intended for those who know the value of detachment and the importance of Self-Realization and who are endowed with an inward-turned mind. It is the quintessence of Advaita Vedanta. It is the Maharshi’s teaching. This teaching is reiterated here. To receive this teaching and to come to know it is the highest blessing. It is the dawn of Knowledge. To meditate on this teaching, applying one’s own effort to awaken from the illusion of duality and thus gain clarity in Knowledge, is to be in a sublime state of grace. To merge with its meaning is samadhi, which is the direct

experience of absorption in Knowledge. To be so absorbed in it that it is one's very identity and all possibility of duality is effaced, the state in which Knowledge and Being are one and the same, is Self-Realization.

In Truth, Reality is comprehended by Reality itself. This is Self-Knowledge. In the Agama texts, this is referred to as all-comprehensive Knowledge. It is so, not because it is an examination of the endless details of illusory, objective things or of the wide variety of practices and states of mind, but because of its fixed gaze upon the Infinite, which is pure Consciousness and Being, and which is the sole-existent Reality. It is Knowledge of the Absolute Self, which is Reality, one without a second, and apart from which there is nothing else.

In nonduality, meditation may be regarded as by the Self, for there is no other knower, and upon the Self, as there is no object of the meditation. In meditation upon Self-Knowledge, one cannot stand apart from the Self to contemplate it. Oneness, identity with Being, is the essence of the meditation. This is timeless Knowledge that is thought-transcendent. Thoughts are not real, and they cannot reveal what is real. Not retaining any idea or concept, by inquiring into oneself, there is entrance into Self-Knowledge. Therefore, the yogi intent upon the Supreme State, meditates with a singular, undistracted focus on Truth, abandons meandering delusions for the sake of what is sacred, for the sake of Self-Realization, and is absorbed in That which is blissful, unforgettable, illimitable, indivisible, and beyond the body, mind, and ego. That is formless Being.

### **Knowledge and Discrimination**

The state of Self-Realization consists of Knowledge. Reality always is and, by its own nature, is the perfect fullness always. The Self is ever present, for nonexistence of oneself is not known by anyone ever. The Reality of the Self is unalterable at any time, for what changes is not real but an illusion or misperception of what is real, and what truly exists is immutable, there being nothing else to alter it. If it is not completely experienced all the time, such is not due to a change or any modification in the real Absolute Self. It is not due to any external

factors, for such would be only an effect of a precedent, delusive cause. It is due only to ignorance, which actually has no existence of its own and which does not actually belong to the immutable, ever-luminous Self. Nor can it belong to another, for the conception of another is a product of ignorance, the notion of an "I" being the very epitome of ignorance. Though unreal, it seems to veil the Truth, this unreal cause yielding an unreal effect of bondage. Therefore, it is imperative that ignorance be destroyed so that no obscuration of the Self is experienced. Ignorance can be destroyed by Knowledge alone and not by any other means.

Ignorance is the lack of discernment regarding what is real and not, what is the Self and not. Discernment in Knowledge, or discrimination, is the perception of what is real and actually the Self. Discrimination is essential for the destruction of ignorance and the inner revelation of Knowledge. The Knowledge, itself, is transcendent of concepts and thoughts. Discrimination means using Knowledge to realize Knowledge. The essence of the means is the end itself. The end itself appears as the means. By clear discernment, one knows oneself truly. Thus, one knows the Reality as it is. Discerning Knowledge shows the direct, clear path. It shows what Realization is. It is what composes the path. In its true nature, the Knowledge is directly experienced without any intermediary. That is the Knowledge of Consciousness, by Consciousness, itself. Any spiritual advance, in essence, is always one of Knowledge. Knowledge is the essential spiritual experience.

Knowledge is not physical or mental in character. It is not a sensation, word, or idea. Its basis is Existence itself. Its attainment endures, as Existence endures, for it is not dependent upon anything of a transitory character. This is the formless path to the Formless.

### **Happiness and Immortality**

Knowledge reveals the real abiding place of happiness. Those who have cognized the presence of suffering in life and are desirous of removing it permanently search for an answer in Knowledge and do not expect happiness to be found in any worldly manner, such as in sensory things or in the moods and

emotions of a wavering mind. Aspirants who desire to be free of desire, who are not content with mere accidental respites from the suffering caused by ignorance, who are in search of spiritual bliss and peace, who are desirous of understanding how it is that happiness shines forth at times and yearn to have it abide knowingly and permanently, and who understand that the way to accomplish this permanent abidance in happiness is by Knowledge and not by any other means should determine with certainty the source of happiness.

Ascertaining the unitary motivation in life, one becomes free of the idea of multiple motives taking one in multiple directions. Accomplishing this, one concentrates the searching of one's mind in the direction that is truly within. This prompts a yearning for Self-Knowledge and provides the motivation for the inquiry into the Self. The determination about happiness is an inquiry into bliss that leads one into an inquiry into Being-Consciousness, because Being-Consciousness-Bliss is the nature of the one Reality, the one Self. The results of meditation upon, and absorption of, the discerning knowledge regarding the nature of happiness are the steadfast motivation to inquire so as to realize the Self, perception of the one motivation behind all kinds of searching through all kinds of experience, detachment from worldly things and cessation of worldly desire, and steady access to the inner source of happiness.

The Self is, in truth, perfectly full of Bliss. The imperturbable peace, the ineffable and complete happiness, quite beyond any sensation or mode of mind, pervaded by a silent Knowledge of eternal, uncreated Perfection is known as "Bliss," Ananda. To realize this Bliss as it is, one should comprehend the nature of happiness, examining it in three ways: desire, experience, and the source. By knowledge of desire one attains recognition of the basic current underlying all desires, all hopes, and all seeking in all kinds of experience, be such physical, subtle, or mental. With this recognition, one uses that powerful current, in an undiffused manner, to abide as the Self. This recognition causes one to become one-pointed in the quest of the Self. By knowledge of experience, one attains liberation of the experience of happiness from the delusion of limitation of it by

form and the ability to experience Bliss directly without delay. One must merge with That which is Bliss itself, free of duality, for, if the experience of happiness is to be full, it must endure, and, if it is to endure, one must become One with it. By knowledge of the source of happiness, one becomes, and remains, completely detached. Detachment is, itself, freedom and blissful. By such knowledge, one is liberated from the external, the inconsequential, and the unreal, and one comprehends the reason to inquire to know the Self.

The desire for happiness comes from deep within. It is an intuition that Bliss is one's natural state. This Bliss includes peace with no disturbance, freedom with no bondage, and perfection with nothing incomplete. The source of the desire is not from external phenomena of any kind. It is not from objects, circumstances, other beings, and such. There is, therefore, nothing alluring. The desire, itself, is not a bodily sensation. It is not particular thoughts, though particular thoughts constituting images in the mind may appear by which the desire manifests. The desire itself is simply the urge from within to be in the natural state of limitless Bliss. The intensity of the desire is continually surging forth. It cannot be subdued, and the attempt to do so would merely be an unsuccessful one to fulfill it. It can be fulfilled by Self-Realization, which is abidance as Bliss itself. Bliss is of the very nature of the Self, and the Self is truly without any desire. When the Self is not known and, by delusion, the first suffering becomes possible, and when, with the appearance of an "I," the natural state seems lost, that very Bliss of the Self manifests as the intuition of one's natural, true state, and this appears as the desire for happiness.

The experience of happiness should be comprehended in wisdom so that one does not superimpose what is not actually the experience of happiness upon it. The joy felt anywhere, ever, is the shining of the Self. Yet, in ignorance, such is accompanied by superimposition of inert, unreal forms upon the experience. When the experience is accompanied by the delusion of superimposition of forms, it appears as if momentary, limited, and dependent. When the experience is without such delusion, the Self, itself, shines as vast, unlimited Bliss, which is self-existent.

