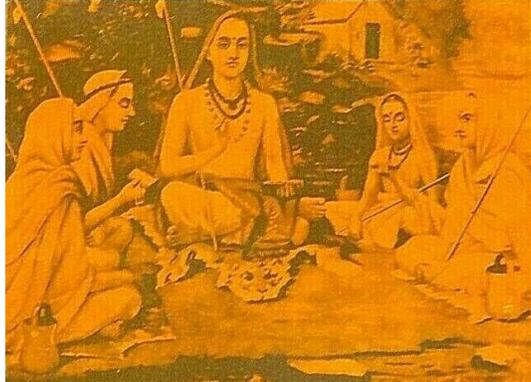


## **Athma Bodh** *(Knowledge of The Self)*



Composed by  
**Bhagawan Adhi Sankaracharya**  
(With translation/commentaries adapted from Swami Chinmayananda)

### **Meditation:**

*In the early morning I meditate on the Self*, residing in the deep wells of our hearts. It is Real Knowledge, Eternal Happiness, the state reached by those who have transcended to the fourth state of consciousness; Self illumines all our experiences during the waking, dreaming and the state of deep sleep. I am that perfect Brahman, not the identity associated merely with my physical and identifiable matter.

*In the Early Morning I salute and show my respect to that Self, the Brahman* who adds glory to the Mind and the Speech; through His grace all Speech comes alive or shines through; Who is Identified in the scriptures by relentless exploration by rejecting all else ("*Na iti – Not this, Na iti – not this*") since Brahman cannot be adequately expressed by Words; Brahman is called the God of the Gods, Unborn, Infallible (i.e. Imperishable) and Foremost (i.e. Primordial).

*In the early morning I worship or praise the glory of the Self*, the stable framework whose nature is Supreme Illumination, whole or the entirety, with Its presence earlier than the beginning, and Which is called the Supreme Soul; In Whom this endless world is seated from time immemorial and in which this cognitive world appears illusively like a fearsome snake even if it is a Rope.

### **Introduction:**

1. I am composing this Athma Bodha (Knowledge of the Self) for those who have
  - (a) *Minimized their negative attitudes and tendencies; strengthened their noble thoughts and deeds* through austere activities such as prayer, meditation, virtuous living, etc.;
  - (b) that has resulted in their mental peace and tranquility where emotions are held in check, *reflection and analysis is natural and ignorance is challenged through knowledge and learning*;
  - (c) which in turn has created a calm contentment in their mind and hence *the desires and agitations are held in check*; and

(d) have become a *sincere* seeker wanting to liberate oneself from his/her self-imposed limitations and constraints in their personality. These are the qualifications for those fit to study this Knowledge of the Self.

### Abstract:

There are two aspects to “Who am I?” or the “Knowledge of the Self”. One is the cognitive aspect which we all can relate to readily. The other is the incognitive forces of nature (*Brahman*) the enabler or substratum of everything cognitive.

This is analogous to:

- People in the boat and the boat itself floating in a lake or a large body of water – the Cognitive; the in-cognitive enabler like buoyancy supporting the boat (and everything cognitive). The boat and the people in it can change. But the buoyancy remains eternal and with equal effect independent of the lake, the boat or the people in it. The boat and the people, the lake, are all identifiable directly. The “buoyancy” or the incognitive nature can be identified only through its evidences of cognitive floating objects!
- Two sides of a coin: One side of the coin is the Cognitive and the other side is the incognitive forces of nature (*Brahman*) which remains inseparable from the other side (all that is cognitive).

### What are the distinguishing features of the “Self”?



2. Fire is necessary and direct agent to cook the raw food into a meal. *Knowledge of the Self is the necessary and direct agent for Liberation or Moksha.*

In comparison with all other contributing factors Knowledge of the Self is the one direct means for Liberation from the shackles of self-imposed personality constraints.

3. Light is opposed to darkness and hence by its mere presence destroys or eliminates the darkness. Similarly *Knowledge of the Self alone destroys the ignorance of the Self. Mere pursuits of activities for austerity, meditation, etc. alone do not destroy the ignorance of the Self.*



4. Undivided sun reveals itself when the cloud cover passes away.



*Self is a mere part and continuum of the Universal Consciousness.* Hence it is not subject to divisions. Self within us appears to be divided, limited, individual and finite because of our ignorance. When this knowledge is understood (like lifting of cloud cover) the Universal nature of Self within us reveals itself.

