WHO ARE YOU & WHY ARE YOU HERE?

by

AiR

Start A QUEST to Discover Yourself

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If you Know Everything,
But you Don't Know
Who You Are,
Then What do you Know?

CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1 :
Surely we are not the Human Body
1-14

CHAPTER 2 :
How can we be the Mind?
15-27

CHAPTER 3 :
Aren't we the Ego 'I'?
28-34

CHAPTER 4 :
Ignorance makes us Suffer
35-47

CHAPTER 5 :
Let's Start a Quest to Discover Ourself
48-60

CHAPTER 6 :
Realize Who You Truly Are!
61-73

CONTENTS

CHAPTER 7 :
Why are we here on Earth?
74-87

CHAPTER 8 :
Who is Managing 'The Earth Show'?
88-99

CHAPTER 9 :
Rewards of the Quest – Peace, Joy, and Bliss
100-107

My Journey of Self Discovery
108-120

POEM
121-124

ABOUT THE AUTHOR
125-133

PREFACE

Man has discovered almost everything. He is proud of his accomplishments that he has been able to put airplanes in the sky, submarines in the ocean and spacecrafts in the cosmos. He has been able to get to the depth of each human cell and understand its behaviour. He has been able to create wireless technology that lets one talk to people from Alaska to Antarctica with the slightest touch of a button using satellites that are being placed by him in outer space. Today, people sitting in New York and Tokyo can do a video conference on their mobile phones, and man thinks that he has discovered everything.

Every day man is inventing new technologies that are redefining the way we live. Ships take us from one continent to another, and modern entertainment has reached a new peak. Healthcare has advanced and man hopes that one day he would be able to transcend death and live forever. Man is confident and continues to passionately discover what lies below the earth and above the skies. While

man has discovered a lot, he cannot deny the fact that the earth is just a tiny dot in the Milky Way and the Milky Way itself, is merely a speck in the cosmos.

While man has been able to discover a lot and needs to be given kudos for his inventions, he has forgotten something very important – he has forgotten to discover himself. Man has become so engrossed with the world outside that he has forgotten to look inside. He is busy discovering how the two cells biologically fuse to become a zygote which is then born as a little baby on earth, but he has no time to decode the mystery of birth and the life inside. Man has discovered medicines that can enhance our lifespan but he has not discovered what happens after death. Unfortunately, man is a prisoner of his own mind and he has not realized that. Therefore, while he is busy creating cosmetics for the skin, he has not discovered what lies within. He has made immense progress in the branches of science like psychology, but if you ask him to find the mind and specify its location asking where it is, he cannot find it.

Man has advanced a lot physically, emotionally and intellectually but he has not paid enough attention to his spiritual development. Man thinks that he knows everything and there is nothing on earth that he cannot do. He can fly a helicopter to the remotest corner of the world and solve any problem with just a touch of his fingertip on his laptop. But man has not discovered the Energy that makes his fingers move.

We live and die in ignorance not knowing who we are, where we have come from and where we will go. We don't know our purpose of life on earth. We just zoom from the womb to our tomb. Ignorance is bliss and we blissfully live in ignorance thinking that we know everything, when in reality we know nothing. What we know is quite limited and insignificant in comparison to what we don't.

Our paradigm of life must change. We have opened the nine doors that we have been gifted with; two eyes to see, two ears to hear, two nostrils to breathe and smell, a mouth to eat and communicate and the organs to excrete and procreate. However, while all these doors

look outside, we have forgotten to open the tenth door through which we should look within. We are so busy discovering the outer world that we do not pay any attention to the inner one. We have used our eyes, ears, nose, mouth, and hands to create a beautiful world for ourselves but we have not delved deep into our heart and soul.

Have we discovered what the Life Energy is which lies within? What makes our heart beat? What gives us breath, and without which, there would be death? What is this mystery called life? We are so busy eating ice creams, playing with our mobile phones, and leading a fast-paced life travelling by bullet trains that we have forgotten to discover the Life Energy within. We all seek happiness and we are in the constant pursuit of pleasure. We try to escape pain in every possible way, but are we truly happy? While we apparently smile, we feel miserable inside and we die without realizing who we are, and why we are here.

What is the use of knowing everything if we don't know the answers to basic questions about life and our

existence? Most people feel that there is no use of asking such questions. The reward of discovering the truth brings eternal bliss, joy, and peace. Only a few are lucky or rather blessed to realize the truth. It needs one to open their 'Real Eyes' to realize what the truth is.

This book will help you start a quest, and then you can look for the answers you seek. It will give you a direction to help you reach your destination but it will not get you there. You have to walk. You must start, and you must not stop until you reach the top of the mountain. It may look steep and impossible. You will be challenged by your own mind. Some of your friends will tease you and the society might not understand your quest, but if you want to discover yourself and attain ultimate bliss, you must start your quest to discover who you are and why you are here.

Have you ever wondered?

Why are you here on this earth?

Why were you given this birth?

1

Surely we are not the Human Body

You have a House,
but you are not the House.
You have a Car,
but you are not the Car.
You have a Body,
but you are not the Body.
Do you know who is this 'You'?

Are you shocked? If we are not the human body then what are we? Everybody thinks, “I am this amazing creation called the human body. I have two hands to grasp, two feet to walk and a mouth to talk. I have a head and I have a heart. I have five senses through which I perceive the outside world. I have eyes to see the beauty that surrounds me, ears to hear what others say and a nose that can smell amazing fragrances. I have a tongue that can taste even before I eat and skin that helps me feel all that I touch. I have this wonderful body, and the body must be me. What else can I be?”

Nobody denies that we have a body. Can anybody deny that a human being is blessed with a brain, a heart, two kidneys, a liver, lungs and several other organs that make his body a wonder that it is?

Aren't we the ones who see, hear and touch? Aren't we the eyes, ears and the skin? No doubt we have the five sense organs of sight, hearing, smelling, tasting and touching and we also have several action organs, feet to walk, hands to grasp, but are we these? Unfortunately, we believe that we are this body when in reality we

have a body and all that is in it - blood, flesh, and bones but we are not all this. That's why we say, “My kidneys failed,” we don't say, “I failed” because I am not the kidney. Sometimes, out of ignorance we say, “I got burnt,” when our skin gets burnt, but then we realize that only the skin is burnt, not I. If the skin got burnt and is dead skin but I am not dead, then obviously I am not the skin.

As long as we are conscious, we feel we are the body, but what happens when we lose consciousness? We still exist, but we dream that we have become a pilot or even an elephant. I dream but the body doesn't. It clearly tells me that I am not the body.

When the body sleeps, I know that the body slept. It is different from me. I can even be still and observe my body only as my body, not me.

It is amazing to know that each human being has about 37 trillion cells. The body has 30 trillion Red Blood Cells. The human eye has roughly 125 million retinal cells. If the eye was to be compared to a camera, it

would be a whopping 576-megapixel camera. It can see 1 million colours. The nose can smell 1 trillion different types of smells. There are 200 different types of cells and 35 billion skin cells. There are 100 billion neurons in the brain. And our brain produces up to 60,000 thoughts per day. Our body holds a capacity of 6 litres of blood, and our blood vessels stretch up to 60,000 miles. Every day, approximately we take 23,000 breaths and our heart beats 1,15,000 times. There are around 1 lakh hair follicles on the human head. The body produces 23,000 litres of saliva in a lifetime, enough to fill a humongous swimming pool. Our brain's electricity when awake can light a small bulb. The heart creates enough energy daily that can drive a truck for 32 kilometres. The heart pumps 1.5 million barrels of blood in a lifetime. If the heart was separated from the body, it could still beat on its own electrical impulse for a little while. Our taste buds are replaced every 10 days. It is astonishing to know just how ignorant we are about the greatest machine ever conceived - the human body.

While the human body is an amazing creation that is

beyond our comprehension, how we are able to live with these sense organs, organs of action and other vital organs – is a wonder beyond wonders. But the biggest wonder is – are we the human body or do we have a human body? What do we say? Don't we say, "This is my hand?" We say, "I have two eyes to see, and my heart is beating fast." No doubt we have hands, a head, and a heart, but who are we? Who is that talking about having this body? Who is saying that these are my hands, my eyes, and my heart?

We have a house but we are not the house just as we have a car that we drive but we are not the car. Our beautiful clothes belong to us but we never mistake ourselves to be the clothes that we wear. Then why do you and I think that we are the human body? We easily look at a picture of ourselves and say, "This is me." Don't we all identify ourselves as the body? It is unfortunate that we mistake ourselves for the body that we wear. We don't realize that we are the ones who wear the body. Those who consider this for the first time would be shocked. But the truth is we are not the body that we always thought we were.

You see me wearing a shirt and you say, “It's a lovely shirt.” But I say, “Where is the shirt? What shirt are you talking about?” You say, “You are wearing this amazing pure white Calvin Klein shirt and it looks so good!” And I say, “You seem to see a beautiful shirt, but I don't. These are just amazing threads that have been woven together to appear as the shirt.” Now, is my paradigm of the shirt wrong? No. Is your paradigm wrong? No. Although you know that the shirt is not a shirt but intricately woven threads, you permit your ignorance to veil the truth and see it as a shirt. Why is it that you cannot see the threads that lie further beyond the shirt? There is no doubt that the shirt is made up of threads and is actually nothing but threads. But due to our ignorance, a kind of cosmic illusion, we fail to recognize the true nature of things beyond a certain point.

Let us analyze how this body came into existence. It was conceived when two cells, male and female, fused after copulation. It was just a tiny zygote barely visible to the human eye. The zygote grew into an embryo, and then an infant that was finally delivered to planet earth.

When did we come into being? At conception, at delivery or somewhere in between? Which body is truly us? The tiny baby weighing just a few pounds or the one that grew into a huge adult, thanks to pizzas, pasta, noodles, and bread that we ate? Science too has something to add about the body. We are all familiar with dead skin and dead cells, but science goes beyond to tell us that every cell of the human body is replaced in about every seven years. So, if you are 35-years-old, you have already changed your body five times. How can you be the body that is ever-changing? How can you be a body that is dying every seven years? Surely you are not the body although you have one.

Science through its branch of quantum physics has in fact redefined matter. The new scientific theory states that matter and energy convert from one to another. Recently, when I met a scientist, he told me something that astonished me. He said, "You seem to be sitting in front of me." I was bewildered and asked him what he meant. He explained a recent experiment that has changed the way science looks at matter. The smallest particles of matter, when broken down from a molecule

to an atom, to a neutron, electron, proton, and finally to a quark, changed the way science looks at the universe. During an experiment, when one such smallest particle of matter was being examined under a sophisticated microscope, it just disappeared into waves, probably energy, as concluded by scientists. As they were discussing the results of this experiment, the energy reappeared as a particle. They called it Wave-particle duality. The scientist told me, “While you appear to be a human in front of me, you may, in fact, be trillions of energy particles that appear as 'You'.”

What happens at death? Let us say that John died. What do we say - John passed away, he departed, expired or even moved on? We say, “This is the dead body of John, his mortal remains.” Now, where is John? John has gone. This is not John by any means. If this is not John which we realize after his death, this was never John even before. Now, this is John's body just as it was when he was alive, but it was never John.

Somehow we human beings have gotten used to thinking that we are the body. If our leg is hurt we don't

say that our leg is suffering. We tend to say, “I am suffering” because we consider the leg to be us. If we had an accident in which our car was seriously damaged, do we say that we got damaged? Don't we say that the car was damaged because we are able to clearly differentiate between the car and us?

However, we are unable to distinguish between the body and us. We think, “I am the body.” It is because we think, “I am the body,” we suffer from all the pain that the body experiences.

Let us try a virtual experiment. We virtually cut off our hands and legs and keep them on a table. What happens to us? Do we continue living? Of course, we do. Except we have no limbs. What happens to the limbs on the table? Can they walk? “Ridiculous!” you will say. How can they do that on their own? The moment they are detached from us, they lose life. They cannot live independently. So, if I am not the limbs, then who am I? Let us continue the virtual experiment. We remove our eyes and keep them on the table. Can the eyes see? “Is this some kind of joke? Obviously, the

eyes can't see," you would think. Now we remove the ears, the nose, and the teeth. Although we become blind, deaf and lame, we are still alive. Even if we remove the kidneys and some organs and keep those on the table, all our body parts lie dead on the table while we are still alive. To take the virtual experiment to a climax, we peel the skin carefully, put all the blood in bottles and after removing the flesh, muscles, and tissues, we are left with a skeleton. Now everything is on the table. But something is missing. ME! Where did I go? I was there all along while this experiment was taking place. But in the end, I don't seem to be there anymore. I escaped somewhere. Every cell of my body is on the table, but you can't find me.

