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The Ultimate Battle of the Mind Through the Lens of The Ancient Art of Knowledge

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Abstract:

The Mind is the centre of our mental faculties. Everyone has an intimate familiarity with their Mind, in terms of thoughts, feelings, emotions and sensations, yet, to define the properties of the Mind and its nature is not so trivial. Thus, the Mind has been the focus of intense philosophical scrutiny for thousands of years. In this review paper, I try to explain - What is Mind? The nature of the Mind is further explored by examining the question: What is Reality? The nature of Reality is investigated by delving into the timeless teachings of *Advaita Vedanta* to understand Nonduality. Whether one is an atheist or a devotee, by knowing that one is the impersonal nondual reality leads to a oneness in Life which transcends any differences of beliefs, viewpoints, empirical knowledge or personality. Finally, the popular book: *The Art of War* by Sun Tzu, is used as an analogy to provide some practical advice on how to handle our lives by way of: *The Art of Knowledge*.

Keywords: *Upanishads, Advaita Vedanta, Atman, Brahman, Bhagavad Gita, The Art of War, Mind, Consciousness*

INTRODUCTION

In 1987, the English pop band, Pet Shop Boys rocked the global music industry with their unique synth-pop rendition of the timeless classic: *You were always on my mind* (1). Just like all the other children of the Eighties, I listened to it as often as possible. This is because music is a fantastic way to endure childhood suffering, in the plenitude of the modern era. However, an aspect that was intriguing was the title itself: You (the presumed object of desire), were always on *my* mind.

Without any mental effort it is common to speak about the mind in the third person, hence common phrases such as: *My mind*. From our own subjective perspective, it is taken for granted that our mind is our own and not borrowed or bought from an online store. That mind has been naturally identified as an object and that mind-object, is mine. The mind is Possessed and I am the Possessor. However, this separation begs for a follow-up question: *If the mind is the object (which is mine) then who or what am I?*

From a logical standpoint, we could consider: *Can I be the mind if I claim to possess it?*

If we were to enquire into the meaning of the sentence: *My mind*, we might experientially notice the subtle separation between one's own self-awareness and the mind.

Furthermore, everyone is familiar with the meaning of the words: *My mind*. From ancient times to Buddhist Mindfulness meditation, and now with modern mental health and wellbeing therapy, the language of separation between the subjective I, and the objective mind, is commonly used and understood.

However, when the mind is churning thoughts about past regrets or future anxieties, we often say: *I am worried*, which implies an identification with the mind. We now have two statements:

1. *My mind*: Corresponds to a separation between individuality and the mind.
2. *I am worried*: Implies identification of individuality with the mind.

The above two statements contradict each other. The first is of the form: Mine or My (possessive) and the latter is of the form: I or I am (self-directed).

With objects we never confuse the two forms. For example: *My mobile phone* is commonly used but: *I am a mobile phone* is mildly amusing. Yet, when we speak about our minds, both statements are used with full understanding between the Speaker and the Listener.

We must ask: What is happening here? Which statement form is correct, "Mine" or "I"? With respect to the "I", one's own individuality, is the "I" the mind? Or is the "I" not the mind?

Advaita Vedanta makes the stunning claim that: You are *neither the I nor the Mind nor any other thing*. Then it follows with an even more radical claim: *The I, the Mind and every other thing is none other than You*.

ADVAITA VEDANTA OVERVIEW

The *Upanishads* are the final knowledge sections of the ancient Indian *Vedas*. Written in Sanskrit, through a variety of fantastic stories, everyday metaphors, teacher-student

conversations and other profound pointers, the *Upanishads* discuss *Brahman* (ultimate reality) and *Atman* (the Self, the innermost reality of the individual) in a non-dogmatic way.

Collectively, the *Upanishads* are called: *Vedanta*. The purport of *Vedanta* is the cessation of *Samsara* (suffering) and realisation of *Moksha* (ultimate freedom).

The *Taittiriya Upanishad* verse 2.1.1 defines *Brahman* as: *Satyam Jnanam Anantham Brahman*. Ultimate Truth, Knowledge, Infinite without any limits.

The *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad* verse 3.9.28 defines *Brahman* as: *viññānamānandaṁ brahma*. Knowledge and Bliss is *Brahman*.

Atman is defined as *Sat-Chit-Ananda*. Absolute Existence-Consciousness-Bliss. As these are not qualities but a definition, the terms are taken together: *Satchitananda Atma*.

In doing so, the *Upanishads* explain *Jiva* (any sentient life), *Jagat* (the insentient universe) and *Ishvara* (God).

There are many interpretations of the *Upanishads* which form the various philosophical schools of *Vedanta*. All these schools consider the *Upanishads* as the supreme source of scriptural knowledge. It is beyond the scope of this paper to discuss these schools however it is relevant to say that all these schools are theist, except one. That exception is the oldest philosophical school of nondual *Advaita Vedanta*.

All schools of *Vedanta* are based on the *Prasthānatraya*, the three sources of scriptural knowledge: the *Bhagavad Gita*, the *Upanishads* and the *Brahma Sutras*. The metaphysics of these three texts were systematized by the great *Advaita Vedanta* monk, Adi Shankara, c. 700 CE. His philosophical teachings cover ontology, epistemology and axiology.

Advaita Vedanta uses *Shruti* (authority of the *Upanishads*), *Yukti* (reasoning) and *Anubhava* (direct experience) to show that the only conclusion of the *Upanishads* is *Brahman-Atman-Aikyam Jnanam*. The term *Aikyam* means that *Atman* and *Brahman* are identical and non-different. According to *Advaita Vedanta*, there aren't two (or more) independently real entities. Reality is not *dvaita* (dual). Reality is *Advaita* (nondual).

Advaita Vedanta recognises four *Mahavakyas* from the *Upanishads* which help point out that *Atman* is identical to *Brahman*. These great sentences are:

1. *Prajnanam Brahma*: Consciousness is *Brahman*, from *Aitreya Upanishad* 3.3
2. *Tat Tvam Asi*: That thou art, from *Chandogya Upanishad* 6.8.7
3. *Aham Brahmasmi*: I am *Brahman*, from *Brihadaranyaka* 1.4.10
4. *Ayam Atma Brahma*: This Self is *Brahman*, from *Mandukya Upanishad* 1.2

In order for the teaching techniques to be effective, *Advaita Vedanta* asks spiritual seekers to focus on the *Sadhana Chatustaya* the four-fold spiritual practice which is essential for Self-Realisation. These are:

1. *Viveka*: Discernment between *nitya* (permanent unchanging) and *anitya* (impermanent changing). The idea is to realise that all changing objective experiences are to you, the constant conscious subject.
2. *Vairagya*: Dispassion. Given the above *Viveka*, having noticed your desires and fears, become indifferent to them.
3. *Shatsampat*: The Six Disciplines of:
 - a. *Shama*: Calmness and control of the mind.
 - b. *Dama*: Restraint of the senses to external objects.
 - c. *Uparati*: Reducing worldly activities to provide more time for study.
 - d. *Titiksha*: Endure any hardships and sorrows with a cheerful outlook.
 - e. *Sharaddha*: Trust in the scriptures and teacher that the knowledge gained will be fruitful.
 - f. *Samadhana*: Single-pointed focus on the Self.
4. *Mumukshutva*: An intense desire for *moksha*.