5. The muddy water is clarified by adding chemicals which help to settle or precipitate the floating mud contaminating the water. *Constant use of knowledge that “I am the Self or Consciousness and not the matter representing it” helps to clear away the stains of ignorance and hence*



*reveals the Universal Consciousness residing inside each of us.*

6. The world of dualities is like a dream. They appear to be real only as long as one is engaged in the dream. Once awake *through the true knowledge of the Self these dualities – like/dislike, love/hate, friend/foe, etc. – which we describe as the world of attachments and preferences disappear.*
7. *The world of dualities appears to be true and real so long as Brahman (the Universal Consciousness), the substratum and the basis of all creations is not realized.* It is like the pearl being mistakenly identified as pure silver. This mistake in identity disappears once we have the true knowledge of the silver and its distinction from the pearl.



8. *The Supreme Self or the Universal Consciousness is the cause and the foundation for everything.* The air dissolved in water evolves as air bubbles, which grow and reside in the water and then dissolve in the larger body of air in the atmosphere. *Everything in the universe evolves and exists as distinct entities and finally integrates back into the Supreme Self.*

9. *The Universal Consciousness – the substratum - is eternal, all pervading and Universal (Vishnu). Its nature is Existence and Truth. All else exist as projections of imagination on this substratum.*

Gold ornaments in various shapes and designs are mere representations of gold.

10. The all pervading space appears to be distinct and divided by the constraints or boundaries imposed on it. Space becomes one and limitless when these constraints are removed.

*The Self or omnipresent Truth – the Universal Consciousness (Lord of sense organs) - appears distinct and divided as individuals, based on self-imposed constraints. It becomes One when these constraints are removed.*

11. Color, flavor, taste, etc. are superimposed on water, which in its pure state is colorless, odorless and tasteless.

*Constraints of caste, creed, status, etc. imposed on the Universal Consciousness, create the distinctions we perceive in our individual self.*



## How does the “Self” evolve or emerge through the physical world?



### Who am I?

I am made of five elements.

I am the manifestation of consciousness:

- ✓ Physical being with sensory perceptions.
- ✓ Subtle being with life giving processes
- ✓ Enabled by cognitive abilities

12. Our physical body is composed from the five basic elements (earth, air, fire, space and water) and their fivefold division and recombination into each other (*Pancheekarana*).

This body has arrived at its present state, based on the sequence of all actions pursued up to this point. This physical body is the tent for all our experiences.

13. Our subtle body is constituted of:

Five life giving processes (*Pranas*), ten sense organs, the mind and the Intellect.  
The five life giving processes are:

*Prana*: The breathing (the life force which establishes and regulates the functioning of all aspects of our physical body, organs and their sensed perceptions).

*Apana*: The excretory system (Ability to reject anything that is unwanted, poisonous and/or harmful).

*Vyana*: The digestive system (Ability to convert and integrate the nourishment for the sustenance)

*Udana*: Assimilation (Ability to distribute the nourishment as required for sustaining all parts of the system as per their need)

*Samana*: Sustaining each part of the system as required (The ability to rise above the current state of knowledge and understanding; rise above what we know and peep into the new and unknown, the capacity to evolve and devolve in our thoughts).

These in turn are evident through the five basic elements (earth, air, fire, space and wind) and their five fold division and recombination in each other as described in the previous verse.

14. All our cognitive “knowledge” and “understanding” is conceived through our physical and subtle body. Thus the physical body, our subtle body and the cognitive knowledge are the three manifestations (*Upadhi* – that which remains associated with the basis or consciousness) of our individuality. Be assured with certainty that the Consciousness (soul or *Athman*) is other than these three conditions (i.e): Physical, Subtle and intellectual. Our intellectual or cognitive knowledge in reality is not the true knowledge of consciousness.

15. The Consciousness is recognized through our five cognitive abilities:

- Physical (anatomy- *Annamaya*),
- Physiological (life processes - *Praanamaya*),
- Psychological or emotional (mental – *Manonmaya*),
- Intellectual or analytical reasoning (*Vigyanamaya*) - Objective Vs. Subjective based on the three *Guna* (Knowledge, Bias and Ignorance) and their interplay and
- Spiritual or union with the Consciousness (Bliss – *Anandamaya*) aware that everything is Brahman (*Sarvam Brahma Mayam*), part and parcel of the universe at large (*Thath Thwam Asi*).