Isn't it clear that we are not this body? Even if we seamlessly stitch the body back with skeleton, flesh, muscles, tissues, and blood we can never get back the 'ME' which left the body. We were never this body and we will never be the body. There is no doubt that we have a body from birth to death but we should clearly understand that we are not the body.

A simpleton was taken to a wax museum and was told that many people who died centuries ago had actually come alive in this magical museum. He was amazed when he walked through the museum and saw the world's greatest people, who were known to be dead, in a life-like state. He did not know that wax statues or replicas of famous people could look so real as if they were the celebrities themselves. He actually believed that these people had come alive. Thanks to modern technology, these wax statues appeared to talk in their own voice with lip movements that could deceive a simple man. And then he gasped, "Oh, my God! How did these people come alive? Have we been able to discover the mystery of death and are we able to revive those who have died and moved on?"

Obviously, it is not true. Anybody with common sense would realize that these were just wax statues which had come alive with animatronics, sound effects, and 4-dimensional technology. While many of us are well aware that these wax creatures are not real, yet we live and die believing that we are the human body though there is enough scientific evidence to prove that the body is essentially energy and it is constantly changing.

What started as just a zygote will eventually turn into dust, and those who continue to believe that we are this body will continue to suffer. They will never uncover the mystery of who we are.

If we are not the body and we are sure about it, but we know that we exist, then who are we?

Man has discovered the planets,
He has explored the stars.
He has gone below the waters,
And has found fragrance in the flowers.
But to find Who he Truly is,
He doesn't have the hours.

Summary

Surely we are not the Human Body

- We are blessed with an amazing body and five senses through which we perceive the outside world.

- But the biggest wonder is – are we the human body or do we have a human body?

- We say, "My kidneys failed," and not "I failed" because "I am" not the kidney. Similarly, we say "My hands" or "My legs."

- It is just like we have a house but we are not the house, our beautiful clothes belong to us but we never mistake ourselves to be the clothes that we wear. It is unfortunate that we mistake ourselves for the body that we wear.

- As long as we are conscious, we feel we are the body, but when we fall asleep, we still exist - we dream, but the body doesn't.

- The shocking truth is that we are not the body. We have a body.
- If we are sure we are not the body but we exist, then who are we?

How can we be the Mind?

If you try to find the Mind,
You will find that there is no Mind.
Then how can you be the Mind,
Which you cannot Find?

By now we are convinced that we are not the body. Most of us think that we are a complex amalgamation of the body and the mind. Some even think that humans are a body-mind-soul complex. Let us try to examine who we truly are.

We have a body, we are sure of it, but we learned in the previous chapter that we are not the body. We also have a mind and we know we have a mind, don't we? The mind thinks, it worries, it wonders and it wanders. When we say, “I am worried,” instead of saying, “My mind is worried,” we imply that we are our mind. Confusion erupts over whether we are the mind or we have a mind. The human body is said to be made up of gross elements and subtle elements. The gross elements can be touched and felt. If we peel the epidermis and look into the body, we will pass the layers of skin, get to blood vessels, tissues, muscles, and bones. If we break the bone, we will get to the bone marrow. But where is the mind?

What we call the mind or the subtle element, is invisible. The intangible body is made up of four subtle

elements - mind, memory, intellect, and ego. Commonly, these together are considered to be the mind, but actually, they are four separate elements that together form the subtle body.

While we seem to be embodied in a body-mind complex, we are neither the body nor the mind. It seems like our body is the hardware and mind is the software, but we are the ones alive inside.

Even when the mind sleeps and there are no dreams, we still exist. When we wake up after a deep sleep, we get the feeling that we slept like a log. Who is it that feels this bliss when the body and mind are both asleep?

The mind cannot be touched and felt. It is the subtle part of our body and there seems to be no doubt that it exists. We often confuse the subtle body with the mind when in reality it is made up of the mind, the memory, the intellect, and the ego.

The mind is a thought factory. Its job is to produce thoughts. It is said to produce up to fifty thoughts a

minute. This can be a whopping fifty thousand thoughts a day.

The memory is another part of our subtle body. We all use our memory to register the events of our life and then to recall such memories. The third subtle part of our body is the intellect. It is that faculty of the subtle body that discriminates between what is right and what is wrong. It helps us choose and decide. The fourth part of our subtle body is the ego. That aspect of us that causes the 'I-ness' and the 'my-ness'.

All the four elements of our subtle body are commonly referred to as the mind. They are often known as the 'inner instrument' of the body.

Now let's come back to the question - are we the mind or do we have a mind? We often say, “My mind is wandering.” Who is talking about their wandering mind? That is us. But who are we?

There is no doubt that we are, that we exist but there is a big problem in understanding who we truly are. We have a body and a mind but we don't seem to be either

of the two, then who are we?

It is a real mystery that although we seem to have a huge memory which is said to be larger than any computer produced on Earth, we are unable to copy data from our memory and paste it into someone else's memory.

While the mind, the memory, and the intellect form the subtle part of our body and we know that we have these invaluable gifts, we often confuse ourselves to be the mind which we are not.

When we are awake, both the body and the mind are awake. When we sleep, the body sleeps but the mind doesn't – it dreams! Within moments, it can take us to a land of fantasy or even imagining horrible nightmares. Are dreams real? Of course, they are not. When we wake up we realize that they were just dreams.

There was once a little boy who had a dream that he was his own 'grandfather'. In the dream, he saw that he picked up a stick and started beating his only son for being mischievous. Every time the son did something inappropriate, grandfather

would pick up his stick and thrash his son. As he woke up from his dream, he saw his father shouting at him for something he was told to do, but he didn't. For a moment, he felt like picking up a stick and beating up his father, who in the dream as 'grandfather' was his son. Did he do it? Of course not! How could he pick a stick and beat his father? Just a few moments earlier, he was the grandfather, but upon waking up he realized that it was just a dream.

Dreams are dreams, they are not real. If the mind can cook up dreams that are unreal, how difficult it is for the mind to make us feel that we are the mind which actually we are not.

The mind is a rascal. It behaves like a monkey that keeps on jumping from one thought to another. It doesn't let us contemplate the question of who we are. It keeps thinking and making us believe that we are the body-mind complex. We already know that we are not the body although we have a body, and we have also realized that we seem to have a mind but we are not the mind.

How does our mind deceive us and conceal the truth? How does it withhold the reality from us? With its constant rumbling and mumbling of over fifty thoughts a minute, the mind bulldozes any spiritual thought or contemplation with its dreamy and mystical musings. The mind is capable of fooling us and that appears to be its primary job. It bombards us with thoughts, moment after moment, and doesn't give us a chance to be still and realize the truth of who we are. It keeps emphasizing that we are the ego, the mind, and the body. We suffer because of this mistaken identity that is forced on us by none other than our mind. Yes, our own mind is our biggest enemy. It is the cause of our misery and suffering. But we don't realize it. The mind is desperate to keep us trapped in a myth because the moment we realize the truth, the mind will cease to exist. It is not real. It appears to be, but when wisdom overtakes ignorance, then there is no mind. The mind ceases to exist and we get filled with peace and calm.

A rich man went to a saint and complained that his mind was anxious and full of worries. He asked the saint how he could get rid of the tensions from his mind. The saint replied, "This

is a simple matter. Please come to me tomorrow morning at 5 a.m. and we will solve your problem. However, please don't forget to bring your mind along." The rich man was puzzled by the saint's reply. He went home and discussed the same with his wife. He told her that the saint seemed to be a little crazy for how could he go to the saint without his mind. His wife was intelligent, she saw something beyond the obvious and urged him to go to meet the saint the next day.

When the rich man went to meet the saint, the first thing he was asked, "Have you brought your mind?" The rich man could not control his irritation and asked, "What do you mean? How could I come here without my mind?" The saint smiled and told the rich man, "It is good you know that you have brought your mind. I am busy for two hours doing some work. Please sit in the room next door and find your mind. Once you find your mind, bring it to me and I will remove all the tensions, worries and anxieties." The rich man went into the next room and started looking for his mind. He knocked at his head trying to locate his mind, but he realized that the thoughts came to him from every part of his body. They seemed to go to the brain but where was the mind that he was trying to locate? Eventually, he realized that he could not find his mind. After two hours, he met the saint and said,

"Sorry, I cannot find my mind." The saint smiled and said, "There is no mind. How can you find it? Can you find talking or walking? You can't. Talking is a function of the mouth and walking is a function of the legs. If we want to stop walking or talking, we can easily stop. We just have to stop worrying and being anxious when these negative emotions emerge. If we cannot find the mind, then where is the question of the mind being anxious or tense when it doesn't exist?"

If one tries to analyze the mind, one will realize that the mind is a rascal. Every time the body sleeps, the mind takes us on a tour of fantasy. Thanks to the mind, what is essentially a myth appears to be the truth. It takes us on a fairy tale journey which seems to last for years although it takes just a few minutes for us to wake up. Unfortunately, we consider ourselves to be the mind, and we start believing everything that the mind projects. If we contemplate the mind, we will realize that it is just a fake factory. The mind is as fake as the dreams it produces. No dream is real, just as no mind is real. The fact is that we don't have a mind. We just have a brain that produces thoughts and these bundles of thoughts together appear as the mind.

If we think that we are the mind but it is something we cannot find, then how can we be the mind? We all know that our subtle body exists. Beyond blood and bone, heart and brain - we have a thought factory, a memory and an intellect that can't be touched or felt but they exist. Nobody can doubt the existence of these subtle faculties. But just like we realized that we have a body but we are not the body, we must be absolutely clear about the fact that we seem to have a mind but we are not the mind.

Isn't it strange that on deep introspection we realize that we have a body but we are not the body? We seem to have a mind, but we can't find where the mind is. If we are not the body that is awake, nor the mind that dreams then who are we? We exist, don't we? But who is the one that exists? If you really want to know who you are, then you must not stop. You must go on a quest. You must probe deeper, and try to find out the reality.

You know you have a mind,
It worries and it wanders,
Your energy it squanders.
You can hear it rumble and mumble,
But you don't see it tumble.
Can you be what you can't see?
Or is somebody else the Real 'Me'?

Summary

How can we be the Mind?

- Most of us think that we are a complex amalgamation of the body and the mind or a body- mind complex.
- Are we the mind or do we have a mind?
- Even when the mind sleeps and there are no dreams, we still exist.
- It seems like our body is the hardware and mind is the software, but we are neither. We are the Power, the Energy within.
- Unfortunately, we start believing everything that the mind projects because we consider ourselves to be the mind.
- If we try to find the mind, we can't even find it. Then, how can we be the mind?
- We have a brain that produces thoughts and these bundles of thoughts together appear as the mind.

- We have a body and a mind but we don't seem to be either of the two. Then who are we?
- If we really want to know who we are, then we must go on a quest.

3

Aren't we the Ego 'I'?

Let's find out "Who am I?"
Aren't we the ones who say, "My"?
We exist from Birth till we Die.
Aren't we the ego, 'I'?

If we are not the body and we are not the mind, then who are we? Surely we are, we exist, but it's not clear who we truly are.

We refer to ourselves ever so often like, "I am Grace. I am an Indian. I love fruits. I like to visit the beaches. I get angry because I don't like dishonesty." All day long, we keep on repeating the word 'I'. "I am coming." "I will call you later." "I will meet you tomorrow." Surely we must be this 'I'.

One of the most common English words that we use is 'I'. We keep referring to the ego which is our self-identity without realizing who we are. We often consider ourself to be a combination of the ego, mind, and body. "I am this body with this mind and I occupy this space. I weigh 50 kilos. I am the son of Victor and Neena and I am the father of Tom and Smith. I create a story that tries to identify me, but finally, 'I' still don't know who I am. There is no doubt that I am, I exist but who is the 'I' that exists, I don't know."

It's really funny that we don't know who we truly are.

The ego is invisible and intangible just like the mind. Then, how can we be the mind and ego? The body, of course, is tangible and visible, but it is inert matter without 'ME' (Mind + Ego). It's so amusing to find out who I am. The whole world thinks that it knows the answer, but in reality, nobody knows.