The core teaching methodology of *Advaita Vedanta* is: *Adhyāropa* (superimposition) and *Apavāda* (de-superimposition or negation). A new concept is brought in which is slightly subtler than a seeker's current World View. When the seeker has understood the initial concept, it is negated. This is done by bringing in another concept which is subtler than the first. Step-by-step, the pairs of *adhyāropa-apavāda* increase in subtlety. Until finally an intuitive leap must be made by the seeker, alone.

Shankara neatly compresses all of *Advaita Vedanta* into his infamous maxim: *Brahma satyam Jagat mithya, Jivo brahmaiva naparah*. *Brahman* is the ultimate reality, the universe is an appearance and the individual, is none other than *Brahman*. Though *Jiva* and *Jagat* are mentioned, they are *mithya* (appearances, to be explained later), but they are not non-existent. Only nondual *Brahman* is.

Within the *Advaita* framework, the realisation that this *Jiva* is that *Brahman*, is *moksha* resulting in *Purnam* (wholeness) and *Abhayam* (fearlessness and freedom). The implications of Shankara's claim must be hammered into every spiritual seeker: *You are already That which you seek. Just remove the ignorance that you're not.*

However, Shankara's maxim seems to be far removed from the everyday experiences of typical humans. Though an individual's life is unique, what is common is an undertone of incompleteness, desires and fears. In acting out these emotions we experience momentary pleasures and long-lasting pains. Despite the enforced *happy face* we show externally to others, at some point in life, we find ourselves internalising big questions such as: *Who am I? What is*

all this? Will the background dullness ever end? If there is one topic almost everyone can agree on, it is quite likely to be *Samsara*, the sorrow and suffering that is experienced throughout life.

One should question the *Advaita* tradition: *If I am that ever-free Atman, which is identical to Brahman, right-here right-now then why do I not know it? Why can't I experience it, or at least experience the bliss aspect of Atman?* *Advaita* claims that it is due to inherent natural nescience, of not knowing oneself as *Brahman*. The Sanskrit word for this primary ignorance is: *Ajnana* or *Avidya*. This ignorance leads to an incorrect understanding about oneself and the world. The Sanskrit word for incorrect understanding or mistake is: *Adhyasa*. The only way to remove the ignorance of something is by knowledge: *Vidya*.

In *Bhagavad Gita* Chapter 6 Verse 6, Lord Krishna reminds Arjuna of a common fact:

*bandhur ātmātmanas tasya yenātmaivātmanā jitaḥ
anātmanas tu śhatrutve vartetātmaiva śhatru-vat BG 6.6*

“For one who has conquered the mind, the mind is the best of friends; but for one who has failed to do so, their mind will remain the greatest of enemies.” BG 6.6

What does it mean to conquer the mind? In Chapter 6 Verse 35 Lord Krishna urges Arjuna to try controlling the mind:

*śhrī bhagavān uvācha
asanśhayam mahā-bāho mano durnigraham chalam
abhyāsenā tu kaunteya vairāgyeṇa cha grīhyate BG 6.35*

“O mighty-armed one, undoubtedly the mind is intractable and restless. But O son of Kuntī, it is brought under control through practice and detachment.” BG 6.35

How does one conquer and control the mind? The answer is explored later.

The standard example of the interplay between *Ajnana* and *Adhyasa* is the Snake-Rope example: A dimly lit rope is seen as a poisonous snake, ready to pounce and bite. *Advaita* points out that the ignorance of the rope, leads to the mistaken cognition that the rope is a fearsome snake. If one were told to examine the situation closely, then one would have to (1) calm down (2) question what was seen by doubting, negating the snake perception and then with *Ishwara's* Grace, (3) realise that the snake is actually just a rope. Though simplistic, this example provides some important points:

1. *Ajnana* of the rope caused *adhyasa* that it is a snake.
2. Seeing a snake caused *samsara* of fear and suffering.
3. Though the rope appeared as a snake, there was only rope. There never was a snake.
4. The apparent snake was not non-existent because it was experienced.

5. Ignorance of the rope was removed by *vidya* knowledge of the rope.
6. Prior to knowledge, one must negate the experience of the snake.
7. The rope did not create the appearance of the snake.
8. The apparent snake was projected onto the rope by some power.

In *Bhagavad Gita* Chapter 2 Verse 16, Lord Krishna explains to Arjuna the highest truth:

*nāsato vidyate bhāvo nābhāvo vidyate sataḥ
ubhayorapi dṛiṣṭo 'nta stvanayos tattva-darśibhiḥ BG 2.16*

*“The Unreal has no existence; the Real has no non-existence. The nature of both, has
been realised by the seers of Truth.” BG 2.16*

The Real is that which exists in all three periods of time: past, present and future. The Unreal exists only in the present. There is only the Real.

Advaita explains that all perceived objects are *Mithya*. *Mithya* means that though an object is experienced hence not non-existent, the objects are not independently real. Connecting with the first line of the verse, *mithya* relates to the word: Unreal. A more accessible way to understand *mithya* is that it refers to an appearance which is in between the absolutely Real and the absolutely non-existent. A perfect example of *mithya* is a dream. During a dream, the objects and events which are experienced feel real, but upon waking, dreams are easily dismissed. Those dream objects and events were just appearances.

Given that *Brahman* is defined as *Satyam*, the timeless changeless Truth then *Mithya* objects are: False appearances. Just like the false snake appearing on the rope, the last line of the verse can be interpreted as: *The Unreal though experienced, is only an appearance on the Real and (by extension) nothing but the Real*. It is worth repeating that to say an object is false or unreal does not mean non-existent or illusory, because the object is experienced.

According to *Advaita*: Any perceived object is *mithya* because it is experienced. This draws attention inwards to oneself, the Consciousness aspect of the Self, *Atma*. In which case, all objects of perception are: *Anatma*, Not-Self. Anything which is *mithya*, is *anatma*.