Self is like the crystal – which is pure, colorless, devoid of properties and eternal. Like the crystal seen in the color in its vicinity the *Self or Consciousness is seen through the Physical objects, subtle manifestations and / or the cognitive abilities*.

Physical Elements		Manifestations of the Consciousness as “Self” ( <i>Upadhi</i> )		
		Sensory	Subtle	Cognitive
1	Earth	Touch	In-take ( <i>Prana</i> )	Physical or material ( <i>Annamaya</i> )
2	Air	Taste	Excretion ( <i>Apana</i> )	Physiological ( <i>Praanamaya</i> )
3	Fire	Smell	Digestion ( <i>Vyana</i> )	Emotional ( <i>Manonmaya</i> )
4	Water	Sight	Assimilation ( <i>Udhana</i> )	Intellectual / analytical ( <i>Vignanamaya</i> )
5	Space	Sound	Nourishment ( <i>Samana</i> )	Spiritual ( <i>Anandamaya</i> )

16. Through discriminative analysis and logical thinking, one should separate the recognition of the Self (Consciousness) within us from our cognitive abilities, just as one thrashes out and separates the rice from the bran (or corn from the husk) covering it.



17. The divinity (Consciousness) shines in all its glory, through a well refined and polished intellect, just as a clean and well-polished mirror or a still body of water reflects perfectly everything in its vicinity.

18. The Consciousness is distinct from our cognitive abilities (body, senses, mind, intellect and spiritual), which constitute the world of matter (*Prakriti*), just as the King is recognized as distinct from the subjects (even though the king is also a human being, living in the world along with his subjects).

### Why is it we misunderstand our Self only as part of our cognitive universe?

19. Through the lack of discrimination the Consciousness as observed through the world of matter appears to be active, just as the moon appears to be moving, when observed through the passing clouds. When the focus or reference is shifted, the passage and motion of the cloud distinct from the steady and motionless moon becomes clear. Similarly, when the focus is shifted and redirected, we realize the eternal stability of the Self or Consciousness vs. the constant changing nature of the world of matter around it.
20. Indeed, the world of matter acquires its ability to engage in their constant churning of activities and functions thanks to the Consciousness, just as the earth as a planet exists in all its vitality thanks to the light and energy from the sun.
21. The Consciousness exists as Pure, Absolute, Eternal and the state of Bliss (*Sath Chith Aananda Athman*). We tend to associate the various functions of our cognitive abilities to it through our limited knowledge, just as we tend to attribute blue color to the colorless sky!
22. All our actions and emotions are influenced by mind, which is one of three means (*Upadhi*) of the human as a person or individual. We mistakenly identify them as the nature of our True Self or Consciousness, just as we see the reflection as the moon dancing on the water.

23. Dualities such as attachment, desire, pleasure, pain, etc. and their opposites are intimately connected with the mind. They are perceived only when the mind functions. During deep sleep, when the mind is at rest, these dualities are not perceived. *The Consciousness which is present all the time – whether one is awake or asleep – is not associated with any such dualities.*
24. Cognitive objects have their distinct nature: The sun is bright and luminous, the water is cool and the fire is hot. *The Self or Consciousness which enables all these properties of nature is eternity, purity, reality, self-awareness and Bliss.*
25. Blending the cognitive aspects (related to the world perceived through body, mind and intellect) and the Consciousness (which is eternal, pure, self aware and blissful) without discrimination there arises the notion of “I know”.
26. *The Consciousness never engages in any action on its own; It merely exists. All the cognitive aspects do not have the capacity to experience “I know” on their own accord without the aid of the Consciousness.* We believe that we are the observers and what we “know” or have the knowledge of the observation. Hence erroneously we believe the observer and observed as one and the same. Through this misconception we live as individuals and acquire our individuality.
27. We believe the rope as the snake and hence become overcome by fear. This fear disappears as soon as we realize the true reality that the object is the rope and not a snake. Similarly *we, the observer* (one who responds to observations) *become brave* (fearless) *by recognizing the Consciousness as different from the living being with associated individuality.*
28. Just as a lamp inside a pot illumines the pot, *the Self (Consciousness) enables the mind to shine in all its glory and all the sense organs function expressing the individuality. Otherwise the mind and the sense organs are inert like the pot and cannot illumine by themselves.*