The 'I' thinks, "I am this body, I am this mind, and I am alive." The 'I' thinks many more things like, "This is my house, my family, my bank account and my wealth." It is the 'I' that says, "This car is mine, that office is mine, and those clothes are mine." While we are aware of the 'I-ness,' 'my-ness,' and 'mine-ness,' we still don't know who the 'I' is. We have learned in the previous chapters that we are not the body and we are not the mind. Then who is this 'I'?

Does 'I' exist? Of course, 'I' does exist. It is alive in a body-mind complex. The 'I' is embodied. It is not the body and the mind. Just like 'I' has a house but 'I' is not the house, 'I' has clothes but 'I' is not the clothes, 'I' has a body but 'I' is not the body. 'I' is in the body. How do we know this?

When the body dies, it lies on the ground because the 'I' that was alive has departed or passed on. The 'I' is said to have left the body at death. In fact, it is this leaving of the body by 'I' that caused the body to die in the first place.

Therefore, we know that 'I' is alive in the body till it is alive. But we are not clear as to who is this 'I'. Although it may seem repetitive, we know that 'I' has a body but is not the body and 'I' seems to have a mind but it is not the mind. We are absolutely clear about what the 'I' is not. If we know what the 'I' is not, then what are we, the 'I'?

Some people call this 'I', the Soul. The Soul is also known as the Spirit, the *Prana*, the *Atman* or the *Chi* in different parts of the world. Because these terms are easily misunderstood, it is better to call the 'I', the Life Energy. It is the Life Energy that arrives at birth and departs at death.

But do we truly know what this Life Energy is? We don't. We know beyond doubt that such an energy does

exist. Our being alive is proof of that, but we are ignorant about who we truly are.

Due to ignorance, we believe that we are the ego. Not just the ego, along with it is born the mind and thereafter, the body. Our ignorance makes us believe that we are the ego-mind-body complex. Even though we know that we are not the body and we also realize that we are not the mind, our ego imprisons us in ignorance that makes us suffer as the body and mind.

Now that we know that we are not the body that keeps changing, and we know that the mind is an illusion and without the body and mind, we cannot be the ego, it makes us believe that we may be the Life Energy which we are ignorant about. Isn't it high time to find out who we truly are?

Man is so busy
Discovering everything outside,
that he has lost connection
with what is inside.

Summary

Aren't we the Ego 'I'?

- One of the most common English words we use is 'I'.
- We keep referring to the ego which is our self-identity without realizing who we are.
- We consider ourselves to be a combination of an ego, mind and body, because of our ignorance.
- The ego is invisible and intangible just like the mind. Then, how can we be the ego?
- Does 'I' exist? Of course 'I' exists. It is alive in a body-mind complex.
- People call this 'I', the Soul or the Spirit, the *Prana*, the *Atman* or the *Chi*. It is the Life Energy that arrives at birth and departs at death.
- Even though we know that we are not the body or the mind, our ego imprisons us in ignorance, which

makes us suffer as the body and mind.

- Now that it is clear that we are not the body, mind or ego, it makes us believe that we may be the Life Energy which we are ignorant about.

4

Ignorance makes us Suffer

We think we know everything,
but we have not realized the truth.
It's time for us
to stop and get to the
bottom of the root.
Who are we?
And why are we here?

Because we don't know the truth of who we are, we experience suffering and misery. What is this ignorance? And why does this ignorance cause us suffering?

Because of our ignorance, we consider ourselves to be the ego, mind, and body, and therefore, we suffer. If we wipe off the ignorance by realizing the truth, we can escape this triple suffering. First, we suffer as the ego, “This is my wife, my child, and my house,” when in reality, nothing is ours. This ignorance makes us suffer. Then we suffer as the mind. It jumps to yesterday and worries about something that's over and can't be changed. It jumps to tomorrow, to our fears and makes us anxious. We are not this mind, but because we think we are the mind, we suffer. Finally, ignorance that makes us think that we are the body, makes us suffer physical pain. The body suffers pain, but if we realize that we are not the body, the impact of the pain will be far lesser.

How can we escape from this triple suffering? We can escape if we wipe off our ignorance by realizing the truth. This is possible if we go on a quest to discover

who we truly are.

Suppose I place a cube of ice in your hand and say, “This is not ice,” you would say, “Nonsense! This is ice, I can touch it. I can feel it. I can see it.” In a few minutes, the ice melts and soon what seemed to be a cube of ice is now water. If I tell you, “This is a block of ice,” you will say, “No, it's not a block of ice. It is just water. I can see it. I can touch it and I know it is water.”

What actually happened is the temperature changed and the ice melted into water. But those who are aware of how water freezes below zero degrees to ice and evaporates into vapour when boiled over hundred degrees, know the truth of the property of water. But what about a small kid who is ignorant of this? Will the kid believe the story that ice could become water and water could disappear? It is impossible for a young child who has not studied the basics of science, and who does not understand the properties of matter, to realize this truth.

Such is the state of a spiritual child - a child who has not

studied the truth of the Spirit. The seeker of truth doesn't realize that this body that seems to us to be real, disappears into thin air, known as Consciousness. This body appears during a phase called life just like the cube of ice forms when water reaches freezing point. The same ice becomes water just as our body disintegrates into dust. And the true life, the true self that was within the body, becomes one with the Universal Consciousness. What stops us from realizing the truth? It is ignorance and this ignorance is very dangerous because it makes us believe in a myth and conceals the truth. There is something known as the Cosmic Illusion. The Cosmic Illusion makes so many things appear to be the way they are but in reality, they are not. Just as the freezing point makes the water appear as ice and the boiling point makes the water appear as vapour, these Universal Cosmic laws created and instituted by the Creator make the whole Universe appear as it does. How do we get to the bottom of the truth? We would get to the bottom of the truth when we transcend ignorance. When wisdom overtakes our ignorance, then we realize the truth of who we are and why we are here. As long as we live in ignorance, we

can always think – "I am Jones and Mary is my wife. Tim and Rachael are my kids. I own this house, and this is my Mercedes Benz." It is our sheer ignorance that makes us think like this because the fact is that nothing belongs to us. If we are blessed with wisdom, we know that we come empty-handed and we go empty-handed. Then why do we feel that these things belong to us? This is because at that point in time they appear to belong to us. But the truth is something else. We are enveloped by ignorance that makes us suffer by preventing us from realizing the truth of who we are and why we are here.

A child who was taken to an amusement park, got terrified when his parents brought him close to a fake crocodile that was lying with its mouth wide open. While the parents were having a good time going close to the crocodile knowing the fact that it was just an animation, the child could not believe that such a real-looking crocodile was actually fake. It was doing everything that a real animal would do. It was moving and opening its mouth, hissing and also attacking. The child was crying while the parents were laughing.

Instead of trying to make the child overcome his fear they said, “Why are you crying? Don't cry. It's not real!” Although they knew that the child was afraid due to ignorance, they were not able to make the child overcome its false perception that the crocodile was not a real reptile that would attack. As long as the child remained in ignorance, it continued to cry just like we continue to scream and cry in this world. We live in misery and sorrow because of our ignorance. If something goes wrong, for instance, if we lose money or a relationship, we cry without realizing that it is just a cosmic drama that is unfolding. We get disappointed and heartbroken due to our own ignorance. We must understand that in the end, the game will be over and only the stage called Earth will be left. Because we don't realize this and live in ignorance, we remain miserable, we remain unhappy and we don't get to discover the truth of who we are and why we are here. Today, we human beings know that a caterpillar is nothing else but a butterfly, just as we know that a butterfly is nothing else but a caterpillar that metamorphoses. But imagine telling this to somebody living in ignorance who has never seen a butterfly. He would never believe

the fact that a caterpillar undergoes a process which is scientifically known as metamorphosis. The caterpillar transforms into a pupa and then finally it becomes a beautiful butterfly. But we need to have the knowledge of metamorphosis to enjoy the bliss of the butterfly. If we considered it to be a creepy little worm, what would we do? We would crush it under our feet. But someone who sees caterpillars in their garden and knows that they would turn into beautiful butterflies, would treasure them rather than crush them. We human beings are unaware that we can metamorphosize into the Spirit that we truly are. Although we are born as the body-mind complex, this is not what we are all about. This is just a phase that we have to pass through until we transform and finally metamorphose into the Divine Spirit. But due to our lack of knowledge, we think we are this body and mind entity, and we get carried away with lust, greed, and desire, not realizing that these emotions stop our metamorphosis into becoming what we truly are, the Spirit. The difference is that the caterpillar normally would metamorphose into a butterfly, but human beings will not do so until they eradicate the ignorance that they

live with and realize the truth.

We are all aware of what a mirage is and how people walking in a desert often see an oasis of water at a distance. But when they go towards the water, it disappears. Is it magical water that suddenly disappeared? Of course not! We are quite aware that it is called a mirage, a mirage in the desert. In fact, it is said that in cold winter areas, people see a tree that appears as if it is suspended from the sky. But in reality, no such tree hangs from the sky. But it appears so because it is a mirage, an illusion or an appearance. This world is an appearance and the answers to who we are and why we are here are the truths that we do not realize because we live in ignorance. There is a Cosmic Illusion that projects a myth and conceals the truth. Take for granted that you are a surgeon who is sleeping. While you are sleeping, you start dreaming, and in your dream, you are a nurse. What happens when you wake up? When you wake up and you are told to go to the operation theatre because you are a surgeon, would you rather put on the nurse's clothes and start sterilizing the operating instruments? Of

course not! Because when you wake up from the dream, you realize that you just saw a dream and the dream is not real. It is an illusion. You are a surgeon and your job is to perform surgeries. You put on your gown and gloves and you go on with it because you realize that the dream is a myth. The dream is ignorance. It is a temporary state of thinking of the mind that makes us believe something that is untrue. But while we are aware of the ignorance that appears in a dream, we are unaware of the ignorance that appears when we are awake. We think we are this body and mind and we think our job is to earn money, and it is OK to cheat and do wrong things. This is ignorance which makes us live without ethics and doesn't let us realize the truth, our ultimate goal. We don't go in search of the truth because we live in such ignorance that even the thought of the so-called reality being untrue doesn't come to our mind. We believe the fairytale with such conviction that we are unable to overcome the ignorance. Kids believe in Santa Claus. Can you convince them that there is no Santa? Impossible! They would pray to Santa Claus. They will sing carols to Santa Claus and they would wait for Santa to bring them presents on

Christmas Eve, that will be put under the Christmas tree the next morning. But as we grow up, don't we realize that Santa Claus is a myth? It is our mother or father who packs the gifts for us and makes it look like it was Santa who brought those gifts. While we grow up physically and emotionally, we don't grow spiritually and thus remain in a state of spiritual ignorance. Therefore, we are unable to realize the truth of who we are and why we are here.

Because of this ignorance, we suffer the pain of the body and misery of the mind. We already know we are not the body and mind, but still, our ignorance of the truth continues to make us suffer till our last breath. Imagine that your car has a crash and you are not hurt but your car suffers damage. You, who were inside the car suffer no pain. But while we know this, we still suffer physical pain. Because unlike the car which we think is ours and not us, in case of the body, ignorance makes us believe that we are the body and so we suffer physical pain of the body without detaching from it intellectually.

Ignorance makes us experience emotional pain of the mind though we are not the mind. We suffer what the mind suffers. The mind worries, it fears and lives with anxiety. Our ignorance also makes us experience all this because we don't realize we are not the mind. If we become the observer of the mind, then the mind will suffer but we can escape from this suffering if we overcome the ignorance and realize we are not the mind. How can we realize the truth? We need to go on a quest, a search for the reality!

We all want pleasure,
We don't want pain.
We love sunshine,
And pray that it doesn't rain.
But if we don't realize,
Who we are and
Why we are here,
Our life will go in vain.

Summary

Ignorance makes us Suffer

- We suffer because of our ignorance: we consider ourselves to be the ego, mind, and body.
- If we wipe off this ignorance by realizing the truth, we can escape this triple suffering.
- We don't realize, that like a mirage, the world is an illusion. We become disappointed due to our own ignorance not realizing that in the end, the game of life will be over and only the stage called Earth will be left.
- We continue to believe in a myth like Santa Claus because of our ignorance and our failure to spiritually evolve.
- We suffer physical pain of the body without detaching from it because of ignorance.
- Ignorance also makes us experience emotional pain of the mind, though we are not the mind.

- Therefore, we must realize the truth! But how? We need to go on a quest! Ask Questions, Investigate and Realize.

5

Let's Start a Quest to Discover Ourself

Who are you, Why are you here?
Shouldn't you find out the truth, my dear?
The only way is to go on a quest,
Until you find out, do not rest.

