

## Human Consciousness

**Dr. Rajshree**

Assistant Professor

Bhartiya College of Education

Udhampur, Jammu

rajshri.dei@gmail.com

### **Abstract**

*Human consciousness is awareness of things and the self. As a power of awareness, it exists in the form of dynamic creative energy, remaining mostly unnoticed and unknown. Human consciousness as a dynamic-evolutionary phenomenon, is in the process of growth, through certain stages and if cultivated and trained properly, may reach the final stage of the Gnostic Being of special help, can be the teaching of Patanjali, Aurobindo, or the system of the 'Koshas' or the seven 'Chakras'.*

*A synthesis of current viewpoint with regards to the 'Human psyche' and its optimum growth is pleaded and what is needed most is to get blendry of the psychologies of the East and the West to pave way for dispelling ignorance to realize the only one reality- the Sat, the Chit, and the Ananda.*

*The growth of human consciousness*

*Consciousness is-*

*A light that dwells within and sees within:*

*A light not born of Sun or Moon or Fire Shedding an intimate visibility.*

*-Savitri*

### **Introduction**

Above lines indicates that human consciousness is a subjective experience. Our saints, mystics, rishies, yogis, and poets, like Aurobindo, had during his life time. Some realized person in Ram, Krishna Paramhansa guru of Swami Vivekanand had and even new saints, sages claim to have experience of this light.

In common parlance, it means awareness of things and self. To be more precise, in words of Qrenstein, it is "awareness of awareness" because besides being aware of self and things, we are conscious or awareness too. It is inherent in existence, being those even when not active on surface, but silent, dormant immobile and invisible. It is not only a power of awareness; but also a dynamic creative energy. In humans it does not exhaust its possible ranges. There are ranges above and below human range as super-conscious and unconscious. It is difficult to define scientifically but can be described

as unique presence of events inside our organism, but can't be reduced in terms of anything else. However it can be felt as cognition of something in its state. To grasp it clearly, and interesting anecdote can help. Fishers, asking what water was! went to a wise fish who told them, it was all around them, yet they were still thirsty. Similarly we humans have an ocean of unnoticed consciousness, yet fail to know what it is, although it penetrates all existence living and non living, as a substratum. It is present even in solid matter for electronics constantly revolve around the nucleus of its atom and the physicists are not still able to decide whether matter is a substance or a wave. Higher reaches of consciousness lead to accepted levels of human aspirations as a Mestow's Self-actualization. Sir Aurobindo's Self perfection, Buddha's 'Nirvana', Raman's 'Self-realizations', or Vedant's merging with Supreme Absolute Energy- Sachchidanand, a blend of Sat, Chit, Anand –higher peak of Consciousness Growth.

### **Consciousness and psychology**

Modern psychology began as a science of consciousness but later on, developed as a science of behavior. Gustave Fechner had invented a method of 'Psychophysics' in an attempt to correlate mental and physical events. But research on consciousness continued under E. Titchner – group of psychologists who sought evidence in consciousness by introspection. Research was to analyze the content of personal consciousness and compare them with that of others, but some observers did not agree. John Watson came out with a suggestion that psychology could study 'action' which could be verified by objective methods. This led to movement of Behaviorism and soon swept academic psychology which still dominates its field.

Later on, Abraham Maslow, Carl Rogers appeared on this scene and passed on human growth potentials with their Humanistic Psychology to expose a full and comprehensive view of consciousness unlike famous facts of some blind-men who tried to investigate an elephant. One, who took hold of its trunk said, "It is soft and long and emits air." The other, touching his legs, cried, "It is massive, hard and cylindrical." Still another contacting his skin spoke, "It is rough and scaly." One who caught his ears, uttered, "It is like a fan to scare away flies." Each blind man had perceived a part of reality, but none was right, because no one had seen the elephant as a whole- the way of synthesis. This story makes clear that there is more than one way to know things and behaviorisms was not the sole option available to experimental psychologists. We can know what psychology with

different approaches, would be able to study para-normal phenomenon, like para ESP and mystic experiences, as well.