29. *The Consciousness is Knowledge itself. It requires no other knowledge to clarify It just as the lighted lamp does not need another lamp to illumine it!*



## **Techniques to recognize the incognitive side of the coin (i.e.) Consciousness, Brahman or the Self:**

30. *It is through constant negation of the body, mind and intellect or the senses (Upadhi) – this is not the Self (Na ithi Bhavam) - the single or Universal Consciousness articulated in the great pronouncements in the Upanishads, can be realized.*

Great Pronouncements (*Mahavakyas*) are:

- *Thath Thwam Asi* (You and the Universal are integral in each other)
- *Aham Brahma Asmi* (The Self (Consciousness) exists as the Brahman (or "I" am Brahman"))

- *Brahmavith Brahmaiva Bhavathi* (He (one) who comprehends the Brahman, becomes the Brahman himself.)
  - *Sarvam Brahma Mayam* (Everything is Brahman).
31. Recognize that all that is cognitive (knowledge or reasoning as well as emotions, physical body (the equipment for thinking and feeling) and all perceived objects are perishable, just as the air bubbles. Through such discrimination realize that the Self is Brahman (with out any attributes and hence without any blemish, eternal) remains independent of all that is cognitive and perishable.
- 32 to 36.
- a. Self is independent of the physical body. It does not acquire the features of the physical body such as birth, illness, old age and death. The Self is independent of sense organs; hence the Self can not be described through the perceptions such as sight, sound, feel, etc.
  - b. Self is other than the mind and hence It is independent of sorrow, attachment, malice, fear, etc. associated with cognitive emotions and feelings of objects. The scriptures (Upanishads) state that He (the Universal Consciousness) is Pure and can not be identified with objects with limitations such as breath, mind, etc.
  - c. Self remains without attributes, without actions, eternal, without thought/desires, without blemish, without changes, without form, always liberated (without constraints), ever pure.
  - d. Self fills all objects inside and outside, just as the space exists everywhere. The Self is consistent (with out changes – Achyutha), permanent, same in all aspects, and at all times, pure, unattached, stainless and without variations (motionless).
  - e. Self is the Universal Consciousness (Brahman), which is Eternal, Pure and Free, One, Indivisible and non-dual, Changeless/Knowledge/Infinite.
37. The understanding that “I (The Self) am Brahman” through the constant practice/reflection, destroys ignorance and the agitation caused by such ignorance just as the medicine cures the disease.

### **Methods or practices to internalize the understanding of Brahman, Self or Universal Consciousness:**

38. Be seated in a quiet place, free the mind from desires and control the senses and then meditate with unwavering attention on the Self (which is one and the same as the limitless Universal Consciousness).
39. *The wise man recognizes the Self, when everything else merge or unite into it as one – with out differences - as the eternal blemish less sky encompasses all of the space.*
40. Any individual who recognizes the Supreme – the Universal Consciousness – discards all his cognitive identifications such as name, form, etc. Then he dwells as an embodiment of the Self or Consciousness itself. In the end such a realized individual becomes the Self.



41. Within the Self (or Consciousness) there are no such distinctions as the “Knower”, “Known” and the “Object of knowledge”. It shines alone by itself. It remains as eternal or endless Bliss.
42. *Thus by the constant churning of the Self and the cognitive world (of body, mind and intellect) the fire of true knowledge is born, which burns down the ignorance (individual centered thoughts, feelings and experiences).*

**Note:**

At the end of this text we describe this as recognition of the Self as two sides of a coin or the two levels of the boat (above and below the water) – the Subtle and the Cognitive universe.

43. The shining glory of the rising sun is preceded by the destruction of all darkness by the Lord of the early morning (*Aruna*). Divine Consciousness (the Self) becomes visible in its full glory when the true Knowledge has already killed the darkness of isolation as individuals in our hearts.
44. The Self is an ever present Reality within each of us. Because of our ignorance we do not comprehend it. We search for it everywhere like one searching for the gold chain which is already in his/her neck (adding glamour or beauty).
45. The Consciousness is mistakenly identified with the living individual, just as we mistake a shadow for the object (pole or person). Individuality and such ego centered notions are destroyed when the true nature of the Self is realized as distinct from the cognitive aspects of the world which we call as life.



46. *By experiencing the true nature of the Self, the false notions of “I” and “mine” disappear, just as the correct information removes our ignorance on the proper direction to travel.* Each of these analogies is ripe with lot of meaning. The reader is suggested to reflect on the inner meaning of the analogies in the various stanzas of Athma Bodh.