How can we discover who we truly are? The only way to discover the truth is to go on a quest. We must search for the answers of all the possible questions which relate to our life and our existence.

Unfortunately, we are too busy in this world of pleasures and possessions that we don't consider it important to discover the truth about ourselves. Thus man lives and dies in ignorance and suffers pain of ego, mind and body.

Man is worried about the stars in the sky, the planets, the galaxies and the wonders that appear to be in outer space. Man is exploring the depths of the ocean trying to discover what lies there. In fact, man is so busy discovering the world that he has forgotten to discover himself. Man has no time to go on a quest to understand that he is not the body. While he sees the body die and he knows that it is not the person who was alive, he doesn't ponder on the question - Who am I?

Man gives so much importance to the mind that he believes his mind to be him. Although he lives in worry

and fear, he does not go in search of the truth to realize that he is not the mind.

It is absolutely clear that we are not the body, nor are we the mind. We seem to be energy that is captured by the ego and thus we live in ignorance. As man has no time to find out the truth of who he is, he lives and dies without realizing the truth.

Man is too busy to discover that what he lives in, is actually a Cosmic Illusion. The Cosmic Illusion has trapped man in its twofold powers that keep him ignorant. The first power is the power that projects a Cosmic Illusion. The second power conceals the truth. Because man has not discovered the Cosmic Illusion, he continues to live and die in ignorance.

It may sound strange but it is true that we don't know who we truly are. What is even stranger is that we seem to have plenty of time for everything else except discovering the truth about ourselves.

While we know that we are not the body or mind and we may be a Life Energy or Power, we have not

discovered the truth. Where does this life power come from, and where does it go? What causes this power that gives us breath and without which there would be death?

When death occurs, man realizes that he is not the dead body that lies on the floor. The power that kept a person alive has escaped and disappeared somewhere. It is the same power that appears in a child when it is born. If the child did not have the power, it would be stillborn. Man sees all this with his eyes, but has no time to realize the truth.

Man is busy trying to create new toothpaste and shampoos that can beautify his skin and body. The cosmetics industry is one of the largest growing industries in the world, only to be outdone by the food industry. Man is so concerned about his burgers and pizzas, his noodles and ice-creams that his complete attention is targeted on discovering and inventing something or the other, which in reality, is not as important as finding out who he truly is. When man is faced with a question about his true identity, he just

shrugs his shoulders as he is far too preoccupied with other things that seem to be more important to him. Don't we know that our journey from womb to tomb is but of a few decades? Before we die, we suffer but we don't try to find a way out of this suffering.

Everybody in this world wants to be happy. We seek pleasure and joy and try to stay away from misery and pain. Man intuitively knows and has been told again and again by wise men, the saints and sages of the world that there is a way to eternal bliss and peace, and he must find it. He must go on a quest to realize the truth. But he is too busy. He has time for everything else except to discover himself.

Isn't it time to go on a quest? Isn't it important to stop and find out the truth of who we are and why we are here? There seems to be something that is stopping us from the truth - what is that? Shouldn't we find out who our enemy is?

We are born on planet Earth as an embodied soul but we know that we will not be here forever. Before our physical journey comes to an end, we must stop to find

out our true identity and our true purpose by asking questions, investigating our findings, and finally realizing the truth.

Most people believe that they are the body-mind complex. They don't even bother to find out who they are. They think they already know it. They live, die and suffer due to their ignorance.

There are a few people who start a quest, a search to discover the truth of who they are and why they are here. The quest is essentially several unanswered questions that they contemplate.

They think they were born from their parents, and their parents from their parents, but how did all this start? How did the first human being come into existence? If apes became human beings, then why are they not becoming human beings today? A tree came from a seed, but the seed came from the tree. How did the tree and the seed come about? If everything on the earth, the earth itself and the cosmos were caused by a Big Bang, who caused this Big Bang? How many planets, stars, and galaxies exist? How does this whole

universe operate? What makes the earth rotate around itself once in 24 hours? Why does the moon rotate once in 27 days? How do the Earth, the Sun, and the Moon synchronize their movements as the Earth revolves around the sun once in 365 days?

Seekers on a quest let their curiosity go wild. They don't stop questioning till they find answers. They continue their search with passion and intense obsession.

What is this mystery called birth? A sperm fertilizes an egg cell which forms a zygote which finally becomes a human being at birth. What causes life in this process? If life can be caused by a man and a woman, then why can't we create life in a laboratory? What is this mystery called death? What happens at death? If the soul departs, where does it go? If it goes to a heaven or hell, where are heaven and hell located? Those on a quest enjoy their search as they explore all possibilities.

Is this earth real or is it just like a stage where we actors come and go? What is the truth? We live and we die, we are sure of that, but are we reborn? If there is rebirth,

then who is reborn? The body dies but it is said that the mind is reborn along with its Karmas or previous actions. Is that true? Just like the Law of Gravity, the Law of Karma also known as the Law of Cause and Effect also exists. The Law of Karma proclaims that like a boomerang - what goes around comes around, all the way back. If this is true that we die but we are born again and again, is the mind reborn with a new body?

How many times will we be born again and again? While we are born on earth and we depart from here, the earth remains, but who is controlling and operating all that is happening on earth? The controller seems to be eternal, existing before we were born and even after we die.

A rainbow suddenly appears in the sky. In a matter of seconds, the rainbow disappears. What causes this beautiful magic? The magic continues everywhere on earth. Plants, insects, and animals are so unique. What makes them coexist so beautifully?

How does this world actually operate? Who is in charge of the cyclones, the hurricanes, and the tornadoes? Is everything just happening or is there

somebody managing whatever happens on earth?

Who are we in reality? Are we human beings having a spiritual experience or are we Spirits having a human experience? What is the reality of whatever is happening on earth? Is it real or is it just a dream?

Very few people actually start a quest with such questions. Most of humanity lives in a comfort zone. They prefer to live in blissful ignorance rather than probe such questions. They don't touch upon subjects like, 'who is God, where is God and what is God'. They prefer to live in peace, without any conflict.

Some people are excited to go on a quest. They start a journey and even find a spiritual master, a mentor, or a coach. With the help of their spiritual master, they evolve and go on a quest within, trying to discover who they are and why they are here. A good spiritual coach is normally coached by another evolved spiritual master. Spirituality is not an easy subject and the genuine seekers who are on a quest realize that it is impossible to realize the truth without a spiritual coach. They trust and surrender to their mentor in an

attempt to transcend their mind and ego.

A quest is not like a switch that can be switched on in a moment. It is like a mammoth rock that we must break. Have you ever seen a stone cutter trying to break a rock? He keeps hammering the rock – blow after blow and nothing happens. One blow – ten blows – one hundred blows – and suddenly the rock cracks into two. What caused it? Was the one-hundredth blow very special or was it the result of all the collective effort that went before? Realization of the truth and discovery of oneself happens just like this. You keep going on and on and on. You keep finding pieces of the jigsaw puzzle until that 'Aha!' moment comes, and once the puzzle is solved, the rock is broken, the truth is realized.

Without going on a quest, there is a little chance for us as human beings to realize that we are not the body, nor the mind or ego. Rather we are something else. It only happens when we start a quest to realize who we are.

Some people go from
Womb to Tomb,
not knowing what is
Birth and Death.
They laugh, they play,
they dance, they sway
and suddenly
lose their breath.

Summary

Let's Start a Quest to Discover Ourself

- We must search for the answers to all possible questions which relate to our life and our existence.
- We are so busy in this world of pleasures and possessions that we don't find it important to discover the truth.
- We live and die in ignorance, and suffer the pain of the ego, mind and body. We are so busy discovering the world that we have forgotten to discover ourselves.
- We have no time to go on a quest to understand that we are not the body. While we see the body die and we know that it is not the person who was alive, we don't ponder on the question - Who am I?
- We give so much importance to the mind that we believe the mind to be us. Although we live in worry and fear, we do not go in search of the truth to realize that we are not the mind.

- Before our physical journey comes to an end, we must find out our true identity and our true purpose by asking questions, investigating our findings, and finally realizing the truth.

- Without going on a quest, there is little chance for us to realize that we are not the body, the mind or ego.

- Realization happens when we go on a quest to discover who we are.

6

Realize Who You Truly Are!

Do you know who you truly are?
Or are you from the truth afar?
If the truth you must find,
First, you must transcend the mind.

Those who go on a spiritual quest are sometimes fortunate to realize who they truly are. Everybody doesn't realize the truth, but genuine seekers realize the truth that is often referred to as self-realization. It starts as a quest to find the answers to some basic questions such as - Who am I and why am I here? Knowledge of the answers is not enough. One has to realize the truth. What is the difference? Just knowing that we are not the body and the mind is not self-realization. Self-realization brings a paradigm shift in our lives. It is a direct experience that transforms us into a new personality. How does this happen?

Realization of the self is like somebody entering a dark room where they cannot see anything and therefore, think there is nothing. Suddenly, a bright light comes on and they begin to see so many things which they thought did not exist. They suddenly become enlightened. As long as we live in ignorance, we are enveloped in darkness that stops us from knowing who we are and why we are here. When we go on a quest, ask questions, and then investigate our findings, we are blessed to realize who we truly are.

There are several methods that may help us discover answers to the questions - who we are and why we are here. Some people probe, what is known as the principle of the cause and effect in this world, and they realize who they are. It starts with understanding the Law of Causation which is made up of three principles:

1. *Every effect has a cause*
2. *The effect is nothing else but the cause in another form*
3. *If you remove the cause, there is no effect*

Based on the Law of Causation, one realizes that a gold ring is actually not a ring. Why? Because if you remove the gold from the ring, nothing remains. There is no ring without the gold. It appears to be a ring but actually, it is gold. Gold is the cause – the ring is the effect. Similarly, mud is the cause. The pot, the plate, and the statue may appear to be so, but in reality, they are not. They are only effects of the cause - mud. If you remove the mud, there would be nothing. Without the mud there would be no pot, no plate, and no statue.

We human beings appear to be the body – the gross

physical body and the subtle mind. But in reality, we are the Divine Life Energy that gives life to the body-mind complex. At death, when the Life Energy departs, there is no breath. The body immediately disintegrates into dust and becomes nothing. It is only an effect of the cause, the Life Energy that departed. Life Energy is the cause. Without the Life Energy, we return to dust. We become nothing. This Law of Causation makes people realize the truth.

Another method of realizing who we are is called the virtual peeling method. If we virtually peel a live human body like an onion, layer by layer, and keep every cell with blood in beakers on the table, organs in trays, and flesh and bones along with the rest of the body, we will find everything except the one who was alive. Now, if we try to stitch back the body with the help of expert surgeons and medical equipment, we may probably recreate the body but we cannot put back life into it. The one who was alive in the body escapes into Consciousness. This virtual peeling method makes us realize we are not the blood, nor the bone or the skin but the Life Energy within.

Another way to realize who we truly are is to reflect upon what is popularly known as the consciousness method. We human beings experience different states of consciousness. When we are awake, the body and mind are conscious. When we sleep, the body is not conscious, but if the mind dreams, it is conscious. When the mind also sleeps, neither body nor the mind is conscious and we experience in deep sleep a feeling of peace, which makes us say, "I slept like a log" when we wake up. If we notice we experience the waking state, the dream state, and the deep sleep state. We are neither the waker nor the dreamer nor the sleeper, but the one who experiences these three states. Who are we?

To realize the truth, some people meditate. What is meditation? It is slowing down the mind from producing fifty thoughts a minute to just one thought. In such a state, a yogi or one connected to the Divine, realizes the truth. Normally, the mind jumps like a monkey and does not let us contemplate the truth that neither are we the body nor the mind. Although we know it, we are not able to realize this truth because of the rascal mind. Meditation reveals the truth.

Most seekers on a quest progress on the journey by asking questions - existential questions like what came first: the chicken or the egg? The chicken screams, “I came first. If there was no chicken how could the egg ever come?” “Hello, Mr. Chicken”, retorts the egg, “If there was no egg how would you be born?” The questioning method ultimately leads us to the answer to - Who are we? We should not give up and believe that some questions have no answers. We must persist to find answers. The tree came from a seed but the seed came from the tree. What came first? We were born from our parents and our parents from their parents. Could our forefathers be apes? Questions like these make us investigate and ultimately help us realize the answer to who we truly are.