How was the experienceable snake projected on the rope? How is the world full of experienceable objects?

In *Bhagavad Gita* Chapter 7 Verse 14, Lord Krishna explains, *Maya*, His Divine Power:

*daivī hyeṣā guṇamayī mama māyā duratyayā
māmeva ye prapadyante māyāmetāṃ taranti te BG 7.14*

“This divine illusion of Mine caused by the qualities, is difficult to cross over; those who take refuge in Me alone, cross over this illusion” BG 7.14

Advaita suggests: *Maya* is a projecting power which has two aspects: *Vikshepa* (projecting) and *Aravana* (veiling).

Maya projects the Universe and veils the *Jiva* in *Avidya* (ignorance) about the *Jiva*’s true nature. *Brahman* with the power of *Maya*, is called *Ishvara* (Krishna or God with divine qualities). From *Ishvara* come the manifestations of *Jiva* and *Jagat*. Yet *Jiva*, *Jagat*, *Ishvara*, *Maya* are *mithya*, they are appearances in *Brahman* because only *Brahman* exists.

When the ignorant *Jiva* takes itself to be an independently real individual living in a real Universe, the *Jiva* makes two types of *adhyasa* errors:

1. *Asambhavana*: The existence of the real *Atma* is denied.
2. *Viparitabhavana*: The unreal Universe including the body and mind, is taken as real.

Adhyasa causes the *Jiva* to experience *samsara*. Shankara often quotes his famous axiom about *samsara*: *avidya-kama-karma*. From Ignorance, comes desire (& fear) which leads to action and their results, which leads to endless cycles of yet more desires, actions and results. One could say that the link between *avidya* and *kama* is *adhyasa*. Hence: *avidya-adhyasa-kama-karma*.

What is required is *Vidya* (Knowledge) about *Atman-Brahman*. *Vidya* is also a product of *Maya*. Hence, *Maya* cannot be considered in negative terms. *Maya* is the divine positive power of *Ishvara* to manifest the Universe and provide endless opportunity for a *Jiva* to undertake their spiritual journey.

The *Jiva*’s *sadhana* (spiritual journey) is a path from Ignorance to Knowledge. It is performed through a process of *Shravana* (scriptural study), *Manana* (resolving doubts) and *Nididhyasana* (assimilation through reflection). Just like the snake-rope example, a crucial part of rope-knowledge is to cognitively negate whatever was experienced or perceived using the technique of *neti-neti*. The term *neti-neti* is mentioned in *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad* verse 2.3.6:

*athāta ādeśaḥ—neti neti, na hyetasmāditi netyanyatparamasti;
atha nāmadheyam—satyasya satyamiti Br.Up 2.3.6*

“Now therefore the description (of Brahman):

‘Not this, not this.’ Because there is no other and more appropriate description than this

‘Not this.’ Now Its name: ‘The Truth of truth.’” Br.Up 2.3.6

The negation aspect of *neti-neti* follows the ordinary understanding that one cannot be what one experiences. A conscious subject cannot be the object. Hence, the *Advaita Vedanta* working

principle that the ultimate subject can be considered as the: Not-That Consciousness. The positive aspect of *neti-neti* is that one's identity with an experienced object is shifted to the Consciousness aspect of *Satchitananda Atma*. In other words, the first *neti* corrects the mistake of *viparitabhavana*, to understand that the Universe including one's body mind is an appearance. The second *neti* corrects the mistake of *asambhavana* to realise that the *Jiva's* identity is *Atman*.

We return to the question: How does one conquer and control the mind? By simply understanding that one is not the mind. Mind is a series of thoughts which appear to you.

For example, I love my cat. When my cat is happy then I'm happy. When my cat is sick, I feel awful. I am identified with my cat. Using *neti-neti*, I can still love and take care of my cat however I am centred within my own being. Though my mind might react to the cat, I am unaffected. This doesn't mean I am cold and indifferent to my cat. It means I am free to use the mind so that my cat is treated in the best way possible, for its well-being. Because my cat's well-being is non-different to my mind's well-being.

WHAT IS MIND?

According to Isaac Newton, gravity is an attractive force which is a natural consequence of the interaction between the Earth and everything else, including ourselves. We live within Earth's gravitational field, yet we do not think about gravity, we simply accept and use gravity in our day to day physical activities. If gravity were removed, such as in outer space, then life would continue albeit in a drastically different way.

Consciousness is like gravity; it is present in every experience, yet it is taken for granted and unnoticed. Every sentient lifeform has some sort of awareness of its environment. Though we use awareness in every waking moment to conduct our lives, we do not typically pay attention to awareness itself. When we consider ourselves as to who we are, with a little bit of self-analysis we can easily reach an understanding that we are not the body but some sort of *embodied mind*.

Disassociation is a conscious separation or detachment from something or someone, yet it can be a coping mechanism too. Disassociation should not be confused with Dissociation.

During disassociation, it feels like one is a silent non-judgemental witness to all external events and situations. It can be argued that *Vedanta* posits a form of internal disassociation, such that one is a silent witness of not just external events but also to all thoughts (including feelings, emotions and sensations) in the mind. Instead of an embodied mind, *Vedanta* encourages one to notice ourselves as a non-judging witness.

The *Shruti* discusses the Witness nature of ourselves as *Atman*. In *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad* verse 3.7.23:

yo retasi tiṣṭhan retaso 'ntarah, yaṃ reto na veda, yasya retah śarīram, yo reto 'ntaro yamayati, eṣa ta ātmā 'ntaryāmyamṛtaḥ; adrṣṭo draṣṭā, aśrutaḥ śrotā, amato mantā, avijñāto vijñātā; nānyo 'to 'sti draṣṭā, nānyo 'to 'sti śrotā, nānyo 'to 'sti mantā, nānyo 'to 'sti vijñātā, eṣa ta ātmāntaryāmyamṛtaḥ, ato 'nyadārtam; tato hoddālaka ārunirupararāma Br.Up 3.7.23

“He who inhabits the organ of generation but is within it, whom the organ does not know, whose body is the organ, and who controls the organ from within, is the Internal Ruler, your own immortal self. He is never seen but is the Witness; He is never heard, but is the Hearer; He is never thought, but is the Thinker; He is never known, but is the Knower. There is no other witness but Him, no other hearer but Him, no other thinker but Him, no other knower but Him. He is the Internal Ruler, your own immortal self. Everything else but Him is mortal. Thereupon Uddālaka, the son of Aruṇa, kept silent.” Br.Up 3.7.23

The *antahkarana* (mind) is concisely defined in *Vedantasara*, a beginner’s text that describes Vedantic Cosmology, particularly the instruments of sensory knowledge within the body. Together with the five instruments of the senses, *antahkarana* is considered as the sixth instrument of knowledge. It is a part of the *Sukshma Sharira* (subtle body).