Happiness is always a subjective experience, in which the ego diminishes along with its attendant notions. Thus, because it destroys the ego and those notions by the revelation of their unreality, leaving the ultimate subject unconcealed, inquiry to know the Self yields the most profound happiness. To set the experience of happiness free of limitation, the experiencer must be free of limitation, that is, free of misidentification with form. Then, one abides in infinite, unending, intense Bliss, which is so intense that even the memory of suffering and sorrow is erased. All the superimposed forms are of a sensory or mental character. The experience of happiness is not a sensation, such as seeing, hearing, etc. It is not a thought or a collection of thoughts. It is of a formless nature, shining at the same depth from which the desire springs, at the very source of happiness itself.

The source of the desire and the source of the experience of happiness are one and the same. That source is within. Unrealized, the source manifests as the desire. Realized, it shines as Bliss itself. Realization means Knowledge. Knowledge is direct experience of the Self. Such is abidance at, and as, the very source of happiness. The Self is the source of happiness. Nothing else is the source.

The Self is Bliss. The experience of it is determined by Knowledge. No other factors are involved. Seeing this is the dawn of Knowledge. To conceive otherwise is delusion. Objects, circumstances and events, sensations, and time are not factors determining the desire, the source, and the experience of happiness. The Self, which is alone the source, is always present. Self-Knowledge is the sole factor determining bliss.

Therefore, the search for happiness is actually a search for the Self. The Self is the source of happiness, the “place” in which happiness occurs, and the nature of the experience of happiness. The Self is always present. Self-Knowledge is its revelation and not its creation. The Knowledge of the Self is the blissful Knowledge of Reality. Bliss is Being, which is ever-existent, as Existence itself can never cease to exist. Bliss is, therefore, always present, and all that is required is to know its existence within oneself. All that is required for permanent, profound happiness is to know the nature of Being.

## **Immortality**

Those who are perplexed by observing life and death, who seek a spiritual answer when recognizing the approach of death, and who wish to free themselves of the transitory so as to abide as the eternal, seek the Eternal. Using the desire to be free of death to find their Liberation, they seek the immortality of the Self. They find clarity regarding the desire to endure, and thus turn this innate desire into the desire for Self-Realization. This Realization alone can fulfill that innate desire. Those who perceive transience, who feel the inner urge to find something that does not die, who recognize that everything in the world perishes and therefore what they seek must be found within in a way that transcends what is physical, and who see that it is futile to be attached to that which is only going to pass away sooner or later seek spiritually for immortality. This immortality is to be found in the Self. Abidance as the Self is Knowledge of the Self. An inquiry into the knowledge of immortality reveals that bliss and immortality are the same and that both are realizable by Knowledge. As a result of comprehending this teaching, one is liberated from the illusory connection to the body and to what is mortal. The fusion of the desire for happiness and the desire to exist results in one being endowed with a singular focus upon Self-Realization. This enables one to practice the inquiry to know the Self with the power of undistracted meditation.

Fullness and Perfection, the unceasing Bliss, reside in That which neither rises nor sets, which neither begins nor ceases. The experience of happiness is connected with the experience of eternity, and the desire for happiness is connected with the desire for eternity. No one desires a happiness that will cease, but, rather, the desire is for a happiness that will not cease and is forever. One wishes to exist forever so as to experience that happiness forever. The desire for immortality is as strong as the desire for happiness. The two are inextricably woven together. Just as no one wishes to be unhappy, so no one wishes to cease to exist, though one may wish objective appearances, such as the sensations, the body, and thoughts, to cease. All wish to continue to exist forever. This is an intuition of the true nature of Being.

This desire to exist cannot be fulfilled externally in bodily forms. The true state of Being, when it is unrealized and delusion is present, manifests as the desire for anything to last. Realized, the Self itself is the unborn and the undying, abiding in the state of imperturbable peace, completely detached and not dependent on anything. It is transcendent of the entire universe for all time. The desire to endure springs from the deepest, and it is fulfilled solely by realizing the deepest, which is the eternal Existence of the Self.

Immortality is complete happiness, for the essence of both of them is the same, and only that which is unending is complete. The transitory is not complete, and that which is suffering is not eternal. The Realization of the Self is blissful immortality. It is abidance in and as That which has no beginning or end. The desires for happiness and immortality are the same. They come from the same intuition of the Truth of the Self. Only abidance as the Self, which is the Reality, fulfills both.

The Self is that which has no beginning or end and which is real, or truly existent. It is changeless. Whatever has a beginning, a change, and an end is unreal. This “being unreal” may be understood as being utterly nonexistent or as the Existent entirely misperceived. To experience blissful immortality, one must realize the Existence of the Self as it really is; one must abide as the beginningless and endless, as the changeless. The Knowledge of the Self is the Knowledge of the eternal, the unchanging, and the completely blissful. It is the Knowledge of Reality. This is the only true perception. To see anything else is to see the nonexistent. That is ignorance. Ignorance is composed of assumptions and superimpositions. It is the non-perception of Reality and the misperception of Reality, displaying itself as the non-seeing of real, nondual Being and the hallucination of duality or multiplicity. The knowing of anything, be it gross or subtle, without the Knowledge of the Self, is simply diversified ignorance, or diversified illusion. In the Knowledge of the Reality of the Self, there remains neither multiplicity (or duality) nor anything else.

One formless Existence is, with no differentiation whatsoever. One formless Existence appears as if all this multiplicity.

All the multiplicity is only the one formless Existence imagined as such.

To realize the Truth, for the Truth to be Self-revealed, one should abandon ignorance, multiplicity, the transitory, and the illusion of form, and abide as the formless, which is real, non-dual, and ever-existent. This abidance is Knowledge. The destruction of illusion means the destruction of ignorance regarding the Self, or the destruction of misidentification. Such is the destruction of suffering and the death of death. This is blissful immortality. It is simply the vanquishing of ignorance. By the Truth being revealed within, misidentifications, or superimpositions, are destroyed. By the destruction of misidentifications, or superimpositions, Truth is revealed within.

In Self-realization, all notions about the Absolute and the Self are relinquished. Notions about the Absolute are such as that it is separate from oneself, or objective, and that it is not always present. Notions about the Self are such as that it is endowed with form, minuteness, that it is changeful, material, embodied, defined by thought, in time, or endowed with individuality. For Knowledge, the superimposition of the jiva-hood (concept of individuality) is removed from Atman (the Self) and Isvara-hood (idea of the Lord, of God) from Brahman. Upon such removal of superimposition, or ignorance, one realizes the identity, as declared in the Upanishad, Tat tvam asi, That you are. Sri Ramana Maharshi revealed in his teachings, which are most direct and immediate, that if the Self remains undefined, it is only Brahman, and it alone is. Therefore, one should know the Self.

The Knowledge of Reality, which is the Realization of the Self and the Realization of the Absolute, is attained by the direct path of true Knowledge. By liberating oneself from the misidentification with what is not the Self, one knows the Self. When the real nature of what has been considered as the non-Self is seen, it invariably proves to be nonexistent, for it was dependent upon misidentification in order to even ever appear.

Blissful and eternal is the Real Self. One should regard only that which has no beginning or end, is ever existent, is immutable, is transcendent of all that has form, of all that

changes, and of all that is in time, and which is continuous and undivided as real and as one's true Being. By this Knowledge, one abides in the natural state, which is the only true state of the Self. The Self may be said to call unto itself, as the Sought and the seeker, as the Guru and the disciple, as God and the devotee. It seeks itself as meditation. It reveals itself as inner experience. It knows and abides in itself for blissful eternity. May this blissful, immortal Knowledge shine clearly.

### **The Self and the Body**

For Self-Realization, it is necessary to know the Self as transcendent of bodily form and limitation. By liberating oneself from the ignorant misidentification with the body and its attributes, one abides as the infinite and the eternal.