Ancient scriptures suggest that we use the method called ‘negation’ to find out who we are. This calls for us first to know who we are not. We are not the body, there is no doubt about that. We also know we are not the mind. Then who are we? There is no doubt that we exist. From birth to death, our existence is referred to as our life journey. The only element that may be us is that

life that arrives at birth and departs at death.

We human beings are very proud of our beauty, but stop and think – the most beautiful human being decays and disintegrates at death. Why? What happens? The real beauty is that Life Energy that departs at death. We become still, stone-like, we stink and become incapable of being maintained unless we are embalmed or preserved under special conditions. The Egyptians preserved the 'Mummy', bodies of their dead but these were not those that were truly alive. This should make us realize that we are actually the beauty that departs at death, not the bodies that decay after we depart.

Another method of realizing who we are is spiritually coined as 'The Seen and Seer' method. We see a ball with our eyes. The ball is the object. The eyes are the subject. The eyes seem to see the ball. But if we remove the eyes and keep them on the table, can we see the ball? Of course not! The eyes are wired to the brain and it is the brain that sees the eyes seeing the ball. The eyes become the object and the mind the subject. Next, we

find that the mind is wandering and although we are staring at the ball, we don't see somebody grabbing it because our mind is wandering. Who is conscious that the mind is wandering? The mind itself becomes the object and we, the observers, become the subject. We realize that we are not the body. We are not even the mind. We are the observers, the ones who are conscious, and the ones who actually see. This 'Seen and Seer' method takes us further into realizing the truth of who we are.

Those who want to find out who they are through a scientific method may also do so. Science, too, endorses that we are not matter, rather trillions of energy particles that appear to be the body. For so many centuries, science and spirituality were at loggerheads. But recent experiments in science have tabled several theories that are in sync with spirituality. One such theory is the belief that energy can transform to matter and matter to energy. Is the scientific belief enough to make us realize who we are? Scientists who study quantum physics and quantum mechanics go deep into studying the smallest particle of matter at subatomic

levels. Recently in one such experiment, the smallest particle known as Quark suddenly disappeared. The scientists were flabbergasted. As they were wondering whether the matter had transformed into energy, the particle reappeared. They coined a new theory called 'Wave-particle duality'. No more were matter and energy to be considered separate from each other as one could transform to the other. This scientific truth should lay to rest our doubt of who we are. There is no doubt we are not the matter but the energy that is called life.

Who are you? The Saint asked the American who came to be blessed. He said, "I am John." "That's your name," said the Saint. "I asked who you are." "Oh! I am an American." "I didn't ask for your nationality. Tell me who you are." "Oh! I am a lawyer." "That's your profession, Mr. John. Who are you?" "I am the son of Tom and Mary and the father of Sarah and Rachel." "Did I ask you for your relationships? Please tell me, who are you?" "I am a millionaire from New York." "That is your financial status which I am not asking. Tell me, who are you?" The American was embarrassed. After a lot of introspection, he realized the truth. He thought he was his name but that was only his name, he had no idea of who he truly was. Now he was inspired to search for the truth.

Those who are sincere and want to realize the truth of who they are can use any or many of these methods to realize the truth. It is so obvious that we are not the body. Science declares it, death endorses it, beauty proclaims it, and virtually peeling the body will confirm it. Several methods endorse that we are not the mind. We observe the mind watching the world. We meditate to calm the mind. And we reflect that we are not the dreamer.

So, we are clear that we are not the body and that we are not the mind. But we are alive. One day, the body will die, and as for the mind – where is it - we cannot find. It is the Life Energy inside that will leave us causing death.

When we realize that we are this Life Energy , not the body nor the mind, then we realize the truth. We realize our true self. Not this body, not this mind. We are the Life Energy that keeps us alive.

True seekers realize their true self. This is called self-realization. It happens as a direct experience, something that happens in a flash. It's not just the knowledge, that we are not the ego, the mind, and the

body rather it is the realization of truth. This is the realization of "Who we are". Once we have answered the question, "Who we are" this takes us to the next most important question, "Why are we here on earth?"

Who are you? *John!*
No, that's your name.
An American!
No, that's your nationality.
A millionaire.
No, that's your financial status.
Son of Mr. and Mrs. Smith.
That's your relationship.
A lawyer.
That's your profession.
Who are you?
It's sad, isn't it?
You don't know
Who you are.
Isn't it time to stop and find out?

Summary

Realize Who You Truly Are!

- Those who go on a spiritual quest are sometimes fortunate to realize who they truly are - the truth often referred to as self-realization.
- It starts as a quest to find answers to some basic questions such as, "Who am I and why am I here?" followed by the investigation of our findings.
- Several methods help us discover answers to these questions. Any or many of these methods can help us in self-realization:

  1. The Law of Causation: The body and mind are just effects. We are the cause.

  2. The Peeling Method: If we virtually peel the body, we will realize that we are not the body.

  3. The Consciousness Method: If we are not the waker, the dreamer, the sleeper, but we are, then who are we?

  4. Meditation: It stops the mind from the constant production of thoughts and focuses on one thought with concentration.

5. Questioning: We can realize the truth by asking questions like 'What came first: chicken or egg?'

6. The Negation Method: We first realize who we are not, and then we realize who we are.

7. Understanding what makes us beautiful: We are not the beautiful body that we appear to be. It decays. We are the Life Energy within.

8. The Seer and Seen Method: If we realize that we are observers, we can realize the truth of who we really are.

9. Scientific Reasoning: Even science now endorses that we are not matter. We are energy.

10. Our 'given' names: Our names are just our names - our identity. Our names are not us.

- Self-realization is not just the knowledge that we are not the ego, the mind, and the body. It is the realization of our true self, the realization of 'who we are', the energy within.
- Once we have answered the question, “Who are you?” this takes us to the next most important question, “Why are we here on earth?”

7

Why are we here on Earth?

What is our purpose here on Earth?
Why are we given this human birth?
Why are we here, is happiness the goal?
Or rather to Realize that we are the Soul?

Have you ever thought about what your purpose on earth is? Why were you born and what must you do before you die? Very few people even ponder over such questions.

Very few people in this world stop to find out the true purpose of life. Most people just exist and while they think they live, they just zoom from the womb to their tomb. They have no time to ask questions, to go on a quest, and to find out who they are and why they are here.

While the whole world is seeking happiness, the biggest secret unknown to mankind is that ultimate happiness and peace come when we realize the truth of who we are and why we are here. On realization, man is liberated from all misery and pain and is transported to a life of eternal peace and everlasting joy.

Everybody in this world wants to be happy, and we think this is our life's purpose. Different things make different people happy. But ultimately everybody wants pleasure. The whole world lives by the pleasure-

pain principle. What is it? All human beings seek pleasure and chase happiness. While we are attracted to pleasure, we run away from pain. Nobody wants to be unhappy or miserable. Unfortunately, in the end, we all suffer and nobody can escape suffering.

Our first challenge is to realize who we are. As long as we don't realize the truth, we live, suffer, and die. In fact, we can broadly divide humanity into three types. These three categories of people have three distinct paradigms of life. And according to their paradigm, they carve out a life philosophy and the purpose of their life.

Each of these three categories believes differently about what the purpose of life is. The first category which we will explore, thinks that it is the body. The second category thinks that it is a mind that has a body. The third category is that rare and small minority that realizes that it is neither the body nor the mind, but the Life Energy that gives life to the body-mind complex. Let us analyze these three categories:

The first category of people is the majority. They

believe that they are the body. They may or may not have ethics that rule their life. They believe that death is the end. Death means 'game over' for them. They do not question, ask or seek answers. They do not care about where they came from or where they would go. To them, life is all about pleasure and happiness. And as long as they can escape the pain, they are fine. They live as an ego that has an identity, with a mind that thinks and a body that acts. They do not believe that their actions are recorded for a future life. Some of them vaguely believe in a God and His judgment that will befall them after they die. However, they have no time to think about who will receive the verdict after their death as their body will no more be alive. This paradox doesn't baffle these people as they are not interested in any kind of introspection. They are pleasure-driven individuals – seeking pleasure, shunning pain and living to gain. That's all their life is about. They have no other purpose.

There is a second category of people in this world. They are more philosophical and introspective. They realize a few important things in life. They realize that there is

a Law of Action and Reaction. What goes around comes around. If they plant mangoes, they will not reap tomatoes. They see bad things happen to good people and people being born with misery and pain. They realize that there must be some reason for a newborn infant to suffer. In fact, it is not only the baby that suffers but also all of those who are close to the baby. They believe in the doctrine of Karma, the law which says, “What you give is what you get.” For them, they are not the body that dies. They are the mind which is reborn based on its Karma. Everything that they do in the world will be rewarded in the days to come. Their present life is a result of their past actions, just as their present actions will determine their future.

The mind will be reborn in a new body. The body is only an instrument. But the one who actually gets reborn is the Mind + Ego, 'ME'. The 'ME' suffers punishment and enjoys rewards as it is born in a new body. This second category of people is God-fearing and they live far more ethical lives. Their purpose is to create good Karma so that they are blessed with happiness not just in this lifetime but also that they are

reborn to a life of peace, joy, and bliss.

There is a third category of people. They are the ones who realize the truth. They realize they are not the body and they also realize that they are not the mind. Because they are not the body and mind, they transcend the ego. This means none of the actions of the body, driven by the mind belong to them. The body is only an instrument through which they act but the actions are not theirs. They are not the doers.

This third category realizes that neither are they the body nor are they the mind. In fact, the mind doesn't exist. It is just a bundle of thoughts that is constructed by our ego. Our ego is the slave of our ignorance. They overcome this ignorance, realizing the illusion of the mind and transcend it along with the ego to realize the truth.

These people believe they are the Life Energy that empowers the body and mind to act. However, they disown actions of the body and the mind and distance themselves from them. One who has truly realized this, develops a sharp intellect to control the mind and the body senses, living with dispassion and discipline

without any worldly desires of the body and the mind. It is this third category that believes that their purpose is to realize the truth of who they are and why they are here.

All three categories of people have their own respective purpose of life on earth based on their paradigm of who they are. The understanding of who they are determines why they are here. Of course, we must evolve from category one to category two and then to category three because the first category lives in complete ignorance thinking they are the body, the second category lives in partial ignorance thinking they are the mind. Both suffer though the degree of suffering varies. It is the third category that escapes the misery and suffering by realizing that they are not the body and the mind. Each of us must aspire to realize who we truly are and thereby live a life of meaning and purpose. If we live a life of mistaken identity, not knowing who we are, then how can we fulfill our purpose of life on earth?

If you look around, what do you see? There are some people, who live for today, they don't believe in

tomorrow. They don't want to ask questions. They don't feel the need to introspect and contemplate. They suffer the most. They don't find the need to live with values and ethics. There are other people who try to investigate life and live with meaning and purpose. Most of humanity falls in these two categories. Very few people go on a quest to find out who they are and why they are here.

Sohail believes, “I am this body, and I don't need to think further. I like to eat, drink and have fun. One day I will die, that is the end, there is nothing beyond. I don't want to find out anything about life. I just want to enjoy it. I don't believe that I must find out the meaning and purpose of life.” When suffering strikes Sohail, he is unable to face it, he is devastated and destroyed.

Keshav thinks deeper, believing in rebirth and Karma, the Law of Action and Reaction. He believes that we must find out what is life's true purpose and we must live with meaning. He knows the law that what we give is what we get. One day his body will die, but he will be reborn based on his own actions - his Karma. Therefore,

he tries to live a good life, being kind and compassionate, living honestly and praying to God. Keshav is far more equipped to face the trials and tribulations of life.

Yogi is a true seeker. His purpose is to realize the truth. He goes on a quest to find out who we are and why we are here. He realizes the truth, that we are not the body, mind or ego, but the Divine Soul. He also realizes that the purpose of life is at first purification, then illumination and finally unification. Purification is removing all the toxins, the negativity from our life, eradicating the ignorance, cleaning not just our body, but also our mind. This is the first process. Once we are purified, then there will be illumination. Illumination is knowledge, wisdom, and the realization of the truth, realization to that level where we are able to clearly distinguish between the truth and the myth. This is the second step or illumination. Once there is purification and illumination, then there is unification. The embodied Soul then unifies with the Cosmic Soul or the Cosmic Consciousness that is everywhere. This completes the three-step method. Yogi's purpose is clear. He is an instrument of the Lord and he is here to fulfill the

Divine Will. His goal is to be liberated from body, mind, and ego at death. He lives a life of peace and tranquility, joy and bliss, realizing the truth of who we are and why we are here. He knows that he is the manifestation of the Divine and he realizes everything that happens on earth is just a drama, a big show on a theatre called Earth.

