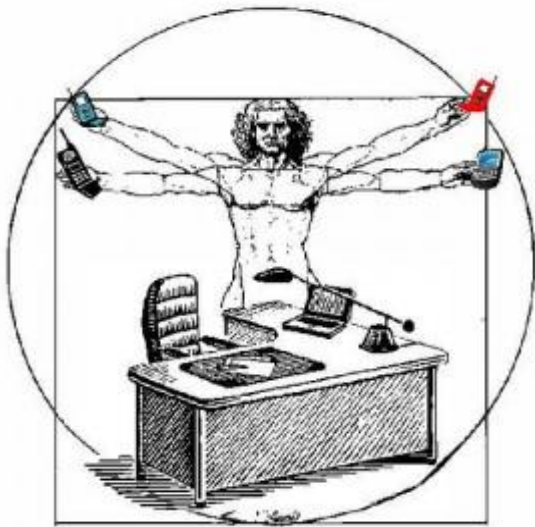


Levels of Consciousness

Every living and non-living being is a mere contemplation of God. This musing is caused by illusion. This illusion prevents you to realize the God either within you or within others. That is why illusion is called as veil that obliterates the true form of God to be realized. When we say God is omnipresent, naturally He has to be present within all the species. Let us understand this in an encyclopedic way. The one that differentiates a man from other living beings is mind, consciousness, intellect and ego. These can be explained as the psychological result of perception, learning and reasoning that happens internally. This works predominantly only on the physical plane, the lowest of all the planes (the level of existence and development). The invisible and powerful tool that comprises of four these components viz. consciousness (an alert psychological state in which you are aware of yourself and your situation), intellect, ego and mind. When an individual identifies himself with his body and emotions, it is called ego. As this is against the principles of self-realization, ego is considered as the most grievous enemy. The intellect and mind are interrelated and interdependent and one cannot function without the aid of the other. Intellect is a product that develops from the mind, but does not have the impure qualities of the mind. Suppose you see a rope. Your mind gets confused in the darkness (ignorance) whether it is a rope or a snake. The confusion prevails only in the mind. When the mind is in a state of confusion, the intellect



comes to its rescue. Intellect, by its sheer tidings conclusively decides that it is only rope. When the mind is in a state of trauma, only the intellect comes to its rescue.

In the path of spirituality, we should use the intellect and not the mind. Intellect is the purified and refined form of mind. Mind is pelted by the stimulations received from all our sense organs. When the mind on its own without the aid of the intellect, responds to these stimulations by means of actions, such actions arise out of ignorance (the impure form of mind). Intellect is also known as noesis. Intellect does not mean the quotidian knowledge. Mundane knowledge is different from the supreme intellect. The former is acquired by worldly experience and vulnerabilities and mainly deals with objects. The supreme intellect deals only with internal exploration (search within) and deals with the source of the object

and not with the object itself. What do we look for within? Look for the source of our creation. Why should we look for the Lord within when we say that He is omnipresent? It is easier for us to look within than to trenchant Him elsewhere in the macrocosm. That is why it is advocated to pursue the path of self-realization. This path is to be pursued with the help of mind, consciousness, intellect and ego. But not all the four have equal importance in this search. If all these are used in this search, you continue to dwell in the physical plane alone, in the sense that you consider your body as the source of creation. Body is only a product of creation and not its source. What we are trying to do is to know the source and not the product. This can be explained as the difference between a programmer and a vendor of software. Programmer creates the software and the vendor merely distributes it. The end user deals only with the vendor and not with the developer. What we are now trying to do is know the developer and know the source code. To know the source, we do not need the mind as the mind is unrefined and archaic. It can deal only with vendors. So leave that alone. Then there is ego, the pernicious enemy to know the creator. If it is involved it will always identify only the body. It does not know anything beyond body, as it knows only the body. So we have to drop this too. The balance is consciousness and intellect. Before proceeding further, we have to understand the difference between this two, the important tools in selfrealization.

Consciousness is awareness. There are several levels of consciousness. The lowest level of consciousness is at the physical plane and the highest level of consciousness is illuminating, pure and unpoluted and is outside the physical plane. There is no time and space limit to the highest level of consciousness. This highest level of consciousness is known as God or Spirit or Paramatma etc. The middle level of consciousness is neither pure nor impure and neither illuminating nor dark. This middle level of consciousness is called the soul or jiva or jivatma, where karmic account is embedded. The soul cannot function on its own and it needs necessary maneuvering to manifest from the highest level of consciousness or God. At this point, we are cognizant of the three levels of consciousness. The first is associated with the physical body, the next is associated with the soul and the third is the Spirit. It is only the intellect that differentiates between these three types of consciousness. The intellect functions on the basis of the stimulants derived from the mind. The mind seeks the help of intellect only when it is not able to decide on certain issues. Mind functions comfortably with all the objects and emotions. But when it comes to the subject, mind struggles to find a solution and leaves the decision to the intellect and mind and remains indentured to the senses. During this process, the mind gets profaned, impaired and remain pestiferous. Therefore, the intellect does not get colligated with mind and lower level of consciousness, the one that exists at the physical plane.

The intellect cannot propel beyond a certain point. Intellect is like a master or guru. A master cannot always be with his disciple. The master can only show the virtuous path and it is the will and dedication of the disciple that can take him forward. Same is the situation with consciousness and intellect. Consciousness is the student and intellect is the guru. The level of consciousness cannot come back from the higher levels that easily, unless the mind is terribly besmirched. When the intellect leaves the consciousness all alone, it becomes more matured and sublimated, unaffiliated, unpoluted and attains the state of self elucidation, which is called the Supreme Consciousness, the God.