Those who understand that they seek a Realization that is not a bodily state, and who are neither enamored of nor ashamed of the body, seek to discern the Self's freedom from the body and its attributes. That is, one should know the Self's transcendence of all bodily definition. The results of this knowledge of the Self's freedom from the limitations of the body and its attributes are bliss and peace that are undisturbed by bodily conditions, spiritual freedom from birth, growth, decay, illness, and death, and transcendence of action.

A wise yogi, intent on the supreme Knowledge, remains detached from the body, its attributes, and its activities. He utilizes the bodily form, while it is alive, as an instrument for selfless activity inspired by wisdom, by the desire for Liberation, and by the immensity of Grace, acting with corresponding equanimity, purpose, and devotion. The bodily activities are used as an instrument that expresses the divine. By contemplation on its wondrous workings, the body may be viewed as a reminder of the supreme Consciousness by which it appears, as does appear the entire universe. The emphasis is placed, not on the reminder, but on that of which one is reminded. Yet, the yogi abides unmoved by pleasure and pain, motion and inactivity, and birth and death. For invariable Bliss, one must know one's freedom from the body and all bodily attributes. Knowledge is

Realization. It is neither something done nor is it any bodily transformation, but it is the comprehension of what is true.

The Self is formless, birthless, deathless, and immutable. It is eternal and infinite Being-Consciousness-Bliss. Realization of this results from liberating the Self, by the essential discrimination inherent in the inquiry, from the illusory bondage of ignorance, which is composed of the delusive assumption that the Self is something other than the true Being that it is. It is possible to realize this true Being only if one is thoroughly free of the ignorance that consists of misidentification with the body, for a body has form, birth, death, change, does not last forever and is not infinite. As long as there is any misidentification with the body, the real nature of the Self will not be known, or the Self will be misconceived in terms of the limitations of the body. When such misconception is relinquished by a deep inquiry into one's actual Being, the nature of the Self is self-evident.

The Self is changeless Existence. The body changes continuously, even if this change is noticed only after some time. How, therefore, can Existence be equated with the body?

The Self is birthless. There is no time when it is not. There is no experience, no knowledge, and no memory of nonexistence or of the commencement of existence. The body has a birth. How, therefore, can Existence be equated with the body?

The Self is immutable. There is no increase or decrease in Existence. The body has growth and decay. How, therefore, can Existence be equated with the body?

The Self is deathless. There is no time when Existence is not, and nonexistence cannot even be imagined without oneself existing to imagine so. The body is transient and is subject to death. How, therefore, can Existence be equated with the body?

The Self is partless, indivisible, homogeneous, pure Existence. This Existence is beyond its name. The body is a multiplicity of elements and organs, a conglomerate of cells, apart from which there is no entity that can be referred to as a "body." The body is matter. The Self is immaterial. How, therefore, can Existence be equated with the body?

The body is composed of matter, the very same that is contained in the food it consumes. Why should one regard that

as oneself? Before eating it, it is not regarded as oneself. After eating it, it is, by delusion, regarded as oneself, provided one does not regurgitate it. After it passes along the system of digestion, it is certainly not regarded as oneself. Similar is it with the parts of the body. They are regarded as oneself only so long as they are connected with the rest of the body. The misidentification is, thus, arbitrary, and delusively associated with proximity to the rest of the form of the body. How, therefore, can Existence be equated with the body?

The Self is not momentary, but permanent without a moment's interruption. Its Existence does not cease even in the absence of perception. The body is momentary. It endures but for one lifetime. It appears only in the moments of perception. How, therefore, can Existence be equated with the body?

The Self is nonobjective and ever the knower. The body is objective and always only the known. How, therefore, can the Self's Existence be equated with the body?

The Self is attributeless Existence. The body is known by its perceived attributes, apart from which there is no body. How, therefore, can the Self's Existence be equated with the body?

The Self is continuous. It does not commence at birth, and it does not cease at death. Existence does not have the attribute of "living" or "dead." Existence and the Knowledge of Existence are full and not partial. Knowledge of Existence is not sporadic and does not move about to different parts. The Existence of the Self is the constant background of the body's appearance and disappearance, and, likewise, of the waking and other states of mind. The body is discontinuous in several ways. For the body, there is life and death. The experience of the body is sporadic in perception, with only one, or a few, parts, limbs, or senses experienced at any one time. Never is one aware of all of it at once. The body appears only in the waking state of mind. How, therefore, can the Self's Existence be equated with the body?

The Self is nondependent Existence. It is, regardless of the senses and corresponding thoughts. It is directly and immediately known. It is not known through something else. The body is entirely dependent on sense perception in order to appear. The senses depend upon the mind. There is no body apart from

these. How, therefore, can the Self's Existence be equated with the body?

The body has no sense of "I." The "I" belongs to Existence. When the "I" sense is confounded with the body, such is delusion, and the Self is then assumed to be a bodily being or an embodied entity. There is no actual experience of being a body. There are only sense perceptions, which are misconstrued in delusion. There is actual Existence, with its own unbroken continuity, the invariable, constant knowledge that you are. There is no memory of being a body. There is the timeless knowledge of Existence. Memory is always only of something objective, yet the object itself does not exist. So, the memory of it is also unreal and cannot actually exist. The body is an illusion in time and space. The Self is not in time and space. How, therefore, can the Self be equated with the body?

The notions of an existent body and that the "I" is the body are only delusion, utterly dependent upon the conception of such. The Self is self-existent and not a notion or a product of a concept. The Self is naturally, without effort, thought, notion, or becoming anything other than what it is, the "I."

Therefore, the Self is not the body. The Self is bodiless, immutable, indivisible, unborn, undying, indestructible, ever-existent, continuous, formless, partless, beyond the elements or matter, nondependent, and self-existent forever. This is beyond all doubt.

The Self is motionless and actionless. The body moves and acts. The Self is not affected by the actions of the body. It does not act, move, or change by the results of the motions and actions of the body. Abidance in this Knowledge alone constitutes the truly still or actionless state. This alone is truly Liberation from karma, which can never be achieved within the context of the "I am the body" notion and its corollary concept, "I am the doer." All physical experience, from birth to death, inclusive of everything between, is only for the body. The Self is free of all of it and without birth or death. The body is inert and not endowed with Consciousness. The Self is Being-Consciousness and is never nonexistent or insentient. Being-Consciousness plus bodily definition is called "life," which, not

being eternal or true, has a death. In delusion, one thinks that the Self, of the nature of Being-Consciousness, perishes, rather than that the bodily definition, being with a start and false, cannot last. Being-Consciousness, as it is purely, is bodiless and has neither life nor death. In Knowledge, this is clearly evident. Thus, one who abides in this Knowledge of the Self abides in imperishable Bliss.

The Self is not located in a body. It is not in space. It is not located in relation to a body. That is, it is not in or out of a body. It is simply undefined by the body. The Self, being space-like but not in space, has no location. Being is neither a particular part of the body nor confined inside it. If it were a spot or in a spot, the spot could be pointed out, and that very form would be the Self or would contain the Self, but, then, the Self would neither be existence nor real, neither infinite nor eternal, and there would be no liberation from bondage. Then, the very declarations of the wise would become false. This result and its causes are absurd. If the Self would be located throughout the body or in a bodily spot, such location would be objective. The Self, though, is nonobjective, and the nonobjective cannot have an objective location or other objective attributes. If the Self were located in the body, when that part of the body underwent change or decay, so would Existence itself. If that part of the body would be lost, the Self would be lost; if forgotten, then forgotten. The Self, which is real Being, is never modified, is always present, and is never forgotten. If the Self would be located throughout the body, Existence would diminish and change as the cells of the body change. If one part were lost, even a single hair or cell, Existence would diminish accordingly. This, though, is not so, for the Self is changeless and ever undiminished. The Self is not located in the body. The entire assumption of being located in a body, as if the body were a container of the Self, is not true.

