

Realization – The Sum And Substance

Compiled by A. (Arunachala) Ramana with Added Words of Commentary
From the Works of Sri Ramana Maharshi and Sri Nisargadatta Maharaj

Everyone is aware of two things, namely himself the seer and the world which he sees; and he assumes that these are both real. But, that alone is real which has a consistent existence.

Judged by this test of reality, these two – the seer and his spectacle, the seen – are both unreal, as they appear intermittently. They are apparent only in the waking and dream states; in the state of deep sleep, they cease to appear. That is, these two appear when the mind is active and disappear as soon as the mind ceases to function. Therefore, these are both but thoughts in the mind.

There must be Something Else from which the mind rises, and into which it subsides. That Something must have a continuous, uninterrupted existence. That is, It must be the Reality.

Can there be a sense of existence or reality without something that exists, or that is real? Is one's own consciousness, or Being, a thing *other* than That? Since that Reality dwells thought-free in the Heart, can it – itself being named the Heart – even be considered or meditated on? Who is there different or distinct from it to contemplate it, or meditate on it – this Self whose nature is Reality, or Existence-Consciousness – and how? How could this for example even be done?

KNOW THIS: To simply abide in or be at one with That in the Heart, *as* the Heart, is *itself* to contemplate or meditate on it – for it is All. This Self dwells in the Heart of ALL creatures *as the Very Self of each one*, like a silent witness without thoughts, unrelated to anything. To remain here and now present – *in It, as It* – is its contemplation. It is one's own presence and power of Awareness.

However, this Self or One Reality is concealed during the outward-turned state of the mind by the false appearance of the world and the seer, which are both only a manifestation of the mind.

This One Reality – named the Divine Self, or Heart of the Absolute – which is ever abiding *prior to* and *beyond* time and space – being without a second and always complete in Itself – is Itself the giver of existence to the whole world. It also gives its one and only Light of Consciousness to the mind, which in itself entirely lacks or is without consciousness. This One Self is always, already realized, for there is no other. It is ever available Here and Now as the one and only Presence and Power. All else is a false appearance, being a product of the mind.

This is like the full moon, having no light of its own, on a clear night reveals objects on the earth by reflecting the light of the sun. The mind having no consciousness of its own gives rise to the appearance of the world in the one Light of Consciousness of the Self, which is the One and Only Reality; for in Truth there is no world, there is only the Self. Simply see and know this.

Awareness and Consciousness

Questioner: You use the words “awareness” and “consciousness.” Are they not the same?

Maharaj: Awareness is primordial, it is the original state – beginningless, endless, uncaused, unsupported, without parts, without change. Consciousness is a state of duality; it is always *of* something. There can be no consciousness without awareness, but there can be awareness without consciousness, as in deep sleep or swoon.

Awareness is absolute; consciousness is relative to its content. Consciousness is partial and changeful; awareness is total, changeless, calm and silent, the common matrix of every experience.

Q: How does one go beyond consciousness into awareness?

M: Since it is awareness that makes consciousness possible, there is awareness in every state of consciousness. This means the very consciousness of being conscious is itself already an activity or movement in awareness. Determined steady attention and interest in your stream of consciousness awakens and reestablishes you in awareness. It is not a new state, but is re-recognized (known again) as the original basic existence, or pure Being itself, the one Life always, already available *prior* to time and space. It is also pure Love and Joy, these too being its very nature.

Q: Since reality is all the time with us, what does Self-realization consist of?

M: Realization is but the letting go or removal of ignorance. To take the world as cause, primary, powerful and what’s real, and one’s Self as effect, secondary, powerless or immaterial is ignorance. It’s the one cause of sorrow and suffering. To know the Self as the One and Only Reality, and all else as temporal and transient, is Freedom, Peace and Joy.

It is all very simple. Instead of seeing things as they are now appearing in your mind, all of which is really your own imagination, learn to see them as they *actually are*. When you can see everything as *it is*, you will also see yourself as *you are*. It is like cleaning a mirror. The same mirror that shows you the world as it is, will also show you your own face. The thought “I am” is the polishing cloth. Use it. But, you must use it correctly.

KNOW THIS: I AM is *not* a thought in the mind, it is one’s infinite and eternal Self. The mind happens *in you*, you do not happen in the mind. And since time and space are in the mind, you (your true Self) exist *beyond* time and space; you are eternal and omnipresent.

Q: Do you see the world as having a direction and a purpose?

M: The world is but a reflection of your own mind; it is your own imagination. Whatever you want to see, you can see. But why should you invent patterns of creation, evolution and destruction? Why do you need them? The world is in you, it is yourself; it is appearing *entirely* in your own consciousness. Don’t be afraid of it, or desire to lock it up into a particular mental picture.