For example: The direction we wish to proceed is established relative to the direction we wish to avoid! With out the correct knowledge or information, we could proceed in wrong directions believing them to be the correct one! Hence, while all the directions exist all the time, it is the discriminating knowledge that chooses the correct one. Such discrimination is also aided by a sense of purpose: why do I choose a particular direction? Similarly, the Self exists as interplay within everything we know in the cognitive world. As long as our purpose is not clear we can never find the right direction to comprehend the Self. However, once this decision is made we realize the Self, by discriminating it as different from all other directions, which are associated with the notions of “I”, “mine”, etc.

**How does one who has acquired the knowledge of the Self act or behave?**

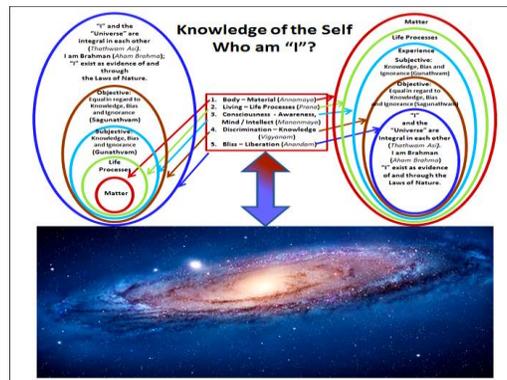
47. *The Yogi – a man of true realization – sees the entire universe in himself and also himself as the entire universe and nothing else.*

A man of true realization of the Self is fully aware of both sides of the coin: the Cognitive and the Subtle.



48. The entire universe exists as nothing but the representation of the Self (Athman – Consciousness). Nothing else exists without the Self.

All the pots and other vessels exist as clay in various shapes and forms. Similarly for an enlightened person the entire universe is nothing but the Self (Consciousness).



49. Because of his true nature (the truth, knowledge and bliss which are the characteristics of the Self) and endowed with the true knowledge of the Self (true awareness of both sides of the coin) the enlightened person gives up the traits of the gross, subtle and the causal bodies (body, mind and intellect) and transforms like a wasp (which as a worm builds a mud nest and stays confined in it) and emerges as a butterfly with ability to fly and move around without limitations.

50. The Yogi (the enlightened person with true knowledge of the Self) through his crossing the ocean of delusion and overwhelming the monsters of like and dislike is united with eternal peace and dwells in the glory of his own Self Realization (Athma Rama).

51. Satisfied with the bliss arising from within through the Self and hence giving up the illusory attachments of happiness in the world of objects, the self realized person (Jeevan Muktha) shines inwardly like a lamp placed inside a jar.

52. The enlightened soul of inward contemplation on the Self (Muni or saint), while he exists in the world of objects (body, mind and intellect and their play fields), remains unconcerned about anything and hence moves about freely like a crazy person and remains unattached like the blowing wind.

Note: Any one is crazy because of the ill health of the brain and its failure to function properly. Yogi on the other hand has full and total control of his faculties. But he does not let the brain constrain his thinking based on his individual preferences or subjective outlook! Hence he may look like a crazy person who does not pay attention to the praise from one or ridicule from another.

53. On the destruction of the constraints of the cognitive world (body, mind and intellect and their functions and play fields) *the enlightened person - saint or Muni – remains totally absorbed in the Universal Consciousness in the omnipresent (Viswam) like water in water, space into space and light into light.*

### **Brahman – Definition:**

54 to 57, 60, 61. Realize that *Brahman* – the state of limitless union of the Self into the Universal Consciousness – *implies* that:

- a. *There is no other attainment, blessing or knowledge to be sought after that.*
  - b. When perceived it leaves nothing more to be seen, *leads to a state of existence, where the constantly changing mortal world ceases to exist* (immortality is achieved) and leaves nothing more to be learned.
  - c. *Brahman* is the only real, knowledge, bliss and absolute, which has no duality; integral across the Self (individual Consciousness) and the Universal Consciousness, and with out perceptions of love/hate, like/dislike, etc., *infinite, eternal and the only existence that fills all quarters as well as in all directions* (above, below and all the space in between, etc.).
  - d. *Brahman* is recognized through the process of negation of all that is *comprehensible*, as described in the Vedantic philosophy. Such *Brahman* is non-dual, eternal, indivisible and blissful; has no other equals (unique).
  - e. *Brahman* is without attributes: neither short nor long; neither subtle nor incognitive; without birth or with changes caused through life cycles; without qualities, color or name.
  - f. *Brahman* illuminates the planets that orbit like sun and the moon, but it is not illuminated by any light source other than itself.
58. Deities like Brahma (the Creator) enjoy but a miniscule of the unlimited bliss of the *Brahman*, in proportion to their realization of this Universal Consciousness.
59. *All objects are permeated by Brahman. All actions are possible through the influence or impact of Brahman. Therefore Brahman permeates everything* as butter permeates milk.