The perception, or idea, of a body and the notion of location appear in the mind, which is in, and illumined by, Consciousness, which is beyond all that. The known occurs within the knowledge of the knower, which is of the nature of Consciousness, and not one bit otherwise. Therefore, the Self is

not the body and is not in the body. There is no birth or death for the Self, and the Self does not enter into or exit out of the body. It is not in relation to a body. It is not in the body now, nor is it out of the body at some other time. It is locationless.

The Self ever is as it is, with no modifications. What it is, it is always. The body, with its transience and mutability, is not an attribute of the Self. The Self does not possess a body, for, otherwise, it would always have it, which is not so. Possession of a body is not in the nature of the Self, and the Self, being Reality, never changes its nature. The Self does not have a body, as possession implies division, or the duality of the possessor and the possessed and posits their relation. Being is nondual and indivisible. Existence is Absolute and infinite. It is not in relation to anything. There is not anything to which it could have a relation, as a finite object might. The Self does not have a body, as an attribute can only be for a “thing,” and pure Existence is not a thing. The Self does not have a body. In this lies its great freedom.

The body does not possess, or have as an attribute, the Self. The attributes of the body are not the attributes of the Self. The body is a form. The Self is formless. The formless does not have a form in any manner. The Self is infinite and space-like, ever the same, and bodiless. The infinite does not wear a body, and the space-like has no form. The body does not possess the Self, and the Self does not possess a body.

May there be the conclusive Knowledge that the Self is not the body, the Self is not in a body, and the Self does not have a body. Know the Self to be bodiless. Thereby, abide as the Self, the bodiless Absolute. May this Knowledge shine steadily.

### **The Self and the Senses and Prana**

Those who would know the Self by Knowledge cease to regard the senses as the measure of Reality and of the Self. This non-sensory Knowledge reveals the Self's freedom from the senses and sets one free of the limitations of the senses. Those who know that there is neither permanence of the senses nor happiness via them, who do not equate pleasure with happiness or pain with sorrow, but recognize that happiness and sorrow are determined by Knowledge of the Self and ignorance respectively,

and who desire to experience the spiritual Truth beyond the senses, take recourse to the inquiry to know the Self. By such inquiry, the Knowledge that the Self is innately transcendent of the senses and not bound by the senses in any manner shines. The Knowledge of the Self is itself free from the limitations of the senses, as is the Self itself, and those who abide in this Knowledge remain unmoved by whatever happens to the senses. By the Knowledge of the Self, which is the Knowledge of Reality, one brings about the destruction of the foundations of the delusion of believing in the existence of an external world.

The wise yogi knows that the senses do not and cannot provide happiness, that attachment to the senses or their objects is bondage, that the senses are neither bliss nor immortal, and that the purpose of life is not fulfilled by any kind of sensory experience. Such a one knows that Liberation is not any kind of sensory experience and that Realization is not a particular kind of sensation, not an increase of sensation, and not a decrease of sensation. One's freedom from the senses must be firm and natural for there to be Realization. This necessitates the Knowledge of the Self's transcendence of the senses.

The Self is Infinite Consciousness, unchanging Being, perfectly full Bliss. Vast and space-like, formless and unconditioned, it is. Of immense, silent peace, ever-shining and motionless, it is. Within it, without actually occurring, there is imagined the realm of objective experience, manifesting as the world perceived by the five senses. There appear five kinds of senses with their corresponding kinds of sense objects. Within the realms of the senses, a great variety of sensations and an apparently uncountable number of sense objects arise. These are the sense experiences of living beings, which are differentiated from one another by means of misidentification with the body. Like the surface ripples and foam on the waves in the ocean of Consciousness, like clouds in the sky of pure Being, are the senses. The Self is Being-Consciousness. To confound the Self with any or all of the senses, in any way, is ignorance. Freedom from misidentification with the senses is Knowledge. Since Knowledge is Liberation, and since one seeks to know Reality and not create it, for it always is, therefore, one should discern

clearly the Self, its innate freedom from the senses, and its freedom from all the limitations of the senses.

The Self is singular and indivisible Existence. The senses are multiple and divided. The senses themselves are objective, the known, just as the sense objects are. The Self is nonobjective, ever the knower, of the nature of Existence-Consciousness. So, how can the senses be considered to be the Self?

The Self is changeless, continuous, permanent Existence. The senses are changeful, discontinuous, and impermanent. The senses are lost, dulled, or altered in death, old age, and illness. The senses change during the lifetime, from infancy until the end of the body. The senses are changing all the time, transforming into dull and acute states, subject as they are to the three guna-s—the qualities of tamas (inertia), rajas (agitation), sattva (tending toward the light of Knowledge). Each sense takes a turn being predominant and fades due to a change of the sense organ, the mental attention, and similar factors. The senses appear only in the waking state. With each state of mind, they change. Upon the death of the body, which is not the Self, the senses are lost entirely. Rarely are all the five senses active, or experienced, simultaneously, but Existence is always wholly present. The senses are just a momentary function. The Self is steady, self-existent Reality, permanent, and not a function of some other thing. It is Being and not a doing or activity. The Self is not determined by any conditions and is itself without any conditions whatsoever. The senses, though, are determined by conditions such as the condition of the sense organ, the environment, the experience of which is the result of the interaction of what appears to have become split in Consciousness—that is, the object and the instrument used to know it—and the mental attention given to or removed from the senses. From a higher view, in the one mind, all three mutable factors appear, determining the five sense experiences. Partless Existence, which is the Self, is beyond the changeful appearances in the mind. So, how can the senses be considered to be the Self?

The senses are part of the body. The body is perceived only by the senses and has no reality apart from them. Each illusion depends on the other. Such illusion is like the painting of

a wall that is painted on the wall depicted when the wall itself has not yet been built. The Self is bodiless and is not a part of the body or associated with a location in relation to a body, unlike the senses. So, how can the senses be considered to be the Self?

The senses depend on the Self. The Self exists as it is, innately nondependent on the senses. This is the highest state of detachment. As pure Being, one is always detached from the senses and, thus, to the whole world.

The Self is not the senses and is not experienced by the senses. The senses are capable of perceiving sense objects only, and the Self is not a material object. The sensory experience is only that of sensation, and not of a separate sense and object. The Self is not a sensation or a product of sensations. So, how can the senses be considered to be the Self?

The Self is the eye of the eye, unseen by the eye. This Self, which is formless Being-Consciousness, cannot be sensed and does not have senses. It is not a sensing entity, conceived as a nexus of all the sensations, but ever unalloyed Consciousness. The Self is all-seeing but eyeless. In truth, the senses do not exist. They are only a figment of the mind, which is in the infinite Consciousness. Upon the substrate of the Self, which is Being-Consciousness, the senses, which are but the thought of them, appear. The sense objects do not separately exist, but appear only to and in the senses. The senses vanish, leaving the substrate unaffected and all alone. The substrate is Reality, which is immutable. There is no actual creation of the senses in that Consciousness. By this Knowledge, one remains identified as the Self and not misidentified with the senses, which are unreal. Let there be this steady Knowledge. May the unsensed Knowledge of the Self, free of all the limitations of the senses, abide.

Those who yearn to go beyond the illusory boundary of life and death, who desire to be beyond the limitations of life, and who do not wish to suffer death clearly discriminate between Existence, or Consciousness, and prana, or life energy. "Prana" signifies the life-energy, that which seems to animate the body and the senses, without which they are inert. Prana in various combinations with the body, senses, and the mind is

that which is responsible for the experiences called “physical” and “subtle.” Without such animating energy, there is no bodily or sensory experience, for a corpse has no experience and its sense organs, though intact, are not animated and do not produce any experience. The result of inquiry to know the Self is abidance as pure Being-Consciousness, which transcends the animate and the inanimate, and which never dies, and this is abidance in the invariable state of the Self.

As long as one is identified with the prana, there will be the differentiation of living and dead, and the one Being which ever is will appear veiled. When this misidentification is destroyed through Knowledge, this duality vanishes. Prana undergoes fluctuations from birth to death, in health and sickness, and varies according to lifestyle and activities. Being does not fluctuate. So, how could prana be equated with the Self?