Some wise men have said it very beautifully. We are all part of the Cosmic Energy that manifests as this world, as you and me. We are imprisoned and caged in illusory embodiments. Our goal is to transcend the illusion, to realize the truth, and to be liberated so that we can unite with the Universal Cosmic Energy, the source from where we came.

Therefore, this is the ultimate purpose of life, to realize, "I am not the body, and I am not the mind. I am the Life Energy." Our purpose is not just to know this but to live this realization. What does living this realization mean? It means transcending body and mind and with it, all misery and sorrow and living a life of joy and peace.

If we want to be fully aware of our purpose and to know why we are here, firstly we must crystalize our understanding of who we are and then why we are here.

Once we realize that we are not the bone and skin but the Life Energy within, then we must pursue our true purpose. What is the true purpose of life? If we do not realize the truth of who we are, then we will be reborn again and again only to suffer. Once we know the truth then how should we live?

This realization makes us aware of and conscious that we are embodied souls – a Life Energy that is encapsulated in a body-mind complex. We live and die as per the Divine Will of the Creator. Although we do not have the power to change our circumstances, we still have the power to choose what we must do in the present moment. We also have an intellect to discriminate and decide.

Our purpose of life is to first realize the truth so we do not sink into an ocean of ignorance. We must be conscious and aware of the reality and live in Yoga, Union with God. Once that Divine moment comes

when we are set free from the body-mind complex, we should merge with the Divine because that is our ultimate purpose. If we fail to achieve this ultimate purpose and become victims of desire, lust and greed, we will not only lose the realization but along with it, we will also lose our peace and joy, not just in this life but in the lives to come because we will continue to take birth again and again only to suffer. The choice is ours.

We are not the body or mind that takes Birth.
We must realize our purpose on Earth.
We are Embodied creatures, we are the Soul.
To unite with the Divine is our Ultimate Goal.

Summary

Why are we here on Earth?

- Very few people in this world stop to find out the true purpose of life.

- Most people just exist, they have no time to ask questions, to go on a quest, and to find out who they are and why they are here.

- While the whole world is seeking happiness, the biggest secret unknown to mankind is that ultimate happiness and peace come when we realize the truth of who we are and why we are here.

- Our first challenge is to realize who we are. As long as we don't realize this truth, we live, suffer, and die.

- Humanity, broadly, can be classified into three types –

  1. The first category, the pleasure-seekers, believe that they are the body.

2. The second category is God-fearing, more philosophical and introspective. This category of people thinks that they are the mind that is reborn after the body dies.

3. The third category of people transcend the ego to realize the truth that they are not the body nor the mind. They are the Divine Soul.

- This is the ultimate purpose of life, to realize, "I am not the body, I am not the mind. I am not the Ego. I am the Life Energy and my goal is to be liberated."

- We must be conscious and aware of the reality, the truth and live in Yoga, Union with God.

- Once we are free from the body-mind complex, we will merge with the Divine – our ultimate life purpose.

8

Who is Managing 'The Earth Show'?

There is a Power that manages the show.
It controls when we must come and go.
We are but actors, this we must know,
It is the Producer, Director of the show.

Have you ever thought about it? The Earth rotates on its own axis, revolves around the Sun, and is part of a galaxy called Milky Way. The Milky Way is a tiny speck in the cosmos. Who created the cosmos? Who is controlling all this magic in the universe?

You are reading a book. If somebody tells you that this book was produced by magic, and it just appeared in your hand, would you believe them? Of course not! You know that somebody must have written this book – edited, designed and published it before it was delivered in your hand. Just like this book must have a publisher, and the chair you sit on must have a manufacturer, this cosmos must have a Creator. Who is the Creator of this cosmos? Those who go on a quest eventually realize the truth, not only about themselves but also about the Creator we often called God.

Unfortunately, the term 'God' has been grossly misunderstood. God is not a statue nor is God a saint. God is not a picture that anyone can paint. God is the Creator, the Power that is Universal, the Power that created the cosmos and manages it.

Unfortunately, we humans have a distinct picture of our 'Personal God'. Be it a man with a long white beard sitting in the clouds or a Divine mother who answers every prayer. This preset notion of God stops us from realizing the truth. We don't know who God is, where God is, or what God is, but God is. Those who go on a quest not only discover the truth about themselves but as they pass through self-realization, they move onward, forward, and towards God-realization.

The first realization is that there is a Creator, a Power referred to as God. However, just like we realize that we are not the body, we also realize that God, the Creator is not a human being. The Creator is not made of flesh and bone. The Creator is immortal and invisible. The Creator is a Power. Because we human beings are unable to comprehend God, our religions knit together mythological tales of mystical Gods. They create stories that portray God as all-powerful. God is Omnipotent – so powerful that he can do anything. God is a Power, not a person.

God has created everything in this universe. Therefore,

just like a manufacturer who knows everything about his products, God knows everything about His creation. The Sun, the Moon, the stars, the birds, the animals, the flowers are all God's creation. You and I are here because of God. But how did all of this come about?

Many things in this world can't be proved but we know them by inference. For instance, the Law of Gravity cannot be proved but because things that are thrown up, get drawn down to the earth, we infer that the Law of Gravity exists.

God-realization is an inference. In fact, it is a direct realization within. It is beyond what the mind can comprehend. It is what the Soul directly experiences.

We have already realized what we are. We are not the body and the mind. We are the Life Energy that is within. Now just imagine that you take two balloons and inflate them with air. Earlier, they were just dead pieces of rubber. But from the air that is everywhere, we fill up these pieces of rubber to become two bouncing balloons - full of life. Once we deflate the balloons, can we retrieve the air of the two balloons

separately or is it merged? No, it is impossible to separate the air once we deflate the balloons, because the air in the balloons merges with the air that is everywhere. Imagine you and I die at the same moment. Both our bodies lie dead and the Life Energy within you and me leaves the body. Is Life Energy inside my body, separate from the Life Energy inside you? Just like air in the balloon, Life Energy merges with the Life Consciousness present everywhere. This Life Energy that leaves us at death, is nothing other than the Universal Power – the energy of the Creator we call God. Therefore, those who realize that we are nothing, realize that the Power of God is within us. We appear to be who we are, but we are actually the manifestations of the Creator.

Look around – the tree and the sea, you and me, the fish and the flowers, the skies and the stars, everything is so beautiful, but what causes the beauty? We see the beauty that appears but we don't see the cause that is behind the beauty. A gorgeous human being, a pretty flower, and a cute animal are all beautiful because of the energy that is in them. The moment the energy

leaves them, what happens? The beauty that appeared to be in them is no more. They die and wither away into nothingness. What does this mean? It is the Divine Energy in everything that is beautiful and that causes the beauty. Unfortunately, we are unable to see beyond the beauty and we miss seeing the Divine Power behind everything that is beautiful.

Have you seen a spider creating a web? With what does it create its web? With its own secretions, the spider creates a web, a world of its own. We don't realize it, but the Creator like the spider has created all of the creation from itself. We human beings cannot comprehend with what material this world and everything in it has been created. It is beyond human comprehension because it is Divine and unknown to man. Our mind is limited to understand how a spider can do it. It cannot expand to comprehend that the Creator can create this whole universe.

Just like gold is a cause, the ring, necklace, and chain are effects. Just like mud is the cause, the pot, the plate, and the statue are just effects. Just like water is the cause, the waves, the bubbles, and the froth are just effects. We

human beings are the effects of the Creator, the Cosmic or the Universal Power manifests as you and me as well as this world and everything in it. Unfortunately, we are able to see only the outer appearance, the effects, and not the cause. If I take out a gold ring and ask somebody what it is, they will say it's a ring but they don't say it is gold. But the fact is, if we remove the gold, there would be no ring. If we remove the power that is in you and me, we become nothing. The fact is that we are nothing. It is the Divine Energy within us that is everything.

How do we understand the Creator and creation? The best way to comprehend life is to see this Earth as a big stage on which the Creator has created a show with over eight billion actors. There are trillions of insects, birds, plants, and animals that coexist on this humongous stage. Just like in any other theatre, people come and go from earth. Everything is just a show. All of us are actors. But unfortunately, we start thinking that this earth stage is real. It is our home. We start thinking that our relationships are permanent just as our possessions are. While in reality, everything is transitory. It is like an illusion, a mirage in the desert

which looks real from a distance. Those who discover the truth realize that God is the producer-director of this humongous drama called life. It is beyond human comprehension. If I ask you to close your ears and listen to me with your nose, can you do it? Of course, you can't! The sense of listening is not given to the nose, but only to the ears. Similarly, we human beings are not given the sense to comprehend the Creator. While we know a Creator exists, we don't know anything beyond.

For us to live a life of bliss and peace, we must realize the truth that we are not the body and mind, but the Divine Energy. This realization can liberate us from all misery and pain as we detach from what we are not and discriminate and realize what we are. The moment we feel one with all the beauty around us, we enjoy the ecstasy of the Divinity that is within and all around us. When we realize that nothing is real and everything is just a show, that we come and we go, then we start living without fear and worry. We realize that the energy inside us is the same Cosmic Energy that is everywhere, and we are nothing but manifestations of the Creator.

Those who realize the truth know who we truly are. We

are none other than the manifestation of the Divine Power. We are the effects. He is the cause. Without Him, we are nothing. We appear as us, but in reality, we are Divinity. People think we are human beings having a spiritual experience. But in reality, we are Spirits, having a human experience.

Why are we here?

The ones who are enlightened with the truth of who we are, know that as embodied souls, our purpose is to be liberated from our human existence at death, and then to unite with the Divine.

Unless we realize the Divine Power, we will never be able to get a full realization of ourselves. We are nothing but Divinity manifesting on earth. Without the Cosmic Power, we cannot realize ourselves. It is only when we realize the truth of the Divine Power that we will truly know, who we are and why we are here.

First, we need to start a quest to find out who we are. We first find out that we are not the body or the mind. When we realize that we are the life within and that this

life is the Consciousness everywhere, we also realize the presence of the Cosmic Power that is omnipresent.

Putting it all together, once we realize the truth of who we are and why we are here, we shall blissfully enjoy the show called life. We will get rid of all the fear, worry, misery and pain. We shall eventually be liberated from the prison of the body-mind and unite with the Divine Energy of the Creator if the grace is upon us. It all starts with a quest to know who we are and why we are here.

The cosmos didn't happen by magic.
But a Magician's work it is!

It is beyond our comprehension
Who the Author of this cosmos is!

The Earth is a huge stage.
And everything just a show.

Our challenge is to find out
The Truth before we go!

Summary

Who is Managing 'The Earth Show'?

- Have we ever thought about who is controlling the universe? Who is the Creator of this cosmos?
- Those who go on a quest eventually realize the truth, not only about themselves, but also about the Creator we often call God.
- They pass through self-realization, and they move onward, forward, and towards God-realization.
- The first realization is that there is a Creator, an immortal, invisible power referred to as God.
- God-realization is an inference. It is a direct realization within. It is beyond what the mind can comprehend.
- The Life Energy that leaves us at death is nothing other than the universal power – the energy of the Creator we call God.

- It is this Divine energy in everything that is beautiful and that causes beauty.

- Unfortunately, we are unable to see beyond the beauty and we miss seeing the Divine power behind everything that is beautiful.

- Those who realize the truth know that they are the manifestation of the Divine power. We are the effects. He is the cause. Without Him, we are nothing.

- We need to go on a quest to find out who we are. It is only when we realize the truth of the Divine power, we understand who we are and why we are here.

- When we realize that we are the life energy within and that this life is the same consciousness everywhere, we also realize the presence of the cosmic power that is omnipresent.

9

Rewards of the Quest – Peace, Joy, and Bliss

What is the Reward of going on a Quest?
What will be the Treasure when we get to the Crest?
If we search for the Truth and our life we Invest,
Then Peace, Joy, and Bliss will be our Guests.

Finding out who we are and why we are here is not just a life puzzle to be solved. It has great rewards. Rewards that are beyond man's wildest imagination.

As long as we live in ignorance, we suffer. We experience joy and sorrow like a yo-yo. We live without knowing who we truly are. Because we think we are the body, mind and ego, we experience, pain, suffering and misery. On realization of the truth, we are liberated. The rewards of realization are everlasting joy, eternal peace and tranquility unknown to most of humanity. Once we realize the truth, we blissfully live as an audience that enjoys a blockbuster comedy movie in the theatre called life.