The *antahkarana* being made of predominantly *Satvic* subtle elements, has one more distinctive feature. It can reflect the Consciousness aspect of *Atman-Brahman*. This reflected consciousness in the *Antahkarana* is called *Chidabhasa*. *Chidabhasa* is the vedantic equivalent of the individual conscious awareness which we use with the mind to transact in the world.

The *antahkarana* can undergo modifications, called *vrittis* (thoughts). There are four types of *vrittis*:

1. *Buddhi*. Intellect that introspects, reasons, understands and determines.
2. *Manas*. Mind that deliberates on thoughts, feelings, emotions and sensations.
3. *Chitta*. Memory that stores impressions from past experiences
4. *Ahamkara*. I-maker that is the Ego. The Ego can appropriate identities of whatever is being experienced. It gives rise to the notions: “I” and “Mine”.

When a sense organ perceives an object, the mind forms a *vritti*, whose form is that perceived object. Conscious cognition happens when *chidabhasa* illumines the *vritti*. Then the *vritti* is revealed.

For example, the eye sees a rope and the mind transforms to take the form of the rope i.e. a *vritti* in the form of the rope. If the mind is certain about the existence of the rope, then the mind is known as *buddhi*. If uncertain whether it is a rope or a snake, then the mind is called *manas*. If the mind recalls a snake seen in the past, the mind is called *chitta*. When the mind

establishes an identity relationship of “I” or “Mine” with the object as in “I see a snake” the mind is known as *ahamkara*.

The *buddhi* is capable of metacognition i.e. Thinking about *Thinking*. It has two functional aspects:

1. Reflection: The ability to reflect on current mental activity. For example, a *vritti* of the form “I am aware that I am hungry”.
2. Reflection on self-awareness: Alternatively called: *Being aware of being aware*. Here the *chidabhasa* illumines and reveals a *vritti* of the form “I am aware of being aware”.

These metacognitive functions are available when required. If during a metacognitive period, our attention is switched to another mental activity then the metacognition is lost. Metacognition is not a state of being because during deep sleep it is not available. Importantly, metacognition in the *buddhi* is experienced and known.

Therefore, metacognition and the function of *Being Aware of being aware* is seen, it is experienced, it is *mithya*.

The above formulations of how the mind works is not of primary importance. What is of significance is that the notion of *embodied mind* has been separated into further components: *buddhi*, *manas*, *chitta* and *ahamkara* in a way which is in line with the *Upanishads*, logical and experientially verifiable. Only in ignorance, one identifies themselves to be *ahamkara* (Ego). But by introducing logical concepts, one might intuitively switch identity to the subtler *chidabhasa* (individual awareness).

The *Drg-Drśya Viveka*, is an introductory text to *Vedānta* which conducts a self-inquiry into the Seer and the Seen. The very first verse indicates an important aspect of one’s true nature:

*rupam drishyam locanam drik
tad drishyam drik tu manasam
drishya dhi-vrittayah sakshi
drig eva na tu drishyate DDV 1*

“The form (object of perception) is perceived and the eye is its perceiver.

The eye is perceived and the mind is its perceiver.

The mind with its modifications is perceived and the Witness (the Self) is verily the perceiver.

But It (the Witness Self) is not perceived by any other.” DDV 1

In the passage above, the technique of *neti-neti* is used to traverse the Perceiver-Perceived chain, until one reaches *Saksi*, the Witness Self. The important fact is that you, the Witness Self are not an object of perception. The Witness can never be an object of perception because it would entail another conscious entity to witness the Witness, resulting in the logical defect of infinite regress. *Vedānta* strictly disallows any failures in logic.

Neuroscience agrees with *Vedanta*. The photons of light that left the rope and hit the retina of the eye get converted to electro-chemical signals which are then transmitted along the optic nerve, to the neurons of the brain. Even though there is no subjective experience of the neurons firing away, in the darkness of the brain, the messages are somehow converted into an illuminating first person experience of seeing a brightly lit rope. How the physical sensory interaction gets converted into conscious experience (or qualia) is the subject of David Chalmers' paper on the *Hard Problem of Consciousness*.

Vedanta defines *chidabhasa* as Consciousness of the *Atman* seemingly reflected, hence limited, by the mind. Why is *Chidabhasa* described in this way? The experience of any object is mediated through the mind. Therefore, *chidabhasa* witness-self is witnessing the *vruttis*. The limitation is that it is still at the level of identification, as an individual *Jiva*. The radical answer is that *chidabhasa* is an appearance of *Atman Brahman*. Furthermore, Witness and Witnessed is an obvious duality. How is this *advaitam*, Nonduality?

WHAT IS REALITY?

To understand how *chidabhasa* is a subtle appearance and to explain the apparent duality between the Witness and the Witnessed, we explore the aspects of the nondual Absolute Reality.

Nonduality

There is a popular metaphor that helps explain the meaning of Nonduality. The metaphor is especially worth re-enacting if one happens to be on vacation at a beach. The waves on an ocean come in all shapes and sizes. They may have differences in speed and frequency. Waves crash against each other, ending in either annihilation or aggregation. The waves are parts which together make up the whole ocean. The waves arise and subside in the ocean. Sometimes, the ocean is calm and almost free of waves. Yet, at all times, the waves and the ocean are just water, but the water could be something else, for example, spray or foam.

There are some important aspects:

1. Wave and Water cannot be counted separately. Either we can count the many waves or just the singular water.
2. Waves are Water, but water can be spray or the foaming surf. Water transcends the Wave.
3. When the Wave is touched, all that is experienced is Water. Water is immanent in the Wave.
4. The existence of the Wave depends on the Water. But the existence of the Water does not depend on the Waves. Water is unaffected by the Wave. The Waves may change infinitely but the Water remains changelessly the same Water.