The animating prana is objective. It is something experienced and not the Consciousness that knows it. It is not being alive that enables one to be conscious, but Consciousness that knows the state of being alive. So, how could prana be equated with the Self?

The life-energy seems to locate itself throughout the body. The Self is not located in a body or spatially in any manner. So, how could prana be equated with the Self?

The prana functions, animating the body and the senses in various ways. The Self, which is Consciousness, remains as its witness. The Self is the immovable Reality of Existence and not a function. So, how could prana be equated with the Self?

The prana does not remain eternally as it manifests, but, at some time, it is absorbed. It may be said to be absorbed into the great, universal prana, which in turn is absorbed in the Absolute. It may be said to be absorbed in the mind, which in turn is absorbed in the Absolute. The Self is itself the Absolute and is never absorbed into anything. That which actually exists always is. That which can be absorbed, or which has a beginning and an end, is an unreal appearance, and ultimately does not exist. The Self exists, and there is nothing else into which it can be absorbed. So, how could prana be equated with the Self?

The prana depends upon the Self. The Self does not depend upon the prana. There are ways, such as those known by some yogis, to alter the prana or its functions. The Self is unalterable Being and immutable. One cannot modify Being, and one cannot stand apart from Being to attempt to modify it. So, how could prana be equated with the Self?

The life energy is ultimately transient, whether viewed as one's individual bodily life-energy or as all the manifest life energy. The Self is that which is eternal. There is no time when one begins or ceases to exist. This Self, which is Absolute Being, ever is as it is. So, how could prana be equated with the Self?

Therefore, the Self is not to be identified with the prana, the life-energy, and does not bear the prana as an attribute. The Self is free of prana and all that manifests due to prana. May there be this unwavering Knowledge. May there be this immortal Knowledge of the timeless Self and Liberation from the illusions of life and death. May this eternal Realization be.

## **Reality and the World**

In as much as the view of the world is a mirror image of the view of oneself, as the identity of oneself determines the definition of the world, as the seer himself appears as the seen, the "I" as "this," for the purpose of knowing Reality without veils, one should inquire to know oneself, giving up the objective outlook as well as the ego to whom it belongs. Those who are detached from the world and the senses, who are not identified with the body, who perceive the transient nature of all in the world, and who yearn for the direct experience of the Knowledge of Reality as it is should so inquire. A wise yogi views the world as transitory, as inert, and as a passing dream. Such a one never expects the world to provide him with what is his: happiness, identity, and reality. To transcend it is to remain blissful, at peace always, and free in the Knowledge of the unreality of the world and the Self's freedom from that illusion. This is the perception of Reality free of the forms of illusion. Abidance in worldless Being, true perception, transcendence of the world, limitless freedom unaffected by anything of the world, direct

experience of indivisible Existence, and true experience beyond debate or doubt are for those who inquire to know the Self, which is the sole-existent Reality.

By the term “world” is meant all that is perceived, all objects, all activities, all events, the forms of living beings, anything in space and time, and anything seen, heard, touched, or sensed in any manner. Transcendence of the world is Liberation from bondage and suffering in relation to all of this. Abandonment of the objective outlook constituting the world yields the perception of Reality as it is. Such cannot be by anything of the world, but only by Knowledge of the Self, the Reality that is. Where could one go in the world that one would be beyond the world? Yet one’s real Being is ever beyond the world, and Knowledge reveals its nature.

The Self is changeless and permanent. The world is changeful and impermanent. Each object has a creation, a changeful duration, and a destruction. This is true for all objects and for the world as a whole, without exception. The Self is permanent with no creation or destruction. The perception of the world depends on the changeful senses. A change in the senses brings a change in the object, the world, perceived. The Self does not change as the senses do, for it is immutable Being and the unchanging Witness of all the changing senses. A change of mode, or state, of mind yields a corresponding change in the senses and the perceived world. The Self is not changed, being immutable Existence and Consciousness, and the witness of the mind as well as the senses.

The Self is one, partless, and indivisible. The world is composed of innumerable parts and divisions. The Self has no form, and is purely formless Being. The world is composed of forms, without which there is no world. There is no formless world. The Existence of the Self is not sensorially perceived, but is known more interiorly. The world is perceived only through the senses. The Self is ever the subject, the knower. The world is only the object, the known. Therefore, the Self has no connection with the world, as the Self shares none of its characteristics or qualities. It is not defined by the world or worldly things. It is not bound by the world or anything of the world. It does not depend

on the world in any way in order to be. That which is true of the Being and Consciousness of the Self is also true of the Bliss of the Self, these three not being actually three, but one and the same thing. This discernment yields freedom from the illusory bondage when the world is apparently perceived as well as when it is not so. By such Knowledge, one realizes that the Self is not of the world and is not in the world. The Self is not produced by anything of the world, shares none of its limited qualities, and is not an object within it, for the Self is neither a body nor located in a body.

Entertaining and debating various concepts or opinions regarding the world can be only so long as there is no clear discernment of the one who perceives the world. Once there is deeper Knowledge regarding the Self, the questions about the world's nature no longer arise. The Realization of the Unborn is the Realization of no-creation. In the absence of this Knowledge, there may arise confusion such as, "If it is unreal, why does it appear; if it is unreal, why does it not disappear?" The confusion is rooted in the delusive supposition that the mere senses are the determination of reality, and the knower is conceived as a sensory being engaged in an experience that is of the same nature as himself. A deep inquiry into the nature of the knower, himself, will result in an absence of a defined, separate experiencer and thus of the world, the supposedly experienced. This yields the revelation of the one infinite Existence of the Self. The meaning of "All is the Self," or "All is Brahman," is comprehended in this nondual Knowledge without a trace of anything other.

To experience a world is to conceive it. The world is not actually a perception, but a conception. To conceive, or experience, a world, one must first consider oneself as some kind of body or as in the body, the body as existent, and the body as being somewhere. It is not the truth, for such is only imagined in the mind. For this illusion of the world, one must also regard the sensations not as sensations or modes of mind, but as endowed with the duality of inner and outer, with the apparent object portion of the sensation considered as separate from the knowing aspect. Since the body is not oneself, and the Self is not

in a body, the world is not around oneself. “Around” is imagined within the mind and is not all around.

The world is constituted solely of sense perceptions, usually from a supposed bodily location. There is no world apart from these. So, the world is not external. The external is merely a conceptual interpretation of the sensations. The senses are known only by and in Consciousness. So, what is thought of as external is entirely in Consciousness, which is free from the senses. The “external world” is a mere notion in Consciousness. Within the notion appears the whole external world. It is one notion fragmented into the imagining of endless objects that are assumed to exist. The one notion depends on the false “I am the body” belief. The world is a mere notion, an illusory appearance in one’s own mind. Therefore, it is called maya, illusion. Illusion is that which is not.

Since the world is unreal, it can offer no bondage. Being unreal, it does not actually come to be. It is for this reason that maya is said to be beginningless. The Reality does not bring forth the unreal. Being nondual, the Reality does not bring forth anything real. Ever-existent Being, itself unborn, creates not at all. The unreal is also not born, for it does not exist. Being unreal, it does not disappear, anymore than the dream world disappears for the dream character when one awakens from both.

The world appears in Consciousness alone. It is known by the knower. It is known in the knower. It has no existence apart from the knower, which is pure Consciousness. The world appears in Consciousness, by the power of Consciousness, is composed of Consciousness, and is known or experienced by Consciousness. All of it is just Consciousness. It has not the least degree of any other existence.