How does the quest to realize who we are and why we are here give us these rewards? Normal human beings suffer physical pain of the body and emotional pain of the mind. The realization that we are neither the body nor the mind liberates us from such suffering. It also liberates us from being reborn again and again. Each rebirth may have joy but cannot be devoid of sorrow. Therefore, the biggest reward is liberation, liberation

from pain and misery that comes birth after birth, leading to eternal bliss.

Once we know who we are and why we are here, we live in that bliss being conscious of the truth that we are part of that energy that is the Cosmic Energy itself. We are the manifestations of the Divine Power and we need not fear nor worry, because we know that nothing is real, it's all a show - we come and we go.

Post realization, what should one do? Nothing? Of course not! Man is not gifted to have freedom from action but a realized Soul enjoys freedom in action. He blissfully acts as an instrument of the Divine and offers all his actions to the Creator knowing that he is nothing and he does nothing. The reward of this quest is bliss unknown to common man and such joy cannot be expressed in words. The ecstasy and the tranquility of experiencing Consciousness as the Divine, creates a feeling of rupture and endless joy - only one who experiences this realization truly knows.

Once we realize who we are, our life is transformed. We no more live with regrets of the past, nor do we live

with worries about the future. We realize that we are not the body-mind complex, but the Power that gives life to it. Therefore, we live as observers and watch life as a movie. What is over, is over. We don't worry about it. And what will be, will be. We don't need to think about it too much. We live blissfully in the present moment, knowing that nothing is real. Due to the realization, we accept whatever happened, and we don't wonder. Further, we don't hope for things to happen in the future. We just surrender. We trust in the Divine Power and we know that the Power is in command of the show. Suddenly, we drop all our baggage of fears, worries, regrets, and anxiety. We feel like we are as light as a feather and we just let go.

Normally, the pain of the body would trouble us so much, but now it doesn't. We know we are not the body and while we know that the body experiences pain, we don't suffer the pain. We distance ourselves from the pain. With the realization that we are not the body, we dilute the physical pain. However, we completely eliminate misery of the mind by refusing to accept that we are the mind. Our mind may worry or fear, but we

brush aside these negative emotions with our realization. Because we know who we are and why we are here, we no more permit the rascal mind to play monkey tricks with us. We live in a state of peace and tranquility and fill our lives with laughter and joy.

Worry no longer worries us, because there is nothing to worry about. Fears no longer make us fearful, because there is nothing to fear. We just live joyously moment by moment with the realization of the truth.

Normal human beings suffer so much thinking they are the body and the mind. But realization drops all suffering like a parachute from an airplane in the sky. The quest for knowing who we are and why we are here rewards us with eternal bliss and peace. Once we know who we are, we are liberated from being born again and again. Most of humanity prepares for the final Day of Judgement or for a life after death. One who realizes the truth is enlightened to know that we do not need to face the Day of Judgement. We become one with the Divine. We do not need to be born again to suffer. We are liberated. Going on a quest and realizing

the truth of who we are and why we are here, is the biggest blessing and there can be no bigger reward than this.

Blessed are those few who realize the truth and become one with the Lord. It is said that without the grace of the Divine Master, it is impossible to realize who we are and why we are here. Many may discover the answers to these questions, but they will still not realize the truth, because the mind will not let them do so. If the truth is realized, the mind ceases to exist. With the grace of the Divine, a sincere seeker who goes on a quest and lives with discrimination, dispassion, discipline and a burning desire for answers, finds the truth. The ones who do so live in union with the Divine; with everlasting joy and eternal peace. To them, there is no misery, pain, and suffering. May you too be blessed to realize the truth!

No need to suffer, no need to cry
If only we Question and find out why
We can be Blissful & Fly in the Sky

Summary

Rewards of the Quest – Peace, Joy, and Bliss

- As long as we live in ignorance, thinking we are the body, mind, and ego, we suffer and experience both joy and sorrow.

- On realization of the truth, we are liberated from all misery. The rewards of realization are everlasting joy, eternal peace, and tranquility, unknown to most of humanity.

- We are also liberated from being reborn again and again - the cycle of death and rebirth.

- We become conscious of the truth that we are part of the cosmic energy itself and start living a blissful life.

- Our life is transformed. We no more live with regrets of the past, nor do we live with worries about the future.

- We realize that we are not the body-mind complex,

but the power that gives life to it and therefore, we live as observers and watch life as a movie.

- We accept whatever happens and we don't wonder. We just surrender.

- With the grace of the Divine, a sincere seeker who goes on a quest and lives with discrimination, dispassion, discipline and a burning desire for answers, finds the truth.

- The ones who do so live in union with the Divine, with everlasting joy and eternal peace. For them, there is no misery, pain, and suffering.

- Blessed are those who realize the truth and become one with the Lord.

- Realize who you are and why you are here before your journey of life is over!

My Journey of Self Discovery

After 50 years, I was shocked to realize I was not who I thought I was. I lived an absolutely normal life till I was 40. I worked for 25 years with the sole purpose of making money, achieving success and going from peak to peak. After making enough money, I realized that life was not just about making money. True happiness came from making a difference. I shut down my business, transformed my life and started doing H.I.S work – Humanitarian, Inspirational and Spiritual work. I moved from the first peak of happiness - Achievement - to the second peak of happiness- Fulfilment, living a life of contentment and peace. I thought I was the happiest man on Earth.

One day, when I was nearing 46, my spiritual Master asked me the question – Who are you and why are you here? He brushed aside all my answers and made me

realize that I did not know the truth. He inspired me to embark on a journey of self-realization. I am so grateful to him for my realization of the truth.

For about two years, I left all my work and focused on my Quest, my search for the truth. I picked hundreds of books from dozens of religions and scanned through every possible scripture and faith.

My quest essentially focused on nine questions:

1. We all know how a child is conceived and born, but how is life created in the womb?

2. What happens after death? The body dies but what happens to the one who was alive?

3. We all believe in God. What is the reality? Who is God? Where is God? What is God?

4. Most people believe in heaven or hell but where are they located? Will we actually go there?

5. Does the Law of Karma actually exist? A law that states

that the actions of this life will be the cause of our rebirth.

6. Is rebirth or reincarnation real? Are we really reborn after we die?

7. We talk of a Soul. But what exactly is the Soul?

8. What is the purpose of life for us human beings who live on earth?

9. What is Enlightenment, Salvation, Liberation, *Mukti*, *Moksha* or *Nirvana*? All religions talk of this being our ultimate goal, but what exactly is this?

In quest for answers to these questions, I left the world and went into a retreat alone into the mountains. I was determined to find the truth and the answers to the questions that I set out in quest for.

For two years, I did nothing else. I kept seeking the answers to these existential questions. It wasn't so difficult because it seemed like the Divine grace was leading me to a treasure trove of wisdom, knowledge, and information that answered all my questions.

My first "Aha!" moment was my realization - Not this, Not this, I am That. I am not this body, I am not this mind, I am that Divine Energy. While I found answers, my rascal mind did not permit me to believe them. It kept confusing me, stopping me from believing the truth. But I was determined. I read all the religious scriptures and studied all the books on theology that I could lay my hands on. It was so obvious that religion was for kids. And somehow, we remain kids; we never grow up. Religion is a kindergarten to spirituality. We all know that Santa Claus is a myth. Why do we believe in Santa? If one looks deeply at Indian Gods, one would be amused by the creativity in Hindu mythology. When I went deep into some of the beliefs, I realized the truth of non-duality. That there was One Power and I meditated upon this.

All along it was my Guru, my spiritual Master, Dada J.P. Vaswani, who held my hand and led me towards the truth. He never stopped me from exploring all kinds of spiritual enquiry that would lead to the realization. He had an answer to every question that blocked my quest and guided me on.

I was a devout believer in God. For forty years, I prayed to Lord Shiva. I even fasted every Monday. But then I realized that Shiva not only lived in the Temple where I prayed, but He also lived within the Temple of my heart.

My Guru explained that heaven and hell were not physical locations. Our bodies perish on earth. Is it so difficult to understand that nobody physically goes to heaven or hell?

I did a lot of study on rebirth and realized it could be true. There were many cases where people were born with memories of their past life. I kept pinning all my findings on a dashboard as if they were pieces of a jigsaw puzzle and I tried to put them together. But there were missing pieces. I prayed to my God although I realized that this was just a form. God was a far greater power than a statue. Shiva, Jesus or Allah are just names given for us to understand God, but the Creator of the universe is a Power that is omnipresent – present everywhere, omnipotent – all-powerful and omniscient – all-knowing.

I had my nine questions present in front of me all the

time as I continued my search. Somehow, I knew that if I answered these nine questions, my quest for self-realization will be complete. What is the Soul? People talk of 'good souls' and 'bad souls'. But I realized that a Soul is just Life Energy. There cannot be good and bad souls. Then I wanted to know what this ultimate goal was all about. Some people call it Salvation, while others call it Liberation, or Enlightenment. The Buddha called it *Nirvana*. About five thousand years ago, the Hindu mystics called it *Mukti* or *Moksha*. I studied all this in-depth, and found that they are all one and the same. It starts with self-realization and goes on to God-realization.

Self-realization, to realize what we are, is simple. But the mind refuses to believe it. It jumps like a monkey using our senses to get entangled in the allurements of this world. Even after knowing the truth, the mind does not let us realize it. Therefore there is this constant 'tug of war' between the mind and the intellect. This was another discovery - that the mind and the intellect are separate. People always think that the intellect and memory are part of the mind. But to realize the truth, I

had to isolate the mind into three parts - one being a thought factory, the memory being the recorder of events and the intellect being the discriminator. I had to use the intellect to transcend the mind, to discriminate between the myth and the truth. But it was not an easy task. In fact, the mind doesn't stop its mumbling and rumbling till our last breath. And even the most realized person faces this challenge till death.

It seemed like an interesting game where I had to juggle between these nine questions. At times, I thought I had answers to all but still, the jigsaw puzzle was not falling into place. I read the Upanishads – one of the ancient scriptures of Hinduism written about five thousand years ago, where the Lord of Death is being questioned on the mystery of death. This helped me fill a lot of gaps in my quest. I realized that at death, one of two things happen. If we are partially ignorant about the truth, and believe that we are not the body but the mind, then we are reborn with a new body carrying not just memories, but also Karmas - our actions of the past that will determine our future. However, a realized being who realizes that he is neither the body, nor the mind, is

not reborn. He is liberated from the cycle of death and rebirth. At death, the Life Energy or Soul within is liberated and unites with the Creator.

By now, the puzzle had started to fall into place. I realized that birth is a mystery only known to the Creator just as death is. Most of the other questions also seemed to be getting answered.

On 31st of August 2014, I took off from Paris to Bangalore on flight AF192. Because I was returning from a retreat which was very intense with introspection and contemplation, yet again, I decided to focus and put my mind to these nine questions, which I had set out within my quest. I did nothing else. By the time the flight landed, it seemed like I had answers to all the nine questions. The jigsaw puzzle seemed to have finally solved! It was my "Eureka" moment - a moment of epiphany, exhilaration, ecstasy, and joy! As the flight landed, I started to put my thoughts together.

The goal of life is liberation. Liberation comes from the realization that we are not the body or mind. We are the

Divine Life Energy that gives life. We live and die in ignorance thinking we are the body and mind, creating Karmas that cause rebirth and we suffer. Although we pray to a God, we don't realize the truth that God is the very Life Energy that lives within. The rascal mind doesn't let us go within by keeping us occupied with the illusion of the world.

On realizing that we are the Divine Life Energy , not the body and mind, we also realize that the same Life Energy manifests as everybody and everything. The world and everything in it that appears is a cosmic drama caused by the Cosmic Illusion of the Creator. It is His show – we come and we go. But because of ignorance, we suffer as we are born again and again. Unless we transcend the ego and the mind, we will be imprisoned in our own body, living and dying in ignorance and misery. When we go on a quest and realize the truth, we live with dispassion and discrimination and discipline ourselves to desire liberation and nothing else. There is no need to be born again after this body drops and we are liberated. Our consciousness merges with the Universal Consciousness. The darkness of ignorance is

wiped out by enlightenment as our Life Energy within flies like a free bird and merges with the Universal Consciousness.

I found my quest had come to an end, as I was blessed with answers to all my questions.