5. From the standpoint of the Waves, it is as if the Waves are created, stay for a while and then they are destroyed.
6. From the standpoint of Water, Waves are not created nor destroyed. Waves are manifested from the Water and unmanifested into the Water. Water holds an infinite variety of unmanifested waves.
7. The emergent properties of the waves such as height, frequency, speed are not intrinsic in the Water.
8. The intrinsic properties of the water such as wetness, salinity, temperature, density are unconditionally inherited by the Waves. These properties of Water cannot be negated in any Wave. Hence, it would be futile (and absurd) to derive the intrinsic properties of Water from the emergent properties of the Waves.
9. Wave is just Water appearing with a Name (Wave) and Form (emergent properties).
10. The Wave and its emergent properties are just an Appearance of Water.
11. Though one might look for a real causal relationship between Wave and Water, there isn't one, because there is only water. If one insists on using terms of causality, then all that could be said is: Water is the causeless-cause of Wave.
12. Water is all the Waves and at same time Water is empty of all Waves.
13. All the Waves together, is the Ocean. Water is the nondual reality of Waves and Ocean.

In the above example, Water is what makes the waves exist. Hence, Water is the nondual reality of the waves. As there are no independently real waves, any wave is just water in a specific form. Therefore, the word “wave” has no real referent. It is just shorthand for “wavey water” as opposed to “foamy water”. Nonduality could be defined using an Asymmetric Identity between Water and Wave, as follows: Wave is Water, but Water transcends all known & unknown Waves.

There are many metaphors of Nonduality, between an underlying substance and its many appearances, for example: Gold and Ornaments, Clay and Pots, Wood and Furniture, TV Screen and Movies. The Asymmetric Identity is: Appearance is substance and substance transcends all known and unknown appearances of that substance. The appearances are nothing but the substance however the substance can appear in a boundless number of forms, not yet even conceived. Therefore, the substance cannot be counted with the many ways it appears. Where these metaphors breakdown is that the underlying substances (Water, Gold, Clay, Wood, TV Screen) are themselves composed of finer substances. For example, Water is nothing but oxygen and hydrogen.

The term Nonduality has two types of negations:

1. Between appearances of opposing properties. For example, hot vs cold, good vs bad, happiness vs sadness, etc. The opposing components of any pairings are experienceable; hence the opposing components and the pairing are *mithya*. The Nondual reality witnesses these dualities.

2. Nonduality does not have any intrinsic properties or attributes: Any property can be applied with postfix “-less”. For example, change is seen. The Nondual Reality is devoid of change hence it is Changeless. Likewise, the Nondual Reality is Timeless, Spaceless, Objectless etc.

Is the Nondual Reality attributeless? The answer must be Yes but then “attributeless” is an attribute. The answer must be adjusted that the Attributeless Nondual Reality is just a pointer to that inexpressible Reality which is the only conscious being.

Satyam Jnanam Anantham Brahman

In *Bhagavad Gita* Chapter 13 verse 3, Lord Krishna explains to Arjuna what is real, who is the Knower and what is the Known:

*kṣetrājñāṃ cāpi māṃ viddhi sarva-kṣetreṣu bhārata
kṣetra-kṣetrājñāyor-jñānaṃ yat-taj-jñānaṃ mataṃ mama BG 13.3*

“Know Me as the Knower in all Fields, O Bharat; Knowledge of the Field and also Knowledge of the Knower, is considered by Me, to be My Knowledge.” BG 13.3

The above *Bhagavad Gita* verse is explained by the following verse from the *Taittiriya Upanishad*. *Taittiriya Upanishad Brahmananda Valli* 2.1.1 begins with:

*om brahmavidāpnoti param . tadeṣā'bhyuktā
satyaṃ jñānāmanantaṃ brahma
yo veda nihitaṃ guhāyāṃ parame vyoman
so'snute sarvān kāmānsaha . brahmaṇā vipaściteti*

“Om! The knower of Brahman attains the highest: Here is a verse uttering that very fact: ‘Brahman is truth, knowledge, and infinite. He who knows that Brahman as existing in the intellect which is lodged in the supreme space in the heart, enjoys in identification with the all-knowing Brahman, all desirable things simultaneously.’” Ta.Up 2.1.1

The verse states that *Brahman* is *Satyam Jnanam Anantham Brahman*. *Satyam* means Truth-Existence. *Jnanam* means Knowledge-Consciousness. *Anantham* means Infinite-Limitless.

According to Shankara, the terms *Satyam Jnanam Anantham* are not used as adjectives to describe or qualify *Brahman* but used as a definition to point out *Brahman*. The three terms are used in apposition referring to the same *Brahman*:

1. *Satyam*: Truth that is real and the ground for all that exists. As *satyam* is changeless it can't come and go, therefore *satyam* is timeless. Changeless existence implies uncaused hence *satyam* is the original material cause of all effects. Therefore, *Brahman* is not an

effect. However, like material clay needs a conscious potter, the term *Satyam* requires an efficient cause.

2. *Jnanam*: Knowledge, Consciousness. Consciousness implies a Knower (subject), Knowable (object) and Knowledge (to be known). For the part “The knower of *Brahman*...”, *Brahman* cannot be the Knower because a Knower undergoes modification and change. If *Brahman* were the Knower, then it cannot be the Knowable Object i.e. itself! If *Brahman* is the Knowable then there is no other conscious entity which can be the Knower. Hence, *Brahman* is the *Jnanam* Knowledge beyond any Knower or Knowable. *Brahman* is not inert but is the changeless efficient cause. However, any knower-knowable-knowledge typically has its limits.
3. *Anantham*: Infinitude, Limitless, Boundless. *Brahman* as *Anantham* means that *Brahman* has no boundaries or limitations. *Brahman* is the source of unbounded knowledge.

Some implications of the above definition is that Time, Space and Objects are all knowable. As *Brahman* is the material and efficient cause, yet it is Absolute Knowledge, this means Time, Space and any Object are knowables which are non-different from *Brahman*, but *Brahman* is beyond them all. *Satyam Jnanam Anantham Brahman* meets our definition of Nonduality using Asymmetric Identity: All knowable experienceable objects are appearances of *Brahman* but *Brahman* transcends all known and unknown appearances.

The *mantra* is self-referential in that the term *Brahman* is used in the *mantra* and in the inner quoted *mantra*. According to the *mantra*, understanding the meaning that the apparent individual who is “The knower of *Brahman*” has “attain[ed] the highest” means “enjoys in identification with the all-knowing *Brahman*, all desirable things simultaneously” hence the knower of *Brahman* has enjoyed the highest *Ananda* (Bliss).