Contemporary psychology has recently added one more new branch named, ‘‘Trans-formal Psychology’’. It attempts to integrate the most ancient with recent developments in the field of psychology. The perspectives have a wider range of human existence. Not many experiences occur in everyday life what Maslow calls, ‘‘peak experiences’’, these are considered more salient and unique, as they provide a vision of ‘oneness’ with the ultimate energy and eliminate our fear of Death which is only a change of container – the body when one change of one old clothes in daily life as affirmed in the Sacred Gita. Transpersonal Psychology is mainly concerned with our meta-needs any mystic experience. It invites original contribution of empirical papers on self actualization and other personal relation, as also on achieving cosmic consciousness (and self transcendence).

To have a complete view of human nature we need to upgrade the psychology and comprehensive science as William James had once visualized in his varieties of Religious Experiments where he asserted, ‘‘Our normal working consciousness while parted from it, his potential forms of consciousness, entirely much of its essence in an attempt of refine the method.’’ The best solution is to blend the true modes. Objective and subjective or analytical and holistic, to study psychology onward. Both being complementary would yield a complete picture of man and provide a global view of consciousness. It is time to redefine the scope of psychology afresh and include both methods of study, analysis and synthesis.

### **Descent and ascent – a double journey**

Consciousness flows in two opposite currents – involution and evolution, one descends download from scripts into matter, the other moves back to its source upwards in the spirit or self. Involution flows from subtle to gross and evolution moves back from gross to matter to subtle spirit through the process of regulated growth on integration. In integrated state it gets established into ones essential nature (Patanjali, Yoga Sutram No. 3), but in its dispersed state. It is assimilated with modification of Mind, the whole process of double journey, in Involution, our or soul sink deeper and deeper in matter. Mandukya Upanishad describes four state of consciousness: walking, dreaming, deep-sleep and turya or transcendent state. It is peak of consciousness. Matter is a converted consciousness.

## **Growth process**

Frend recognized only three degrees of consciousness, the unconscious, sub-conscious and conscious and three forces working in them – id, ego and super ego. It reflects primitive motives we have with animals. Ego represents executive in man and super ego is has moral force, his conscience. It is a reservoir of instinctual derives and super ego has ethical attitudes.

Our ordinary working consciousness is only a small field below which large layers of sub-conscious and unconscious, non-visible to us.

Growth of human consciousness starts from below and upward in graded steps like one climbing a ladder with each step stable and firm till it reaches its peak – the super conscious level. Other level or planes it crosses in order are, unconscious, sub-conscious, conscious or mind, higher mind, illumined mind, institution, over-mind, super-mind and finally achieves its states of Gnostic being.

Each rung of imagined ladder is a world in itself. Those who reach super mind know well what is present in the Divine mind that is how yogis or mystics gain omniscience and omnipotence. Our growing consciousness differs in status at each level. In some, it is unorganized and suppressed but at higher ones it shows blissful tenderness. Its disposition makes one predominantly, physical, vitals mental bound or free. Each grade contributes its bit towards total consciousness but only that matters which turns towards Divine light when it reaches the super Mind-planes, norms of lower planes do not apply.

## **Traits developed at each stage**

### **1. Sub-Mental Levels**

Unconscious and sub conscious regions have brutal forces or satnic forces of dark cuverna as Rig Veda calls them, reside here and have to be made conscious through deep concentration to deal with adequately. Super mind and not the subliminal is competent to handle their heinous forces. The light of the Supreme power alone can illuminate these dark corners. Evolution or growth of consciousness upto mind has been our past progress and the future lies in the Super Mind.

## 2. The Mind

Ordinary mind sees thing in parts and not as Wholes like blind men of the story. The story of ascending consciousness is only 'Unshuttering' it form liner to global consciousness.

## 3. The Higher Mind

It is capable of knowing many ways of actions. This level is mostly found in philosophers and thinkers. They see the whole in a single view, can grasp total truth or integral whole in a single glimpse. There brilliance feeling and action vibrant of higher wisdom, charging our being with supreme consciousness.