(As mentioned earlier, each analogy in this Athma Bodha is rich with content. Consider for example the analogy here: Butter exists in the milk, and adds to the nutrients, just as the *Brahman* exists as the substratum of all our life activities. Yet, butter can not be separated from milk, until the milk transforms itself into yogurt, which on further churning permits the evolution of butter as distinct from its liquid medium. Similarly, we are advised that *Brahman* can not be identified with, until human beings transform their outlook from the individual centered aspects of life and its activities. When transformed into a distinct state, with spiritual outlook – where distinctions of any kind tend to cease – the comprehension of *Brahman* as distinct from the transient aspects of life (perceived through body, mind and intellect) can be identified.

62. Pervading the entire universe, outwardly and inwardly, the *Brahman (the Supreme or Universal Consciousness)*, shines by itself like the heat energy in a ball of iron is perceived through the red hot glow.
63. *Brahman is not limited to the cognitive universe. There exists nothing that is not Brahman.* If any cognitive object appears to be all of Brahman (in totality) it is like the mirage (which for the viewer in his state of mind is real, but becomes unreal on further reflection and comprehension of the original source, the light rays from the sun).
64. *Brahman exists in all that is perceived through our cognitive processes* like hearing, seeing, etc. Attaining this knowledge of the Reality (the universal existence of Brahman as subtle and yet intertwined in our cognitive aspects – like two side of a coin) one sees the Universe as the non-dual Brahman (as being without distinctions, within and without). In that Realization one comprehends the true Knowledge, Real nature of the Universe, and Absolute Bliss.
65. *Even though the Self is Pure Consciousness (the Brahman) it is perceived only through the eye of wisdom born out of rejecting everything cognitive* (which are images or shadows of the light source). Focusing on the cognitive as the “I” is like the blind (or one with eyes closed or facing away from the sun) who can never see the brilliant shining light of the sun.

## Summary:

There are two aspects to “Who am I?” or the “Knowledge of the Self”. One is the cognitive aspect which we all can relate to readily. The other is the incognitive forces of nature (*Brahman*) the enabler or substratum of everything cognitive. This is analogous to:

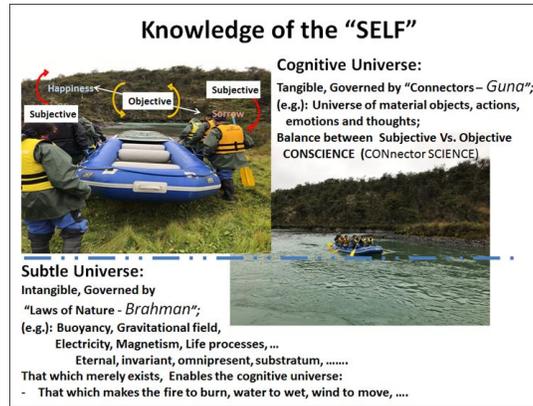
- People in the boat and the boat itself floating in a lake or a large body of water – the Cognitive; the in-cognitive enabler like buoyancy supporting the boat (and everything cognitive). The boat and the people in it can change. But the buoyancy remains eternal and with equal effect independent of the lake, the boat or the people in it. The boat and the people, the lake, are all identifiable directly. The “buoyancy” or the incognitive nature can be identified only through its evidences of cognitive floating objects!
- Two sides of a coin: One side of the coin is the Cognitive and the other side is the incognitive forces of nature (*Brahman*) which remains inseparable from the other side (all that is cognitive).

Each of us can readily relate to the cognitive nature of our existence. In this knowledge of the self each of us or our life in general is a “Product of our experiences”. These experiences are the outcome of connectors (*Guna*). The goal is to maintain a balance or objectivity (*Sagunathvam*) through which dualities of like/dislike, love / hate, etc. gradually vanish. We are equally at ease irrespective of situation, circumstances we are in or people around us.