I had discovered my true self but this was just the beginning of my journey of self-realization. Since September 2014, I have lived as AiR, the Atman in Ravi, or the Soul in Ravi and each and every day of these four years I have tried to live as a liberated Soul only to face the onslaught of the ego and the mind. I am grateful, very grateful because there has been a lot of progress in my spiritual evolution. No human being can claim to be a realized Soul as long as he is encapsulated in a body-mind prison. We are unable to kill the ego or the mind till we are alive. At best, we can transcend them, but they still lie low as lurking fugitives that are waiting to attack. However, while I face this onslaught, I live a life of eternal joy, bliss and peace as I have become fearless, living in eternal bliss and total surrender. I live blissfully in the now realizing that there is no yesterday

and tomorrow. I have given up doing anything other than spending time in union with the Divine and helping people realize the truth whenever the Divine Will leads me to. I have no desires, but as I live, this body has needs and this mind drags me sometimes to do things I should and sometimes it fools me into doing things I shouldn't. My intellect stands upright with a sword trying to kill every irrelevant thought but I must say that my mind is a tough rascal. It doesn't always let the intellect win.

Because I have realized the truth, I see Divinity in all the beauty around. And I try to run away from the allurements and entanglements of not just the society, but also from my duties which can make me sink. I try not to be defeated by lust of any kind, just as I also try not to think or be ashamed of what people would say. My spiritual Master had blessed me with this wisdom, to beware of duty, lust and shame, just as he had blessed me with understanding the three steps to realization - purification, illumination, and unification. I realized that without a Guru or a mentor, it is practically impossible to realize the truth and be liberated.

I continue to live aspiring nothing but surrendering to the Divine Will knowing that happiness is within. What I was seeking was within me all along. Although I am blessed with a full-fledged organization, a large mall, charitable homes and a temple, I stay away from active management and try to retreat as often as possible to places where I can be in union with the Divine. I know there can be no freedom from action – but I choose to be free in action. I realize that this world can defeat us in a moment. Therefore, I spend my time in silence and away from the illusions of this world.

May you too, a true seeker who has started a quest to discover the truth, move onward, forward, upward, inward and Godward and evolve on this journey of self-realization and move towards realizing the ultimate truth.

Neti Neti! Tat Twam Asi!

||Shivoham|| ||Shivoham||

Not This Not This! Thou Art That!

Thou are the Divine!

I was living in pleasure,
Till I stumbled upon some peace.
And then my Master questioned,
And a little did he tease.
Are you just living to die?
And on a plateau lie?
Or will you go on a quest
To find out 'Who am I?'

POEM

Who Are You & Why Are You Here?

One day when life was full of peace
My mentor said something to tease
Who are you? Why are you here?
What is your life's purpose, my dear?
Are you going to just float and die?
Or find out who you are and why?
Are you the body? Are you the mind?
Go on a quest the truth to find

Questions made me start my search
I went to the temple, mosque, and church
Who was God and where was He?
Where could heaven and hell be?
How was I born? What caused this 'I'?
What will happen after I die?
I started my quest to find the truth
I would not stop till I get to the root

Every religion said the truth is mine
Each scripture said its version was fine
Don't murder, don't steal, don't have wine
Rituals were plenty to live and dine
But nobody talked of the truth
Nobody had found out the real brute
The enemy was none else than our mind
Where it is - you cannot find

Although you know, you do not know
Whatever you see, you cannot be
The truth is staring at your face
But you are busy in the world's race
Who am I, you do not know
The ego seems to steal the show
We are slaves of desire and lust
What is the myth, we do not bust

We live, we die, don't find out why
We just cry when we see someone die
Who made this earth? Who made this sky?
Who made you? And who made 'I'?
We believe in the lie we don't ask why
Whatever we are told, we just buy
We fret and fume through life and sigh
The truth passes by, we let it fly

We come and go but we don't know
The world is nothing but a cosmic show
With empty hands do we all come
And nothing is ours when all is done
But still we live and cry and die
We don't ask questions of who and why
Ignorance fills our everyday sky
And we don't laugh, we fear, we cry

Those who realize the whole truth
Those who get to the bottom of the root
Those who put everything to test
Those who go on a search and quest
Those who ask questions - who and why
Those who know that they don't die
They are the ones who live in bliss
Joy and peace, they do not miss

What is the purpose of life on earth?
Why do we die and why this birth?
Who made this earth, who made this sky?
Who causes things to walk and fly?
Before you die, must find out why
Realize the truth you are not 'I'
Not the body and mind, you are the Soul
To unite with God, that is the goal

Who are you, why are you here?
If you don't know, it's sad, my dear
There is a purpose for you and me
To realize the truth who are we
The truth to know on a quest we must go
To realize that life is a cosmic show
The reward will be joy and peace
Then problems none and miseries cease

Realize you are not the body and mind
You are energy of a different kind
To unite with God that is the goal
To escape from the world and live as the Soul
To find out what is your purpose on earth
That's why this life, that's why this birth
The purpose of life is to find out my dear
Who are you, why are you here?

AiR

About the Author – AiR

AiR – Atman or the Soul in Ravi, is an embodied soul whose only mission in life is to realize the Truth and help people realize the Truth.

He was born on October 15, 1966 in Bangalore, as Ravi V. Melwani. At a very young age, he mastered the craft of business and became a very successful businessman who revolutionized retailing in India with the stores KidsKemp, Big KidsKemp, and Kemp Fort.

After making millions, he realized that life is not just about making money. He shut down his business at the age of 40, transformed his life to RVM, living by the RVM philosophy – Rejoice, Value Life, and Make a Difference. He started doing H.I.S. work – Humanitarian, Inspirational and Spiritual work. His mission was to "Make a Difference" in this world before his journey was over.

As a part of humanitarian initiative, a charitable

Hospital was set up in 1998 with an aim to provide free medical treatment and care to the poor, destitute, and needy. Over 700 homeless and suffering people were served and cared for in destitute homes and provided with free shelter, food, clothing and medical care.

A School of Inspiration was set up that inspired the lives of many people through motivating talks, inspirational books and videos, and thought-provoking quotes.

A Shiva Temple was built in the year 1995 in Bangalore, which is now known as the Shivoham Shiva Temple. AiR now believes that religion is just a kindergarten of spirituality, and we all have to go beyond religion to truly realize God.

One day, his Guru provoked him to introspect: What is the purpose of life? Is life just meant to seek pleasures and to live and die without any purpose? What happens after death? Will we be reborn? Where is God? Several questions like these took him on a quest, a search for the truth. He gave up his life of Achievement and Fulfilment in search of the final peak of life: 'Enlightenment'.

After a few years of intense search in retreat, deep in the

mountains, he realized that we are not this body. We are the Soul, the Atman. He changed his name to AiR – the Atman in Ravi. He metamorphosed to AiR and gave up his entire life as RVM and started living as an instrument of God doing His Divine Will. This led to several realizations that formed his new mission of life – ***to Realize the Truth and to help people Realize the Truth.***

Since then, AiR's life has been dedicated to reaching out and helping people to eradicate the ignorance that we live in. Truth is truth but our mind does not realize the truth. With AiR's own realization, he has published several books, written bhajans, blogs, quotes, poems and taken up several other initiatives that can direct people towards the truth. His vision, now, is to help people to Ask, Investigate and Realize. He believes that unless people ask questions, they will never start a quest and even if they start the quest, unless they really investigate, they will not realize the truth. This truth cannot be learnt in a school, college or university, it must be realized. AiR has dedicated his life to helping people realize the truth.

Books by the Author – AiR

1. Talaash – A search for the true meaning of life. Discover your true self

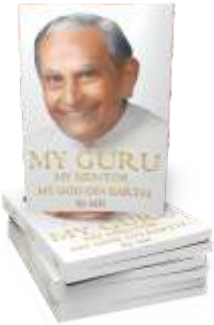
'Talaash' means Search or Quest. This book by AiR is his personal journey to realize the truth where he shares his realization that we are not the body and the mind that we seem to be. We are a power. The divine life force is known as Soul, Spirit or Atman. This search and quest by AiR made him transform his life. It is a quest that made him realize the truth. It might be just that book that inspires you to liberation.

2. 3 Peaks of Happiness

3 Peaks of Happiness by AiR is a simple book that talks about the quest of all humanity. Everybody wants to be happy. But is everybody happy? No. The reason is we are stuck on the first peak of happiness – Achievement. 20% of the people are lucky to climb the second peak of happiness –

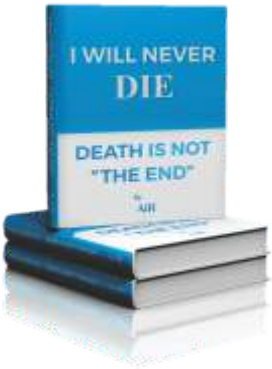
Fulfilment, which comes from contentment. But there is a third peak beyond. The third peak of happiness will liberate you from the prisons of misery and sorrow and give you eternal Joy and Bliss.

3. My Guru, My Mentor, My God on Earth



My Guru, My Mentor, My God on Earth is a book by AiR in which he shares his experiences with his Guru who was not just his Guru and Mentor, but also his God on Earth. We all need a coach, a teacher to help us understand, guide us to live life and this book "My Guru" will inspire you to find your Guru or to make your relationship with your Guru more fulfilling and meaningful.

4. I will Never Die. Death is not "The End"



In the journey of his life, AiR realized many truths. One of the truths was that he would never die. The body will die, but the one who lives in the body never dies. We are not the bodies that we wear; we are the ones

who wear the body. Death is not the end. It is a bend to transcend. This book reveals the truth about Death.

5. Death is Not "The End". Death is "Liberation"

Death is Not "The End". Death is "Liberation" – the second book in the series of books on death by AiR – touches upon the secret of the Kathopanishad, which talks about what happens at death. One of two things happen – if we think we are the body and mind as a doer, we are reborn. But if we think we are not the body and mind, but the energy, we are liberated to eternal joy and peace.

6. I am not I. Who am I?

I am not I. Who am I? – is a very interesting book by AiR, which talks of his quest and realization that we are not who we think we are. We have a house, but we are not the house. We have a car, but we are not the car. We have a body, but we are not the body. We may have a mind, but we are not the mind. Who are we? Realize the truth.

7. The Mind is a Rascal

Can you believe that the mind is a rascal? You always thought that the mind is king – it is everything. But just try this. Sit quietly for an hour, and try to find the mind. Where is it? You will find the mind doesn't exist. This amazing book by AiR will teach us that the mind is our enemy. It is the one that makes us suffer. It is time to find the rascal and to kill it. How do you do it?

8. A Cosmic Drama

This book authored by AiR challenges us to think that whatever is happening in life is not real. It is nothing but a drama. The earth is a big stage, and we are all actors who come and go. There is no need to worry and cry till we die. If we understand the truth, we can enjoy the show called life.

9. Who is God? Where is God? What is God?

Well, this might seem to be a simple set of questions, but

nobody really knows the answers. We all know that God exists. We pray to a God as per our religion but what is the truth about God? Has anybody seen God? Where is God? This simple book will change your perception and belief about God and bring you closer to this Power called God. It will help you realize God.

10. The A to Z of Karma

Most people are aware of the concept of Karma – the Law. What you give is what you get. But not everybody knows the A to Z of Karma, that we can actually transcend Karma, escape from it and achieve *Moksha*, *Nirvana*, Liberation or Enlightenment. This book reveals the secret – of eternal joy and peace - a life without any misery or suffering.

11. Who Are You & Why Are You Here?

COMING SOON!

12. The 4th Factor - Discover the mysterious factor that makes the possible, possible!

13. Be Happy in the NOW!

14. Questions You Must Answer Before You Die.

||Om Namah Shivaya|| ||Shivoham||

Visit Google play **or Scan the QR Code to download the AiR - *Atman* in Ravi App.**
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AiR
Ask *Investigate* Realize
AiR Institute of Realization

WHO ARE YOU & WHY ARE YOU HERE?

Do you know WHO YOU TRULY ARE?

You think you do, but most probably YOU DON'T!

Man has discovered everything. But, he has forgotten to discover himself. We think "I am 'ME' – I have a name, a body, and a mind. That's who I am – no doubt." You have a Body, Mind and Name. But who is the one who has these? Who is the True SELF?

Isn't it time to STOP and find out?

Two most important questions need answers - Who am I? Why am I here?

Very few people search for answers to these questions. But those who do, live a life of peace and joy.

It's time to stop looking outside and start looking within, and find the one who is behind the skin!

This book will give you a new purpose and change the way you live!

by
AiR

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