## 4. The Illumined Mind

Its substance is not higher thoughts but spiritual light inner-peace and power that cause swift and violent impetus of rapid transformations for still higher levels of consciousness, not through intellect, but by vision which grants perpetual power of insight without interaction of rational thoughts. Here comes, is flood of light-inferred with several colours as per inner state a luminous unknown. Everything, as linked with internal joyous vibrations. The light is living and pleasing and helpful towards creative capacity. We can see a number of poets in consequence of this illumination such as Shi Aurbindo's Poetry is the best means to catch such vibrations.

## 5. Intuition

Bring us direct perception of truth with clear transparency. The truth comes within our Heart center in flashes as sounds of vibration which can hear in deep silence of mind, acquired through meditation. Sometimes, the light form intuition is compared with our wishful imagination from which we should be careful to discriminate. This power can be developed by practices in comparing the information received through intuition with actual happening in life, intuitive knowledge always descends from above and is accompanied by special feelings of overwhelming certainty.

## 6. The Over-Mind

This level brings us delegated light upon super mind an opening upward in totality of spirit. It is cosmic consciousness and climbs so well on the ladder that bottom remains linked with the top. All religions have born out of this and all high artistic creation comes out of this light of Over-mind. From its springs the continuous vision of joy, beauty and harmony. A stable light of the unitary consciousness,

the same in all things and in its own self. It comes out of this infinite and disappears into the Infinite. Hence its vibrations are vast, sustained and self-luminous.

### **7. The Super Mind**

Shows double movement of Ascent and Discent – Evolution and Involution. It is the peak of our growing consciousness and ultimately gets transformed into Gnostic or Divine consciousness. It has global vision and can see the whole world things in a single glance. It can judge the unexpressed viewpoint of each being. It sees from above and not from outside surface but from the centre- ‘A Vision of Wisdom’ whereas our mind see only surface of things. At this level man starts thinking spherically, i. e., nothing as finite but infinite. The Super Mind links past, present and future, all the three as indivisible, the three that too in a single look. It is not only the cosmic level, transcended as well the God in eternal silence is a step towards Divine Being.

### **8. The Gnostic Being**

Gnosis means knowledge of truth. At this plane or grade, consciousness becomes established in its natures and becomes so subtle that its mortal coating disappears and begins to see things from point of Oneness. Its will, feeling and actions, proceed from its very back like that of Ether. It, no longer, uncovers ignorance but evolves from knowledge of greater knowledge, from light to greater light, integrating man's spiritual nature all along. Gnostic Being is essentially an entity of inherent and can penetrate into truth of each thing for its descends from the ultimate supreme power – the Creator of this universe. These are three levels of existing Reality – the individual, the universal and the transcendental. The Gnostic Being forms the basis of all these three.

### **Available Means**

Several ways are there to transform human beings into Gnostic being, but the most popular and practical ones use

- (a) Patanjali's Dehtanga Yoga Sutras with limbs.
- (b) Sri Aurobindo's Method of Silence and Maditation
- (c) Probing of the 5 Koshas (or sheaths) enclosing one Psychic Being or Soul and,
- (d) Penetrations of 7 centers of Energy located along one spinal column by Kundali Shohli, as recommended by Swami Rama of Himalayan Institute of Yogs and Psychotherapy of Rishikesh, Haridwar.

(A.) **Patanjalis** Psychology deals with mind holistically and compares it with a lake with calm and crystal clear water. Thoughts, he compares with its waves, stirring into activity after from its bed. One can see through clear water to its innermost levels with deeply quieted mind. Patanjali is very practical. He starts with good moral conduct of 'Do and don'ts' to have mastery over sensory input so as to bring order in mental field. In last three steps he traces to make mind one pointed and deeply concentrated to reach the state of Samadhi.