Given that the knower of *Brahman* is an apparent *Jiva*, then by understanding the *mantra* means that the self (of the knower) knows itself as *Atman*, the Self and enjoys great bliss. This is echoed by Lord Krishna in Bhagavad Gita Chapter 6 Verse 20:

*yatroparamate cittam niruddham yogasevayā
yatra caivātmanātmānam paśyannātmani tuṣyati BG 620*

*“When the mind, restrained by the practice of yoga, attains quietude and when seeing the Self
by the self, he is satisfied in his own Self.” BG 6.20*

It can be concluded that the definition of *Brahman* “*Satyam Jnanam Anantham Brahman*” is identical to the definition of *Atman* “*Sat Chit Ananda*”. In other words, the understanding that one is of the nature of unbounded Consciousness-Existence is *Ananda*.

Nevertheless, Shankara concedes that the definition of *Brahman* is at best a pointer, which is a logical and sensible conclusion, because *Brahman* is indescribable and likewise, *Atman*.

However, these definitions are absolutely positive, affirmative and non-negatable. To negate them would require a negater. The negater must be conscious hence the negater would fall into an affirmation of the definition. Likewise, any affirmer could not improve on the definitions due to the term *Anantham*. Once the definition of *Atman Brahman* has been understood, a raging mind is nothing but sweet bird song in the bright light of the cloudless morning sun.

Language hides the underlying nonduality of reality and portrays it as a Duality. This is because nouns are assigned to appearances yet the object which the nouns refer to is the underlying substance. For example, the word “Wave” refers to the underlying Water appearing as a “Wave”. In addition, the appearances are actually a named set of adjectival properties. It is more accurate to apply the appearance as an adjective to the substance noun. For example, a Wave is actually Wavey-Water. One can continue in this way to obtain terms which indicate underlying nature: ringy-gold, chairy-wood, foamy-water, potty-clay, cuppy-paper, cuppy-plastic. To denote the nonduality aspect of everyday dualistic life it would be more accurate to say: goldy-brahman, woody-brahman, watery-brahman, body-brahman, doing-brahman, enjoying-brahman, knowing-brahman, mind-brahman, jiva-brahman.

EXISTENCE-CONSCIOUSNESS

In Western Philosophy, Ontology (Being) and Epistemology (Knowledge) are treated as distinct separate subjects of academic study which can have a relationship. The author used Google Gemini AI with the prompt: *How are ontology and epistemology related?* Gemini replied (with a touch of irony, perhaps?): *Ontology and epistemology are related because your assumptions about what is real (ontology) directly influence what you believe can be known and how you can know it (epistemology).*

In stark contrast, ancient Indian Philosophy has always had a far more comprehensive and unitive view. Western Ontology is a narrowness of *Satyam* (Existence & Truth). Western Epistemology is a narrowness of *Jnanam* (Knowledge & Consciousness). It seems there is no Western philosophical equivalent of *Anantham* (Infinite & Limitless) though Bliss might have a counterpart in the field of Axiology.

Advaita Vedanta accepts six *Pramanas* (sources of knowledge). These are: *Pratyaksha* (perception), *Anumana* (inference), *Upamana* (comparison or analogy), *Arthapati* (postulation), *Anupalabdi* (non-perception or absence) and *Shabda* (verbal and scriptural testimony).

If there is some object X but there is no way to get any information of X from the six *pramanas* then X may as well not exist. For X to exist then it must be a Knowable object. Existence-of-X depends on Knowability-of-X.

For a Knowable object to be Known, it requires a Knower. Knowability-of-X depends on a Knower. Therefore, Existence-of-X depends on a Knower.

A Knower depends on Consciousness. Therefore, Existence-of-X depends on Consciousness.

Dependency is a sign of Falsity. Which is a sign of *mithya*, which implies Appearance.

By applying the Asymmetric Identity of Nonduality: Existence-of-X is an Appearance in Consciousness *Satyam*. However, Consciousness obviously exists otherwise Consciousness would be non-existent. Therefore, *Satyam* is both Existence and Consciousness, as one Real Truth.

BEYOND THE THREE STATES OF THE EXPERIENCE

We experience the world in the waking state; we experience dreams in the dream state but during deep sleep we do not experience anything. The obvious reason is that we are in deep sleep otherwise one would be awake or experiencing a dream. Having woken up from deep sleep, everyone could attest to the statement: *During deep sleep, I didn't know anything*. If pressed to speak further then one might say that in deep sleep there is no experience, a general blankness or nothingness. However, deep sleep is not a case of absence of experience. Deep sleep is an experience of absence. Because, to say "I didn't know anything" there must have been a consciousness in deep sleep to experience the blankness or nothingness.

The sublime *Mandukya Upanishad* elaborates on waking, dream and deep sleep experience. During the waking state the mind and physical body are experienced and used. During the dream state only the mind is present to project the dream and then experience it. During deep sleep state even the mind has subsided. The *Upanishad* encourages the seeker to realise that all three states of Waking, Dream and Deep Sleep and the Knowers of each state, the Waker, Dreamer and Deep Sleeper are impermanent (changing) and are experienced to you, the one unchanging entity. The States and the various Knowers are nothing but *mithya*. Just like a mind projecting a dream and experiencing it, *Turiya Atman Brahman* projects the three states and experiences them.

The seventh *mantra* of the *Mandukya Upanishad* is perhaps the highest teaching of *Advaita Vedanta* that *Turiya Atman* is identical with *Brahman*:

1. Transcends Beyond All Knowers: *Neti 1*
 - a. *nantahprajnaṃ na bahisprajnaṃ nobhayatahprajnaṃ na prajnanaghanam na prajnaṃ naprajnaṃ*
 - b. It is not that which is conscious of the inner (subjective dreamer) world, nor that which is conscious of the outer (objective waker) world, nor intermediate mystical, nor extraordinary, nor that which is conscious of both i.e. deep sleep, nor that which is a mass of consciousness (*Ishvara*). It is not simple consciousness nor is It unconsciousness (*shunyam*).
2. Transcends All Knowables: *Neti 2*
 - a. *adrstam avyavaharyam agrahyam alaksanam acintyam avyapadesyam*
 - b. It is invisible, unperceived, unrelated, ungraspable, untransactionable, unprayable, unusable, incomprehensible, uninferable, unthinkable, inexpressible, unnamable, and indescribable. Unpointable not Knowable (has no class, category, quality, action, relation or designation).
3. Immanent Ground of Nondual Reality:
 - a. *ekatmapratyayasaram prapancopasamam santam sivam advaitam chaturtham manyante sa Atma sa vijneyaḥ*
 - b. The essence of the Consciousness manifesting as the self in the three states; It is the cessation of all phenomena; It is: all peace, all bliss and nondual. This is what ignorant people know as the Fourth. This is *Atman* and must be realized.

