

AN ANALYSIS OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE DREAMING INDIVIDUAL AND THE WAKING INDIVIDUAL

by

SWAMI KRISHNANANDA

The Divine Life Society
Sivananda Ashram, Rishikesh, India

Website: swami-krishnananda.org

The great concentration called yoga meditation is somewhat akin to the individual involved in dream consciousness attempting to concentrate on his own waking consciousness. It is necessary for every seeker on the spiritual path to know something about the anatomy of dream experience. Who is awake, and who is in the state of dream? We just bypass this interesting phenomenon in our daily existence and imagine that everything is clear to our mind. We dreamt yesterday, and today we are awake; there is nothing complicated about it. But, it is intensely complicated. The entire structure or the secret of our existence is involved in this relationship between waking and dreaming.

Incidentally, this is exactly the relationship between God and the human individual. What is the relationship between the mind that is awake, and the mind that is dreaming? What is the connection? It is the connection between God and every one of us. There is a frightening inscrutability about our relationship to God. We can never understand it, because we also cannot understand how we happen to be dreaming a world quite different in its structure from the experience of

the very same mind in the waking condition. What makes the difference between dream and waking? The person exists continuously in both the states. That is why there is a statement often made, "I slept, I dreamt, and now I am awake." But, who actually dreamt? Is the waking mind dreaming? That would be a self-contradiction. The waking mind that is ours at present cannot be regarded as the one that is dreaming, because waking and dreaming cannot go together. When the one state is, the other state goes. So, it is not true that the waking consciousness itself is dreaming. Then, who is dreaming?

Nobody has thought over this problem, because the enigma of the whole creation is so entangling and deluding that it will not permit even the raising of such questions. It is like asking a magician, "How did you suddenly produce a sparrow from your empty hand?" The magician just waves his fist, and opens it; a bird flies out. If we ask him from where the bird came, he can never answer the question. He only knows that something came, but he cannot explain how the bird came out of his empty hand.

We need not go to gurus, teachers or masters to have an answer to this question. Each one of you sit quietly, and be sure that you are awake. Put a question to your own self: "Am I awake? Or, is there a doubt? Do I doubt that I am awake just now, or am I really awake?" When you put a question like this, you will start doubting: "Is there something wrong in the question? Why should I raise a question like this, unless there is a difficulty involved in it?" Put another question: "How do I know that I am awake just now?" Have you any proof to establish that you are now in the waking state? There is no proof, because all proof arises after you have the certainty and indubitably of the fact of your being awake. If that also is doubted, there would be no source of proof. So, certain things you take for granted: "I am awake. The matter is closed. I cannot ask a question to my own self, 'Am I awake?' Am I to go to different people and ask, 'Please tell me, am I really awake?'" You will not have the courage to ask such questions, because people will laugh at

you that the waking man is asking a question whether he is awake.

All right, be convinced that you are awake; to your satisfaction, it is so. But, do you also dream? When you go to bed and try to fall asleep, you often enter into a condition called dream. You begin to perceive a large world of space, time and objects. Now, go on putting a series of questions. "Who is perceiving this vast dream world of space, time and objectivity?" Don't give me a glib answer: "I myself am dreaming and I am perceiving space, time and objects." This is not a correct answer, because now you are speaking from the waking-consciousness point of view. So, your statement, "I am the person that dreamt of the world of space-time in dream," is not a logically perfect answer. I already mentioned that there is a difficulty in assuming that the waking mind is dreaming the world of dream perception. There has to be assumed a kind of dreaming mind also – that is to say, a diluted form of mental operation, which assumes an individuality of its own for the purpose of getting converted into the location of the observer of the dream.

