

How to free consciousness
from its imprisonment in mind?

Developing
the witness consciousness

consciousness entangled in mind

- *Sāṃkhya*:

puruṣa is involved in *manas* (mind),
and *manas* is a part of *prakṛti*.

- Advaita Vedānta:

ātman is involved in *māyā*.

- But it need not be....

consciousness can be independent

- our consciousness need not be entangled in the egoic workings of the brain
- it can free itself, in order to re-involve itself from a wider, less egoic perspective
- consciousness can then become:
 - the witness (*sākṣī*)
 - the support, the giver of the sanction (*anumantā*)
 - the initiator and ruler (*īśvara*)
- so, HOW DO WE DO IT?

How to develop the witness consciousness?

- stand back, develop detachment
- quiet the mind
- silence the mind
- then shift backwards from mind to consciousness
- But...
 - to quiet the mind, one has first to quiet "the vital"

Why and how to quiet the vital: a realisation and three stages

- Realising the importance of equanimity
- the heroic stage
- the philosophical stage
- the spiritual stage

How to silence the mind?

- watch dispassionately; don't give sanction to thoughts
- find the silence behind (or in between) the thoughts
- find a realm of silence within or above
- throw the thoughts out, and... keep them out

introspection vs. witness consciousness

introspection

- mind looks at mind
- running commentary
- reactions; value judgments
- preferences; likes & dislikes
- limited to ordinary waking consciousness

witness (*sākṣī*)

- pure consciousness is aware of the working of the mind as a pure, perfectly detached witness
- silently watching
- perfect equanimity
- equal to all that happens
- able to penetrate deeper layers of consciousness and being