The seventh *mantra* shows that *Turiya Atman Brahman* is the Nondual Reality and three states of (1) Waker and Waking World, (2) Dreamer and Dream World and (3) Deep Sleeper and Deep Sleep Blankness, are all *mithya*.

Thus, the earlier question about the duality of Witness and Witnessed is answered in the following ways:

1. The Witnessed is an appearance of the Witness. The Witness is none other than the Self *Atman*
2. *Atman* is *Brahman*, therefore the Witness, Witnessed and Witnessing are appearances in *Brahman*.
3. Only Nondual *Brahman* Is.

A doubt may still remain about how to know *Atman Brahman*. Whereas, water, gold, clay, wood are all known including their atomic structure and the quantum fields underlying the atoms, how can *Atman Brahman* be taught let alone known?

The *Kena Upanishad* 1.4 tries to point out *Atman Brahman*:

*anyadeva tadviditādatho aviditādadhi.
iti śuśrūma pūrveṣāṃ ye nastadvyācakaṣire Ke.Up 1.4*

“It is different from the known; It is above the unknown. Thus, we have heard from the preceptors of old who taught It to us.” Ke.Up 1.4

Like a riddle, the *Kena Upanishad* asks: What is that which is not known and not unknown. The answer is: You, the *Atman*, the Self.

The *Kena Upanishad* 2.4 elaborates further:

*pratibodhaviditam matamamṛtatvaṃ hi vindate .
ātmanā vindate vīryaṃ vidyayā vindate mṛtam Ke.Up 2.4*

“Brahman is known when It is realised in every state of mind; for by such Knowledge one attains Immortality. By Atman one obtains strength; by Knowledge, Immortality.” Ke.Up 2.4

Just like the content of every wave is water, one can say the content of every experience is Existence-Consciousness. In other words, *Brahman* is known simply by experiencing. Any experience including the experience of blankness is an indication of *Satchitananda Atma Brahman*.

Hence, the relationship between *Brahman* Absolute Reality and the physical universe, sentient life, individuals etc is Ignorance. *Maya* is the fundamental projective cause of *Jiva*, *Jagat*, Time, Space...anything that is an object of conscious experience. From a basis of Ignorance, the effects of *Maya* are taken as real. When Ignorance is removed then only *Brahman* remains.

PRACTICAL ADVICE

«Fisticuffs from the Fifth Century BCE

During 5th Century BCE, the great Chinese military tactician, Sun Tzu wrote *The Art of War*. In just thirteen chapters, the book contains pearls of wisdom about the skills, science and philosophy of warfare.

The Art of War

Briefly and quite arguably, the ten main points from *The Art of War* are:

1. Know your enemy and know yourself.
2. Appear weak when you are strong, and strong when you are weak.
3. Attack where the enemy is unprepared.
4. Make use of spies.
5. Use terrain to your advantage.
6. Be flexible.
7. Concentrate your forces.

8. Strike at the enemy's heart.
9. Use deception.
10. Know when to retreat.

Needless to say *The Art of War* has become a timeless classic. It has been adopted for use in a multitude of situations. From battles between corporations for market share and profitability to individuals competing with rivals.

However, around that time, another book was written which also discussed warfare. That book was the *Bhagavad Gita* containing 700 poetic Sanskrit verses, spread over 18 chapters.

The Bhagavad Gita

Though the *Bhagavad Gita* was put into written form by Sage Vyasa, the actual story is much older, from 3000 BCE at least. It is part of the 100,000-verse epic, *The Mahabharata*. The *Bhagavad Gita* itself is based on the *Upanishads*.

The *Bhagavad Gita* is set at the start of the great Kurukshetra War. In the middle of the battlefield, Prince Arjuna of the Pandavas is with his charioteer and best friend, Lord Krishna.

Arjuna is full of despair because the cursed enemy, the Kauravas, are well-known to him. They were his childhood friends, inspiring teachers and loving relations. To help overcome Arjuna's doubts and fears, Krishna gives Arjuna a pep talk. He advises Arjuna to think of the bigger picture which is to set aside his short-term misgivings and focus on his duty. After all, Arjuna is a Warrior Prince sworn to protect and uphold the Pandavas, the rightful heirs of the Kurukshetra kingdom.

The moral and ethical dilemma that Arjuna, a good-natured person, faced gave rise to the postmodern literal meaning of the Bhagavad Gita: *When is war justified and at what cost?*

Furthermore, Krishna is no ordinary human. Krishna is the incarnation of God Vishnu! A fact that Krishna reveals to Arjuna. Krishna's divine nature forms the basis of many religious interpretations. The first dualist interpretation was by the theist, Madhvacharya, c. 1300 CE.

The information that Krishna provides to Arjuna, is about the meaning of life, the universe and everything. Krishna covers a wide range of topics including: What is individuality? Why do people have thoughts and raging emotions? What is suffering and how do we overcome it? How can we attain lasting peace and harmony?

If only Arjuna could wrap his thoughts around Krishna's pointers and get understanding in the mind, then Arjuna might overcome his fears, doubts and sorrow. His seeking for answers would end and freedom would be attained. Through the teaching of *vidya* (spiritual knowledge) the

avidya (ignorance) in Arjuna's mind is removed. In doing so, Arjuna would realise *Jnanam* (Absolute Knowledge). »

THE ART OF KNOWLEDGE

«For most English speakers, the word *Knowledge* means: That understanding acquired through experience and thought. Western epistemology is rooted on perception and inference. The term *Art of Knowledge* should be understood with the following vedantic meaning based on *darshan*: *Seeing Jnanam*.

Therefore, there is a difference in meaning between Vedantic Knowledge versus Western Knowledge. Vedantic Knowledge points to Absolute Reality whereas Western Knowledge points to apparent objects of experience which appear in Absolute Reality. Vedantic Knowledge is the nondual reality of Western Knowledge.

Just like the student in *Kena Upanishad*, the *Art* is to: Listen, Reason and Contemplate, until one attains true *Knowledge (Jnanam)*, that oneself is identical to *Satyam Jnanam Anantham Brahman*. Hence, an effective way to start practicing the 'Art of Knowledge' is by managing thoughts, especially the egoic ones.

Krishna's somewhat paradoxical instructions were explained by Shankara, in that Krishna is teaching Arjuna about *Advaita Vedanta*. Shankara shows that the inherent conclusion of *Bhagavad Gita* is: *The Reader is Brahman*.

The *Bhagavad Gita* reuses some of the concepts from the *Upanishads* to discuss the mind and its aspects. We saw earlier that whenever we notice thoughts containing *I-ness* or *Mine-ness* then these are egoic thoughts.