The waking world is also perceived by the waking mind. This waking mind has to assume a locality, a kind of individuality, this bodily existence, in order that it may behold the world outside. Unless there is a beholder, a perceiver, there would not be a perceived world outside. That a similar event is taking place in the dream world is something well known to us, but our difficulty is: Who is actually perceiving this dream world of space-time and externality? Not the waking mind, it is certain. A peculiar, unintelligible transformation takes place in the perceptual process when we enter into the dream world. The slipping into dream is so quick that there is no one to know that this event has taken place. When we commit an error, we suddenly do it, though we may repent for it afterwards. We do not go on logically thinking for days and nights how an error should be committed, or in what manner we should get angry. These are sudden occurrences which defy the operation of logic. Yet, it is necessary to know what is

actually happening to us in the dream world. An individuality is artificially, we may say, created in the dream world – artificially because it is distinguishable from the waking individuality, and that newly manufactured individual existence in dream creates a situation of externality. The whole world of dream has necessarily to be contained in the structure of what we consider as the waking consciousness.

Is it not true that the whole world of dream is inside our brain, in our waking mind? Now, where is the location of the waking mind? Where is the mind situated at this present moment? Psychologists have many things to say about even the location of the mind. Some say it is in the heart, some say it is in the throat, another says it is in the midway point between the eyebrows, some say it is in the cerebrum, or cerebellum, in the brain cells. But how does this little force of thought, which we call the mind, manage to modify itself, transmute itself into a spatio-temporal world in the dream world, and begin to perceive it? It has to assume another dramatic actor-like role of a conceived individuality in the dream world, distinguishable from the waking individuality.

It is not the waking individual who is actually dreaming the world of dream, because we cannot have two kinds of experience at the time – we cannot be waking and dreaming at the same time. This analysis of the relationship between the dreaming individual and the waking individual may give us some clue as to the manner in which we have to carry on Yogic meditation. We say that yoga is principally meditation on God. Nobody has fully succeeded in conceiving the existence of God with a locality of God involved in it. All sorts of phantasms arise in the mind when we begin to conceive God's existence. If this difficulty is to be overcome, for the time being, in the state of a strong imagination, we transform ourselves into the dreaming individual, and imagine that we are seeing a dream world: This whole world is the dream world, and I am the dream individual, who is to wake up into a consciousness which would include within itself not only myself as the dreamer, but also the whole space-time world of dream perception. That is the waking mind.

Actually, that is called God. There is not much of a difficulty in convincing ourselves about our relationship between God and our own individuality. We need not scratch our brains very much on this matter by reading too many scriptures, and all that. The intriguing relationship between the dreaming individual and the waking individual is also the intriguing relationship between man and God. Striking this relationship in a conscious endeavor, and becoming aware of what is actually happening is yoga meditation.

What does it mean? Can anyone catch the point? I mention once again: Imagine that this world is a dream world – here we are included within the dream world, as a perceiver thereof. In our earlier sessions we have taken time to study the relationship between the perceiver and the perceived world. The world of perception is involved in the perceiver, and vice versa, the perceiver is involved in the world of perception. The world does not stand totally outside us, cut off, without any kind of vital connection. This is so, not only in the waking world, but also in the dreaming world. In the same way as the events of the world are connected to our individual existence in this world – physically, psychologically, socially, in every way – so is the connection between everything in the dream world with the dreaming individual.

Then, how do we start meditating on God, the Creator? God the Creator is just the waking consciousness creating this dreaming world. Where is this God sitting – how far? We have often put the question: How far is God? God is as far from us as the waking mind is from the dreaming mind. Each one of you can assess the length, the distance, between the dreaming individual and the waking individual. There is certainly a distance, but it is not a measurable distance in space and time. It is like the distance between death and rebirth. It is an unimaginable self-transformation that is taking place, where we cease to be something, and we become another thing at the same time.

As we cannot understand the relationship between death and rebirth, however much we may brood over this phenomenon, so also we cannot know what is happening to us when we are awake and the dream world is abolished completely. Where is the dream world? We have woken up from dream and we do not see the world of dream at all. All these mountains and rivers and people and the entire population of humankind that we saw in the vast creation of the dream world – where are they now, when we are awake? They have not vanished in a sense of negation, ultimately. They have been absorbed into a wider mind which manifested itself as a spatiotemporal external world, together with an individuality necessary for the perceiving of that dream world.