#### **Ashlans Yoga (Showing the eight limbs)**

Yama	Niyam	Asana	Pranayam	Pratyatrae	Dharma	Dhyan	Samadhi
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Moral	Conduct	Psysique	Birth	Withdrawal Trancedence of senses			

#### **(B.) Silence and Meditation**

In moments when inner lamps are lit, and life's cherished guests are lefts outside, our spirit sits alone and seeks its gulp. Savitri

Deep silence greatly helps in reaching our psychic center – the soul. Silent Mind is not blank with no thoughts, but has some positive ideas that are in tune with our chosen objectives. Consciousness is like a vessel to be emptied of undesirable contents and filled with pure and right ones. Both preserve and active silence work to lend peace and harmony to mind without disturbing its inner stability. It creates a suitable air to breathe, to live in and accelerates the growing consciousness to climb to its highest grades.

Regular meditation is another potent force towards speedy transformation of human beings with Gnostic Beings with the supreme light of the Divine.

#### **(C.) Penetration of Five Sheaths**

Human Atma or Soul is covered by five sheaths like layers of an onion. The outer most layer or sheath is our gross skin – the food sheath. Other sheaths, in order, are energy or vital sheaths, mental sheath, wisdom sheath and bliss or delight sheath. Consciousness is to probe those sheaths one by one, in turn, starting from food and one reaching the Bliss or delight sheath which sheds flood of intense bright light, sufficient to lit all the covering layers in one glow. This light also speeds up one growth of Consciousness.

#### **(D.) The Seven Centers of Energy or the Chakras**

Chakra means a wheel. Man's mental activities mainly depend upon his nervous system. There is a subtle body inside our gross one. Subliminal self is the store-house of vital energy. There are seven energy centres located along our spinal column. The lowest one is at base – the anal, where kundalini sheath is lying asleep like a coiled snake and when awakened through yogic techniques, it uncoils itself and begins to rise upward as a fiery serpent and break open and breaks open each chakras or lotus until it reaches the Crown.

Each centre is linked with some human emotions or tendency. The anal chakra is linked with fear or aggression. The genital one with sensuality and sexuality, the solar chakra is linked with domination or submission, the heart one is linked with empathy and integration of upper and lower parts of body. The chakra of the third eye controls insight and light within. The Crown chakra brings us the highest state of consciousness of Gnostic being and generates unlimited power in us to be utilized for speedy growth of our consciousness or for any vital purpose in life.

#### **Conclusion**

Human consciousness is a synthesis of many viewpoints with regards to Human Psyche and its optimum growth. Suggested amalgamation of Eastern and Western Psychology of which its latest branch is an example, There is one and only reality – Sat, Chit, Ananda or Sachchidananda or Absolute Energy. Controller of all existence living and non-living, covering all existence, individual, universal and transcendent. We have come out of this Reality and are destined to return to it, sooner or later, in this birth or subsequent births. Before we reach our destined goal, we must vanquish our formidable



Foe- Ignorance, Constantly blocking our way. This truth is further confirmed by these lines of Sri Aurobindo's immortal poem 'Savitri' as given below-

“The hidden be lodged in human breast, Man must overcome or miss his fate. This is the inner war without escape.”

### References

- Aurobindo, Sri. (1919) The Life Divine, Aurobindo Ashram Trust, Pondicherry.
- Aurobindo, Sri. (1940) Savitri, Legend and a Symbol, Aurobindo Ashram Trust, Pondicherry.
- Aurobindo, Sri. (1949) The Human Cycle, Aurobindo Ashram Trust, Pondicherry.
- Hoffman, Edward. (1988) The Right to be Human, P. Tarcher Inc. Loss Angels, New York.
- Hoffman, Edward. (1988) The Right to be Human, P. Tarcher Inc. Loss Angels, New York.
- James, W. (1961) Varieties of Religious Experience, George Allen and Unwin, London.
- Prem, Sat. (1968) Adventure of Consciousness, Aurobindo Ashram Trust, Pondicherry.
- Swami, R. & Ajay, A. (1986) Yoga and Psychotherapy, International Institute of Yoga Science, Hnedole.
- Sen, I. (1940) India Integral Psychology, International Centre of Education, Pondicherry.
- Taimni, I.K. (1970) Service of Yoga, Glimps into psychology of Yoga, Theosophical Publication House, Madras.