On sustained reflection we also come to realize that anything cognitive and all the connectors are enabled by laws of nature (*Brahman*). This enabler (*Brahman*) is devoid of anything tangible, cognitive or connective (*Nirgunathvam*). This comprehension leads us

to also acknowledge the transient nature (like reflections) of the Cognitive and the connectors (*Guna*).

Thus the Cognitive (*Gunathvam*) and non-cognitive or subtle (*Nirgunathvam*) are the two inseparable aspects of anyone or anything. This is the “Knowledge of the Self”. Below are two images to capture this Knowledge of the Self:

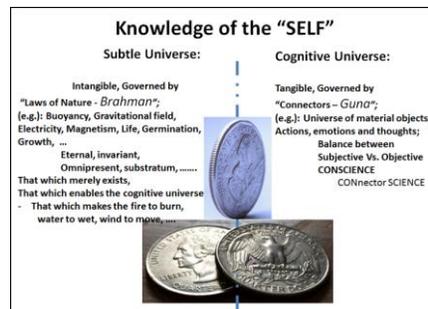


Imagine anyone or a group of people on the boat. Think of the boat itself. This is the Cognitive aspect of the “Self”. Preference or leaning excessively to either side is subjectivity. In order to float well and remain steady one or the entire group in the boat has to maintain a balance between the two sides. This is analogous to maintaining the balance between happiness and sorrow. This balance is objectivity (*Sagunathvam*).

The connectors and their judicious balance (*Sagunathvam*) are all part of the mind and its function. Attempts are being made to explain the inner working of the mind through neural science. But what is this “science”? All forms of science are our attempts to observe and explain the subtle and incognitive laws or forces of nature defined as “*Brahman*”. To make this clear let us return to the boat and the people – all cognitive that are floating on water.

While maintaining the balance (*Sagunathvam*), at the same time people in the boat need to be mindful that the boat is afloat thanks to the body of water in which everything is floating! This floating ability is enabled by buoyancy, which is incognitive. The invisible buoyancy is necessary for everything cognitive (all that is floating) to exist that way! This is *Brahman* (the sum total of all laws of nature that enable who we are, what we do, the planet and the universe to exist).

In the above image we recognized two co-existing states: the cognitive state (above water level) and the incognitive or subtle buoyancy and its role (under the water or below the boat). A true knowledge of the self comprises both these co-existing states.



In many respects it is also analogous to two sides of a coin. Being tied to one side of the coin most of the time we identify ourselves as individuals. When our perspective shifts to the other side of the coin we see ourselves as limitless, as an integral part of the universe at large (*Thath Thwam Asi; Aham Brahma*)

The floating boat cannot exist without a body of water supporting it through buoyancy. A coin cannot exist without two sides. We as individuals or anything we can relate to have a cognitive state and an incognitive or subtle body of laws of nature (Brahman) which enables the cognitive to exist.

### **Conclusion:**

66. The human being or Jeeva (with the Self existing as the substratum of the individual), stoked by the listening (and hence comprehension) of the scriptures as explained by the great masters, then reflecting on such knowledge through the power of reasoning and finally meditating on the concepts that have been heard and reasoned out, shines himself/herself under the brilliant glow of the Self (the non dual presence of individual Consciousness and the Universal Consciousness).
67. The human being, who in this manner renounces association with all activities (unattached active participation), becomes free of all limitations of time, space, direction, etc. (becomes of constant composure and objective behavior independent of all the dualities), lives in constant union with the Self, which has no attributes (heat, cold, etc.), which is eternal bliss and all pervading. In this process the human being attains immortality (a state of existence, which has no change such as beginning and the end).
68. The man of wisdom (*Jnani*)
  - Is free from all the limitations of time, space and direction.
  - Worships the holy place of his own Athma, Soul or the Self) which is present everywhere, which destroys heat and cold and which is bliss, eternal and stainless. Thus he/she becomes all-knowing and all-pervading and attains immortality.

Thus concludes the text of the Knowledge of The Self (Athma Bodh).

### **Aum Thath Sath Brahma Marpanam Astu**

*May all manner of existence be dedicated to be in union with Brahman (a state of Total Self Control and Unattached Active Participation).*

Dr. K. (Subbu) Subramanian

Jan. 31, 2007;

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