If you want to wake up into the consciousness of what you call the waking world, while you are in dream, what will you do? This is a feat of exercise of your mind. Imagine that you are dreaming and now you want to wake up. Don't take this as a kind of theoretical argument. It is an actual thing that is happening, and it will take place again when you depart from this world. So, place yourself in the context of a dreamer who wants to wake up. What do you mean by 'waking up'? You have to do something with this world of perception. You have to deal with it in some way, in order that you may awake. What do you expect to do with this dreaming world when you want to attain the waking consciousness? Remember that the world of perception is involved in the perceiver. To wake up is actually to awaken the whole world that you are perceiving, because when you have woken up into the waking consciousness, you have not left the dream world somewhere far away and come individually, unconnected with it. The world of dream that has come up with you, dissolved at once in the waking mind. This is what we are trying to do in yoga meditation. This is exactly the technique of dissolving individuality in universal consciousness – God-consciousness.

What exactly is the technique that we have to adopt in dream in order that we may wake up, and in order that we

may not continue dreaming? The operational faculties causing the dream world have to be restrained. Which are these operational faculties? They are the eye that sees the dream world, the ear that hears the dream sound, and so on. The five sensations with which we are quite familiar should not be allowed to engage themselves intensely in that enjoyment they call the form of the perception of the world. The consciousness of the dreamer is together with the consciousness of the seeing eye, and involved also in its relation with the object that is seen, as is the case in waking. The object that we see in dream, the faculty of perception that is the eye, which is the medium of perceiving the world of dream externally, and the consciousness thereof, are all intertwined, and one cannot be separated from the other.

We are eagerly awaiting awakening: "I do not wish to continue dreaming; I want to wake up into the world of reality." The "world of reality" – what does it mean, actually? It is something that contradicts entirely the present perceptual process. Otherwise, the present perception also will be reality only. A dreamer need not wake up. He can be dreaming for a lifetime. What is the harm? The dream world is also a reality when it is dreamt. We can live and eat and drink and sleep and do anything in the dream world. What is the reason that we have a desire to wake up? The inward impulse tells us that this is an unreal phantasm. The dream world is a fantasy; it is a total unreality. The consciousness has to restructure itself, in order that it may become the so-called waking consciousness.

If we imagine that we are conscious even in the dreaming condition, there is a way out from this predicament. It is said that people who dream but do not know that they are dreaming are bound souls. People who dream and are aware at the same time that they are dreaming are philosophers, saints and the sages. They are also dreaming. A philosopher, a saint and a sage also see the world, but they see it as a dream object. The other type of people, who are bound, do not know that they are dreaming. A dreaming individual cannot know that it is a dream. It is the only reality. So are

the people in this world not conscious of anything beyond this world. This world is all, and everything is fine, and nothing is wrong with it. This wrong conviction that this world is totally real, and there is nothing beyond it in a higher waking consciousness, has to be tackled properly. For this purpose, yoga meditation is to be practiced.

The meditational process, therefore, is to imagine strongly that one is dreaming this world. Since the dreaming is possible only when the sense organs of dream also are active, they have to be withdrawn. Self-restraint, which is virtually sense control, becomes the precondition for the other type of concentration on the higher level of consciousness in yoga meditation.

There are many methods of meditation. I am describing today one method – the transmutation of dream consciousness into waking consciousness. For this purpose, continuously we have to be aware that this world is a dream world. It should not be taken as a world of reality. It requires great vigilance in the form of non-attachment. If our sense organs get attached to their corresponding objects, they are supposed to be attached to those objects. A vigilant mind withdraws the sensation of connection of the sense organs with the corresponding objects thereof, and ceases from focusing attention on the sense objects. It becomes desireless. This analytic mind will not be attached to anything in the world afterwards, because attachment is to get involved in the dream world, and then it will prevent you from waking up. Suppose you do not succeed in this art – with all your effort, you are not successful in withdrawing the sense organs completely from the world of dream, which is this world of so-called perception, and you die in this process. What happens?