One Being-Consciousness exists everywhere always. The one Self experiences itself everywhere always. It, itself, is just thought of as a “world,” though there is really no such differentiated thing. Consciousness is the world, space, time, matter, motion and events, the moments and the eons, things and people, the animate and the inanimate, the moving and the still, the large and the small, the living and the dead, the far and the near, the atoms and the galaxies, the root and the flower, the cause

and the effect, and all else. The one Self is all. The one Self appears as all this universe. The universe appears in the Self. The Self, being formless and infinite, does not appear in it. The Self appears as the universe, but really undergoes no modifications. It always abides as the perfectly full Void of Being. If the world appears, it and its knower are only the Self. If there is no appearance, there is only the Self. In the Knowledge of the unalterable, ever-same Reality, the Self alone is. Thus, in Reality, there is no question of a world ever being created or ever appearing. For whom would it appear, as there is no second self but only the One Self ever?

The Self is the seer of the world. The world does not see the Self. Existence is Consciousness, and the Self is That. There is no existence apart from Consciousness, the Self. Realizing the Truth of the Self, one sees that there is no world. It is not that the seer of Truth does not see the world, as if this Knowledge were a sensory state, but rather the seer of Truth sees that there is no world. The seer of Truth is the Self, and the Self is indivisible, nonobjective, without exterior, undifferentiated, and One without a second. Consciousness, infinite and undivided, sees none but itself. That which is not Consciousness does not see at all. Lacking being, it also lacks knowing. As the Self, one does not see the world, and the world does not see oneself.

In nonduality, Being alone is real. The world has never come to be, so it is said to be completely unreal. The world never was, is not, and never will be. The uncreated, unmodified, worldless Absolute alone is. That alone is, and That you are. The Real ever is, and the unreal has never come to be. The conclusion about this is known by the knowers of Truth. May this indestructible Knowledge abide always. May this nonobjective, formless Knowledge be. May that Knowledge, in which Reality comprehends itself, be.

### **The Self and the Mind**

Inquiring to liberate the Self from every misidentification with thought requires thought-transcendent Knowledge. Such is the revelation of the Self, beyond all of the mind. Initially, this may be the revelation of the Self as the pure, immutable,

witnessing Consciousness. In Realization, the Self, which is indivisible Consciousness, alone is. Those who are introspective, observing the changeful nature of thoughts and states of mind and desiring to be free of the mind, are intent upon discerning the inconceivable Self that is not to be misidentified with thought. Liberation from thought means abidance as pure Consciousness. Such abidance is freedom from all states of mind and their content. It is awakening from this waking-dream. It is the Realization of that which is not a state.

“Mind” signifies all thought, and Liberation from the mind means freedom from all thought of every kind. There are innumerable permutations of thought. Some deal with the senses and some are associations with the impressions of the same. Some are more subtle, and some are abstract thoughts. Some are memories. Some may appear as emotions of various kinds. Thoughts that are clearer, which are sattvic in character (of the nature of sattva), point toward Knowledge. Self-Knowledge is liberation from all of them.

The mind may be understood in terms of its aspects, such as manas and buddhi (mind and intellect), or as manas, buddhi, and citta (mind, intellect, and memory). Inquiring to know the Self, one can see that thought is a power capable of appearing in multiple ways or permutations with variegated content. The same power of thought may appear individually, in patterns, in modes, or as states of mind. Knowing this, one can take Sri Ramana Maharshi’s direct approach of liberating the Self from the mind all at once.

A wise yogi frees himself from the mind, from thought, realizing that all duality, which is all experience other than the Self, is a creation of the mind. Such creation is due to thoughts and is composed of thoughts. Abidance free from thought requires one to abide free of dualistic notions regarding the mind itself. The unmoving Self does not travel through the mind, and thought does not drag the ever-still, transcendent Self about. The Self is silent and untouched, endowed with the supreme, solitary power of Reality. It does not contend with thought, as if thought were an enemy with its own power. Self-inquiry entails freedom from the pursuit of delusive thoughts that, in the form

of tendencies or vasanas, form the samsara. Self-Knowledge is not merely a blank mind in which thought activity is temporarily stilled. For Self-Realization, one should know the Self's freedom from thought and the true nature of the mind. Inquiring, "For whom is this thought? For whom is this mind?" one should seek Knowledge of the Self, beyond all mental modes and states. Inquiring, "Who am I?" one should know true Being, interior to any thought, more formless than any thought, transcendent of all thought, and ever free from all thought.

The Self is changeless. Thought is changeful. How, then, can thought pertain to the Self? How, then, can thought define or confine the Self?

The Self is singular, stateless and modeless. Thought is multiple, appearing as thoughts, modes, and states. How, then, can thought pertain to the Self? How, then, can thought define or confine the Self?

The Self is homogenous. Thought has many aspects. How, then, can thought pertain to the Self? How, then, can thought define or confine the Self?

The Self is continuous Being-Consciousness. Thought is sporadic, and each thought is momentary. How, then, can thought pertain to the Self? How, then, can thought define or confine the Self?

The Self does not rise and has no disappearance. The rise and fall of thought can be observed by anyone who meditates with depth. How, then, can thought pertain to the Self? How, then, can thought define or confine the Self?

Thought, being objective, is the known. Thought has no knowing power of its own. The Self is the knower, the silent Witness of all thought. The Self is Consciousness, which is the knower, and the mind is the "field." Since this is always so, how, then, can thought pertain to the Self? How, then, can thought define or confine the Self?

The "I" knows thought; thought does not know the "I." I am the unknown Knower of all knowing; this is true Knowledge.

None of the attributes of thought are those of the Self. How, then, can thought pertain to the Self? How, then, can thought define or confine the Self? The Self is free from thought.

Thought can never conceive of the Self. The Self is never an object of thought. Thought always has an objective element in it. The Self is ever nonobjective. There is no such thing as a nonobjective thought, as the thought itself is always known and it is always the thought of something, be it gross or subtle. The Self is never an object and can never be the known. It is always Consciousness itself. Therefore, the Self is ever of the nature that is transcendent of thought. It is not known by thought, which means it is ever undefined by thought and cannot be bound by thought, no matter what the thought is.

What is called “the mind” is only the combination of thought and Consciousness. That combination is an illusion. It is the illusion of combining the ever formless with form. Consciousness is the Self and cannot truly be combined with thought, for the Self is formless and will not change its nature, is infinite and will not be added to, and is real Existence that cannot be combined with false appearances any more than the rope can be combined with the imagined snake, or the sand with the water of a mirage.

What is casually termed “mind” is only a collection, or movement, of thought. It does not exist as such, and it is not an independent entity. If thought is absent, there is said to be no mind present. Thought itself is inert. When the knowing Consciousness is confounded with thought, there arises the notion of a separate knowing entity called the “mind.” Consciousness is the knowing aspect and is not a thought. No thought is Consciousness itself. Consciousness is the Self, and thus the Self is free from thought and free of the mind.

All that appears is only thought: the world, the body, the senses, subtle experience, and of course, thinking, itself. All are known in thought only. Thought, itself, is experienced as if all these things. All are only thought. Thoughts join only to other thoughts and affect only other thoughts. Thought appears as ideas, and thought itself appears as the things that concern those ideas. Thought cannot join with the Self and cannot affect the Self. Therefore, thought cannot bind. Thoughts affect only thoughts. The preceding thoughts generally determine the succeeding thoughts. The apparent interaction of things upon

thought and thoughts upon things is entirely a play of thought, which is merely thoughts affecting thoughts.

Thought itself projects itself into itself. There is no “in” or “out,” for such are only mere notions. It is just like the appearance of a dream thinker in a dream. There appear to be his perceptions of the objects and his interior thoughts, be they conceptions, associations, emotions, memories, etc. The whole of the dream, inner and outer, is actually just composed of thought appearing in various ways. As there are truly no internal and external aspects in a dream, though in the dream such appear, so it is with thought now in the waking state in which this writing is probably appearing.

Even the largest thought occupies no space, and the longest one endures for no time. Therefore, all that is conceived is maya, just as one thinks, envisions, dreams, and such with no respect to physical things, such as when thinking of a large mountain or dreaming of being in another place, without one’s head enlarging or one’s body traveling to those places or those things being altered in any way.