A dominant ego pushes the mind into an egoic state. For example, *I get angry quickly, My life is hard, I want others to like me, My body looks strong and attractive, I am determined to achieve my goals and My happiness is more important than anyone else's*.

The egoic mind state is a coupling of strong personality traits or deep emotions with the ego. It is then arguably similar to modern psychological concepts of ego.

To be clear, none of the thoughts are bad in themselves. However, if our minds are occupied by the same set of repetitive thoughts, especially the egoic ones, then we might find that life feels restrictive and not free-flowing.

Just like our senses and limbs, the *Bhagavad Gita* points out that the mind is something to be used. We can control our senses and physical movement to carry out our actions. For

example, *to endure a bad smell, to closely examine an object, to listen attentively or to reach out for the next sip of coffee*. How is the egoic mind controlled?

What follows is a basic attempt to restate some of the guidance given in the *Bhagavad Gita*, in terms of *The Art of War*. The points indicate how we can control our egoic minds, by simply becoming aware of it.

1. Know yourself. The egoic mind is not the real You because you can perceive it. This is the most important point.
2. The egoic mind can appear weak when You are strong. Don't fall for the ego's deceptive claim about its reality. Simply notice thoughts about *I* and *Mine*.
3. Attack the egoic mind when it is unprepared. Self-enquiry during calm moments can help lessen the identification with it.
4. Make use of Self-Identity. In Deep Sleep, the mind including the Ego is dormant. You, as the Witness Self were there to notice the absence of experience! Switch your identity from the Ego thought to Witness Consciousness.
5. Use experience to your advantage. In the external world, external objects are experienced and cannot be You. The mind is nothing but thoughts, feelings and emotions which are also experienced. Likewise, these internal thought objects are experienced and cannot be You.
6. Be inflexible. The experience of mind, body and universe is constantly changing. Notice that you are choicelessly experiencing. All experience presupposes your conscious presence or being.
7. Concentrate on Being. Instead of churning the mind with thoughts, just Be. Your mind will still function properly without apparent interference.
8. Strike at the egoic mind's heart. The heart is the ignorant intellect. Studying *Advaita Vedanta* through *Shravana*, *Manana* and *Nididhyasana* strengthens the intellect by giving it knowledge about your true identity.
9. Don't be deceived. Be honest. Good thoughts, happy thoughts, bad thoughts, sad thoughts. All thoughts are known. Who is it that knows? Even to ponder *I am the knower of thoughts* is a cognized thought. You are that which knows the *I am the Knower* thought.

10. Know when to retreat by simply staying unattached to any triggering thoughts. You do not have to give energy to thoughts and the subsequent *samsara*. You can simply observe and maintain equanimity.
11. Bonus Pointer: Rediscover Consciousness as the true identity. A strong intellect helps overcome the natural ignorance of Consciousness. By being aware of the egoic mind, identification with it is reduced. Identification as Consciousness becomes natural.»

Results

«Learning to control the mind or at least maintaining a healthy psychological distance from the mind, has a key result. This result is a sense of peaceful inner calmness. From this calmness, both awareness and objectivity can increase, towards oneself and surroundings. There is a sense of protective detachment, yet fully engaged, involved and contribute to life.

For example, work tasks are dealt with purposeful actions performed in an undramatic manner, despite the pressure. Alternatively, when relaxing with others, these moments have a greater chance of being savoured. Our inner calmness can inspire calmness in others. Instead of reacting (or perhaps overreacting) in a stressful way, we can calmly respond in a manner appropriate to the situation.

When in solitude, inner calmness helps to generate a deepening self-awareness and gratitude. This feeds back to stabilise our inner calmness across a greater variety of potentially destabilising scenarios. We are better able to use the full capabilities of the mind, to rationally decide and execute the appropriate action. »

CONCLUSION

In Ignorance, where we do not know our true nature as *Atman Brahman*, *Chidabhasa* is just limited everyday awareness. When Ignorance is removed with *Jnanam*, our true nature is realised, that *Chidabhasa* is none other than *Atman Brahman*.

Our identity has shifted from the individual body-mind-intellect dualistic *Jiva* with personal limited awareness, to the impersonal nondual *Atman Brahman*.

In answer to the main questions:

1. What is Mind? An appearance in *Brahman*
2. What is Reality? The Nondual *Brahman*

«We are all in some way, just like Arjuna. By understanding the *Bhagavad Gita* through the lens of *Advaita Vedanta*, we too can overcome our sorrow and existential angst. To experience a life full of activity yet maintain a rock-steady inner peace and calmness. »

As previously stated, the Four *Mahavakyas* are the great identity statement between the *Atman* and *Brahman*, or between the individual and God. It then follows that You are Immanent, everything is in You. You are transcendent, beyond anything.

This leads to an observation: Whether one is an atheist or a devotee, by knowing that one is the impersonal nondual reality leads to a oneness in Life which transcends any differences of beliefs, viewpoints, empirical knowledge or personality.

Finally, in 1975, the English Rock Band, Queen, released an operatic rock song called Bohemian Rhapsody (2). The opening lyrics are:

*“Is this the real life? Is this just fantasy?
Caught in a landslide, no escape from reality.
Open your eyes, look up to the skies and See!”*

At some point, everyone, irrespective of their age, gender, career, health, wealth or status will shift from the Darkness of Ignorance, to the Conscious Light of Knowledge.

Brief Profile of the Author:

Bharat Bedia, lives in London, England. He is a Senior Technologist with over 30 years of experience in Investment Banking. His expertise spans Equity, Equity Derivatives and Fixed Income financial markets. He holds a B.Sc (Hons) in Electronics, Computers and Systems Engineering and is CFA Level 1 certified.

Growing up in East London, Bharat's early childhood was shaped by curiosity, self-reliance, science fiction and a love for writing Commodore 64 computer games. In his later years, he qualified as a POSE running coach and became a proficient runner competing in marathons and an ultramarathon.

Bharat's spiritual journey evolved from panentheism, through science, religion and philosophy to embrace the non-dual interpretations of the Ancient Indian Upanishads. Together with a professional career and rich home life, Bharat is a passionate amateur writer exploring the themes of the Human Condition and the nature of Reality, so that the Teachings of the Upanishads might be applied to Modern Times.

Statements and Declaration:

This article is an expansion of an original article I wrote here:

<https://entropy608.medium.com/the-art-of-knowledge-715f31152e3>

The common sections, which constitutes about 15% of this paper, are included within the quotation marks « and ». I declare that I have no conflict of interest with my place of employment or anybody else in publishing this article. No financial support was received for the work within this article.

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