You may be under the impression that the dream has gone, because you are dead. It is not so. Though death of the physical body has taken place, the impulse in the mind to project a dream world has not died. That reincarnates. That unfulfilled, unrestrained impulse, which has the habit of

creating a dream world through the operation of the dream sense organs, concretises itself, centralises itself in some location in an imagined space-time, and takes rebirth, manufacturing a form, a body suitable for experiencing the very same dream experience which was cut off in the earlier incarnation due to its separation from the body.

So, death is not liberation. It is a continuance of bondage. If we do not want to go on continuing the chain of bondage and do not wish to be reborn a thousand times for the sake of being in this very hell of erroneous perception, we have to put forth serious effort, day in and day out, to see, first of all, that the sense organs are not attached to their corresponding objects. We do not go on looking at things; the desire for seeing cinema, video, etc., must be withdrawn because we are seeing the dream world. Similarly, the desire of the ear to hear sounds which appear to be very melodious and enrapturing, the desire to eat delicious things, touch soft things, and various other fantastic desires of the ego-consciousness all have to be subdued and centralised in a will that concentrates on its higher degree of reality, which is God, which is the Creator of the world, which is the Absolute – which is our own higher Self. The waking mind will act like the enemy of the dreaming mind if there is no harmonious relationship between one and the other, because the dreaming mind is a manufactured entity out of the waking mind only. So, the law of the waking mind operates in the dream world. Thus, the law of the Cosmic Mind operates in this whole process of world perception.

These ideas are not easy to entertain in the mind. In scriptures like the Yoga Vasishtha and certain verses of the Mandukya Karika of Gaudapada, such analyses are carried on to logical perfection to tell us our real fate in this world of sensory perception. We cannot enjoy this world. There is really no such thing as enjoying, as there is no enjoying in the dream world, except in a form of utter stupidity. So, whoever enjoys this world is a stupid person. That is all we have to conclude, from the point of view of the reality which is the higher Atman, which is to pull up the lower one which is

dreaming, eating the fruit of *samsara*, as is illustrated in the analogy of the two birds in the Mundaka Upanishad. In this tree of the world, this creation, two birds are perched on one branch. One bird is sitting quiet; he is not interested in the fruit thereof. But the other bird is engaged in eating the sweet fruits – so much engaged in eating the *puri* and *kheer* that he does not even know another bird is sitting there. Sometimes, in a good lunch, we will not be even aware that another person is sitting nearby because we are thinking only of the lunch. In this *bhandara* of world perception, we have completely forgotten that there is another Atman above us, which is watching us like a spy; we are totally unconscious of Its Being, and one day It will take action. Like a policeman arresting, the higher mind may arrest this lower mind involved in the eating of the sweet fruit.

Actually, it is not sweet. It is an action-reaction process which is mistaken for the sweetness of the experience of life, says the Yoga Vasishtha. Neither sugarcane juice is sweet, nor lemon fruit is bitter. They are only reactions set up by the palate in respect of the constitutional pattern of the object outside. Neither is anything beautiful, nor is anything ugly; neither is anything sweet, nor is anything bitter. All these differences are the action-reaction process, which you will realise when you wake up from this dream world.

You will be wonderstruck that this malady has gone. All the sorrow of dream has gone! You take a deep sigh, and go for your work in the waking world. Likewise, a miraculous transformation will take place if this dream contact is struck off from the connection it has with the dreaming individuality by yoga meditation, one technique of which, I mentioned today, which is the analysis of the relationship between the dreaming individual and the waking individual, who Himself is God Almighty.