All is thought, inclusive of the large and small, now and then, this and that, you and I, he and she, here and there, past, present, and future, all things, all actions, all occurrences, life and death, and all that is considered the universe-individual-God. The Self transcends all this, for it is free from thought.

Thoughts move in modes. Innumerable thoughts and modes are contained in states. Including all of them are three states: waking, dreaming, and deep dreamless sleep. In the first two, thought projects itself into itself, and the content of thought changes according to those states. The waking state is equal to the dream. In both, the same multiplicity manifests. In both, subject and object appear. The same kinds of mental functions appear in both states. In both, the same tendency to identify as a particular character with a particular body exists. Cause and effect are present in both states. Both are characterized by a nonperception of Reality and a misperception of Reality, which are equivalent to not seeing a rope and imagining it to be a snake. These two states, waking and dreaming, are mutually contradictory. Everything experienced in a state changes within

the state itself or changes with the changing of the state to another state. Only Being-Consciousness remains the same, unaffected by the changes of such experiences and the change of state. So, what is present in the waking state may be absent in the dream state, and what is present in a dream is absent in waking. What appears within a state is that state of mind itself. The dreaming state of mind itself appears as all that is experienced in the dream. So, too, is it with the waking state experiences. The state of mind itself composes all that appears within it.

In the state of deep sleep, there is an absence of waking and dreaming thoughts and their content. There is, therefore, no world, no body, no senses, no ideas, no memories, and no “person” existing in the deep sleep state. Yet, Being-Consciousness still is, and that Being-Consciousness is the Self. The Self is, even in the absence of thoughts in deep sleep, as unaffected by the absence of all else as it is when all else appears in the other two states. Deep sleep is characterized by the presence of the cause but the absence of the effect. Therefore, it may be said that the unmanifest seeds of, or potential for, ignorance is present, but not the effects of such ignorance. In deep sleep, there is only the nonperception of Reality, while the projection, or hallucination, of multiplicity and form is not. The Self, Being-Consciousness, is free of both cause and effect. In Self-Knowledge, neither the veiling of the Reality nor the illusion of multiplicity, neither the nonperception of real Being nor the misperception of existence, exists. The Self is itself and knows itself as it is.

From Being-Consciousness comes deep sleep. From deep sleep comes dream, from dream comes waking. Each succeeding state occurs within the preceding one. All occurs within Being-Consciousness, and that is what one truly is. So, it is better to say that the states, and the worlds that appear in them, are in one’s Self than that one is in those states. Being beyond the states, the Self is called “the Fourth,” yet it is only one and in its own state ever. The three states are seen as three only so long as Consciousness is not known as it is. As dream is to deep sleep, emerging but within it, forming yet not really so, for it is within the formless, so is the waking state to Turiya (the Fourth), which

is actually pure Consciousness. Turiya, or the transcendent state, is just pure Consciousness, which, being beyond the three states, is beyond the notion of a “fourth state.” So, it is also called Turiyatita, “beyond the fourth.” It remains as the one Existence, which is in, and which itself is, its natural, innate state ever.

The three states are not consistently present. The states are passing appearances. There are no aspects or phases of homogeneous Consciousness, which is partless. As it is Being-Consciousness, the Self passes unaffected through the states, unmoved by the presence or absence of thoughts in any of their permutations. Yet, how can the Self, being infinite, pass through anything else? The states revolve in the Self, not the Self in them. Yet, how can there be anything but the Self in that undifferentiated Self? The Self is infinite, detached, unaffected, the Reality devoid of misperception and nonperception, with no cause and having no effect. In final Truth, there are no states and no mind, and the Self is neither a cause nor an experiencer.

Though each thought may be regarded as affecting only other thoughts, for the Self is ever the unaffected silent Witness of all of them, each thought has nothing that actually connects it to another thought. All the thoughts are supported by Consciousness alone.

Thought has no knowing power. A thought cannot know itself, nor can it know another thought. No thought is self-existent. Each thought depends completely on Consciousness and is never known or experienced apart from Consciousness. It appears and disappears in Consciousness alone. So, thought is just Consciousness viewed as such. Thought is said to be a mode (vritti), a modification, or a form of Consciousness. Consciousness, itself, is forever formless, unmodified, and has no modes, for it is changeless and eternal. How can there be a form of the formless or a modification of the changeless? Or, how can there be a mode for the birthless and the eternal? Thought has no real existence. It is like a snake imagined in a rope or the waters of a mirage.

Thought, both as particular thoughts and as thinking itself, is not an attribute of Consciousness. A true attribute would need to be with that to which it is attributed always. Consciousness is

not, by nature, a thought; nor does it have thought always. Therefore, thought is not the attribute of the attributeless Consciousness.

Thought cannot exist without Consciousness. Consciousness exists without thought. The self-existent is alone real, and the dependent does not truly exist. Thus, in reality, thought is unreal and the Self alone is real. The unreal is not an attribute of the Reality, the Self. The unreal is not experienced by the Reality, which is of the nature of Being-Consciousness-Bliss. What is not real and what is not experienced in or of the real does not exist. Thus, there are neither thoughts nor states. One vast Consciousness is.

The mind does not bind the Self, for it does not define or limit the Self, does not divide the Self, and does not alter the Self. The Self is not bound, for the mind has no independent existence. The Self is not bound, for there is nothing other than the Self and, therefore, no mind at all. The mind is nowhere but in the Self, yet, in the Self, there is no mind. The Self is not in the mind, though it alone pervades it to such an extent that the distinctions of pervader and pervaded do not exist.

Though thought exists only as the Self, the Self has never become a thought and has never given rise to thought. Thought is entirely unreal and does not exist at all. The Self alone is, and it is One without a second. The mind exists nowhere but in the Self, yet there is truly no mind in the Self. The true nature of the mind is only the Self. There is truly no mind at all, and the Self alone is.

May this thought-transcendent, inconceivable Knowledge abide. May the Knowledge of the nondual, invariable Consciousness, in which there is no such thing as the mind and which is the only true nature of the mind, be.

### **The Absolute Self and the Ego**

Self-Realization is the egoless state. Freedom from the ego is the quintessence of Liberation. It is abidance in the Self as the Self. The falsely assumed individualized “I” is completely removed by Self-Knowledge, and the one true “I,” the I of the “I,” alone remains. This Self is referred to by the Maharshi, Ribhu,

and other sages as, “I-I.” That true “I-I” is the “I” in the statement, “I am the Absolute.” In the Realization of the significance of the mahavakya (great aphorism) of the Upanishad, “I am Brahman,” Adi Sankara explains, the entire notion of “I” is removed, just like the idea, “a man is here,” conceived when misperceiving a post in the darkness, is completely removed upon illumination being brought. Brahman alone is, and Brahman alone knows Brahman. When the “I” is removed, all of “mine” is also removed, as such is completely dependent upon the delusion of “I.”

The ego is the root cause of delusion, illusion, bondage, and suffering. The ego is the root of the mind, even the very idea of an existent mind, and the root of all else. It is the first illusion to be imagined and the last to disappear. The ego is the cause, substance, and experiencer of all illusion. Without the ego, illusion is impossible.

The ego has no actual form of its own. It may be conceived as the experiencer, the thinker, the performer of action, the one who senses, the one who lives, the one who has attributes, and such. In essence, the ego is the concept of “I,” in whatever guise it may appear.

All duality and ignorance is from the ego, by the ego, and in the ego. The universe has no separate existence, for the Self is all in all at all times and is unalloyed, and transcendent of the form of all, but the ego gives the deluded, wrong view of duality. The body is not one’s home, for the Self is unborn and bodiless, but the ego gives the deluded view of the Self and the body as knotted together. Bliss is of the eternal Self, but the ego gives the deluded view that happiness is not here, not immediate and ever present as Being itself, and must be elsewhere. The ego appears as the knot between the Self, of the nature of pure Being-Consciousness-Bliss, and form. The formless Self, Brahman, alone is ever the solitary Reality, but the ego gives the deluded view of existent form, of something other existing, of a second, which it itself is. Yet, when inquired into to determine its nature, the ego, with all that depends upon it, vanishes, being unreal.

What and where is the ego? One should inquire into this deeply to realize the natural non-ego state, which is blissful and

free from all bondage and suffering. The ego is merely a false notion—a bare assumption—of individuality, of a separate “I,” which is the supposition of differentiation from the Absolute. The ego has no form of its own, and, so, to appear in any way, it creates an illusion of form and attaches itself to such. It itself appears as the misidentification with and attachment to the unreal forms of the mind, the senses, the body, and the world. Thus, in the course of spiritual practice, when one destroys these misidentifications and attachments, the ego dissolves. The “I” notion is the separate experiencer, the individual knower, the embodied entity, the doer of action, and the notion of an “other.” It itself is the concept of a separate universe in which it, the “I,” supposedly is. Upon the ego is based the illusory differentiation of the world, the individual, and the Supreme (jagat-jiva-para). The three are not three, but only That, the nondual Self. Only with the ego does the One appear to be three. It appears as it is conceived.

The world and thought are unreal, and so is the ego. One sees the ego’s guises and its appearances. Where is its existence? One sees its effects, but where is the cause? If the ego is real in any manner, it should be actually experienced. If the ego is an entity, it should exist somewhere. If the ego itself is an effect, it should have a cause. One should inquire to determine if the ego exists at all.

Is the ego actually experienced? It has neither shape nor size, and it has no physical attributes. It is never sensed, for one never sees, hears, touches, or has any other sensory impression of the ego. The ego is not the word, “I,” nor the particular thought of the same, for realized sages, who are fully identified with the true Self alone, may say “I,” but they neither give rise to nor retain any ego. The ego has no form of its own and is never seen by itself as it is. Though the ego is an assumption of a division in Being, how can Being be dual or be divided in itself?

The ego “I” is not a quality or attribute of the Self, since it is not invariably related to it. It does not continue in Liberation or in deep sleep. Since it does not, it must belong to something else and not to the Self. To what does it belong? If one inquires, one will find that it belongs to nothing. It cannot belong to what

depends on it, and the attributeless Self, being homogenous and ever changeless, will never have an ego at any time. If the ego were an attribute of the Self, the ego would be eternal, in which case, all Liberation, all scriptures, all spiritual life, all spiritual practice, all sayings of sages, and such would be futile and false. This would be absurd. It is better to give up the notion of the ego than to hold to it as alone being real. The ego is not a temporary quality of the Self. The truth cannot be like the case of an unripe fruit becoming a ripe fruit, in which there would be two stages, or states, for the Self, one with an ego and one without. The Existence of the Self is Absolute and immutable. If the ego were ever the Existence, as part of it or sharing in it in any way whatsoever, Existence would be changeful and transitory and would cease to exist. Being is always egoless and has no ego quality whatsoever.

Where is the ego? It is not in the world, which is unreal. It is not in the body, which is unreal and not the Self. It is not in the senses, which are unreal and not the Self. It is not in thought, which is unreal and not the Self. It is not in the flawless, unmodified, perfect Self. The ego is never actually experienced by itself and is not actually experienced in any of these. The ego dwells nowhere.

If the ego is not a thing in itself, does not reside anywhere, and is not inherent in anything, the remaining possibility is that its supposed existence is an effect produced by something else. The ego is not produced by the world, the body, the senses, the prana, or the mind. These produce phenomena, sensations, physical, subtle and mental experiences, and thoughts. These appear after the ego is differentiated, and so they cannot produce it, for the effect does not produce the cause. The ego is not produced by the Self, which is the Absolute. The Absolute Self does not produce or create at all but ever just is. That the ego is said to rise from the origin, or substrate, of the Self is expedient teaching intended to guide those desirous of Liberation to the Origin, the one Substrate, in order to realize its egoless nature. Such instruction should not be interpreted as the ego really being born or the Self actually giving birth to it. The ego cannot be self-produced, for to imagine so would be to suppose its pre-existence, which is absurd and which would lead to the consequent question as to

what caused that pre-existent ego. This, in turn, would lead either to the delusion regarding the effects causing the cause or a modification in the eternally, changeless Self, which possibilities have already been negated by the inquiry, or to an infinite regression. But the Self alone is infinite, and causality is not real. One cannot actually recall when this ego, the root of maya, began, was created, or was born, though there is the knowledge of perpetual existence, which is of the Self alone, for never was there a time when you were not, and never will there be a time when you will cease to be. Thus, the Self is ever the Unborn—neither coming from another state or thing nor giving birth to any—and the ego is unborn as it never comes to be. This may also be regarded as the final significance of the Maharshi's inquiry as to "Whence am I?" graciously given to show the method of tracing inwardly from where the identity of "I" derives, as well as "Who am I?"

How can there be the ego's effect (delusion), as the supposed cause itself has never come to be? The ego is an assumption. Who assumes this assumption? No one. Who knows the Knowledge of the Self? The ego "I" cannot know the Self, as the Self alone is capable of knowing. The "I" is inert, and the known is a mere notion, a vacuous imagining, and an assumption that is nonexistent. There is no ego to be ignorant or to be bound, to attempt to know the Self, or to return to it or unite with it. The Self is what you are, and it is innately egoless.

May this egoless Knowledge of the Self abide. May the Knowledge of the nondual, indivisible nature of the Self, the only true "I," in which there is never an individual "I," be.

### **The Absolute Self as It is**

Always, there is one Reality, the nondual Self. All illusion arises without a real cause and vanishes in the Knowledge of the Self. Self-Knowledge, or Self-Realization, is the natural state, the only real state there is. Being is forever immutable.

The Self is the source of all. All depend on and appear in it. It is the beginning. The Self is that which pervades all. It is the actual existence of all. It is the middle. The Self is That into which all dissolves. It is the end. The Self, being universal, is all in all at all times.

The Self is solid Existence, invariable, unmodified, indestructible, and ever still. The Self is ever-shining Consciousness, the one all-pervading Light without a shadow. The Self is Bliss, the long-sought happiness, the invariable perfect fullness (Purnam), and the bliss of the sages. Being-Consciousness-Bliss is the Self of the sages, the Self of the aspirants, the Self of the Guru, the Self of the disciple, and the Self of all.

Knowledge is Being. Being is Knowledge. There is no duality in this. That is, in this, there is no knower and known, and no being one thing and knowing another. There is no ego in this. This is egoless Knowledge. The Knowledge is not a thought. It is transcendent Knowledge. In this Knowledge, the Self is itself the conviction and certitude in itself. The Self, itself, is the depth and power of meditation upon the Knowledge. The Self, itself, is the real teaching and the final proof of itself. The Self, itself, is That which is to be known, the knower himself, and the Knowledge itself. The Self, itself, is the revelation in the ineffable Silence of Dakshinamurti and Sri Ramana Maharshi.

The Self has no states or degrees. It is not bound, not striving for Liberation, and not liberated. It is never bound, and there is no separate state of Liberation. There is, in the Self, no coming into being of illusion and no ending of illusion. In Self-Realization, no new thing has been attained, nothing has been made purer, nothing has been produced, nothing has been acquired, nor has one been transformed. What is stands self-revealed, and the possibility of bondage, with its concomitant suffering, is no more, as there is no unreality and no one to imagine it. In Self-Realization, there is no change of states between active and inactive, or between thought and its absence. Only one, uncreated, unchanged Existence is. In Self-Realization, there are no degrees of any kind. There is not a Liberation while alive contrasted with Liberation after disembodiment. There is no individual "I," no perception of forms, and no disappearance of the perception of forms. In this wakeful bliss, there is nothing further to be accomplished.

The Self is nondual, like space, formless, infinite, Being, Void, uncreated, timeless, and ever-existent. It ever is just as it is, and it alone is. This "ever is" is the significance of Silence.