

THE MANDUKYA UPANISHAD

An Overview

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<i>Mandukya Upanishad Verse</i>	Brief Commentary
1. Hari AUM. The entire universe is the syllable AUM. The following is the exposition of AUM. Everything in the past, present, and future is verily AUM. That which is beyond time, space and causation is also AUM.	<i>Mandukya</i> means “frog.” It is a symbol for the Witness. AUM is a sound or Anahata Nada. AUM is also a symbol. Everything is AUM. Everything is Consciousness.
2. All this, whatsoever is seen here, there and everywhere, is Brahman. This very Self, the Atman, is Brahman, the Absolute Reality. This Atman has four aspects.	<i>Atman</i> , the Individual Consciousness is also <i>Brahman</i> , the Universal Consciousness. Individual Consciousness has four aspects.
3. The first aspect is <i>vaisvànara</i> , the waking state. In this state, consciousness is turned outward to the external. With its seven instruments and 19 channels, it experiences the gross phenomenal world.	The waking state is made up of the five elements, the breath and ahamkara as well as the five active senses, five cognitive senses, five vayus and four antahkarana.
4. The second aspect is <i>taijasa</i> , the dreaming state. In this state, consciousness is turned inward. It also has seven instruments and nineteen channels, which experience the subtle mental impressions.	The dreaming state is also made up of seven instruments and 19 channels. So what is the difference between waking and dream state?

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<p>5. The third aspect is <i>prajna</i>, deep sleep. In this state, there is neither desire nor dream. In deep sleep, all experiences merge into the unity of undifferentiated consciousness. The sleeper is filled with bliss and experiences bliss and can find the way to knowledge of the two preceding states.</p>	<p>The third state, the deep sleep state, is undifferentiated consciousness. The samskaras or impressions are stored here in the form of seeds.</p>
<p>6. The experiencer of these states of consciousness is the Lord of all. That One is all-knowing; that One directs everything from within. That One is the womb of all. All things originate from and dissolve into it.</p>	<p>You are the experiencer or Witness of the three states of consciousness. You are Pure Consciousness. You are immortal and eternal. Everything manifests and ultimately dissolves into Pure Consciousness.</p>
<p>7. <i>Turiya</i> is the “Fourth.” Consciousness is neither turned inward nor outward nor both. It is undifferentiated; it is beyond the spheres of cognition and non-cognition. <i>Turiya</i> can neither be experienced through the senses nor known by comparison nor inference; it is incomprehensible, unthinkable, and indescribable. It is Pure Consciousness. It is the real Self. It is the cessation of all phenomena; it is tranquil, all-blissful, and one without second. This real Self is to be realized.</p>	<p>This state of the Witness is the Fourth called <i>Turiya</i>. It is not a state of consciousness. It is Consciousness itself. It is not an experience. It is the experiencer itself. There is no gender. There is no subject-object reality. There is only subject. This is an evolutionary leap. Therefore, the Frog, that undergoes a metamorphosis to become an amphibian from an aquatic creature.</p>

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<p>8. Pure Consciousness, which has been described as having different states, is indivisible. It is AUM. The sounds A-U-M (ah, ou, mm) and the three letters represent the three states of waking, dreaming and deep sleep. But the Fourth, which is unknown and hidden, is realized only in silence.</p>	<p>Pure consciousness has been described as having different states, yet it is indivisible.</p>
<p>9. The consciousness experienced during the waking state is A, the first letter of AUM. It pervades all other sounds. Without the first syllable A, one cannot utter the word AUM, and likewise, without knowing the waking state, one cannot know the other states of consciousness. One who is aware of this reality fulfills all his desires and is successful.</p>	<p>Understanding the importance of the waking state and knowing your desires leads to fulfilment of desires.</p>
<p>10. The consciousness experienced during the dreaming state is U, the second letter of AUM. This is an elevated intermediate state between the waking and sleeping states. One who knows this subtler state is superior to others. One who knows this—in his family knowers of Brahman will be born.</p>	<p>Between the waking and dreaming state is the transition state called Unmani. Knowing the dreaming state does not mean recalling the dream after the dream is over. It means that the dream state comes forward into the waking state and becomes conscious. This happens in meditation.</p>

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<p>11. The consciousness experienced during the deep state of sleep is M, the third letter of AUM. One who knows this more subtle state as well is able to comprehend all within himself.</p>	<p>Between the dreaming state and deep sleep is the transition called Aladdini. Conscious experience of deep sleep is Samadhi.</p>
<p>12. That aspect of consciousness that is not known is the soundless aspect of AUM. It is not comprehended by the ordinary mind and senses. It is the cessation of all phenomena, even of bliss. This is One without second (advaita). It is called the Fourth and also the real Self. One who knows it directly expands to Universal Consciousness.</p>	<p>Turiya, the Fourth is non-dualistic. In this the Individual Self expands to Universal Self.</p>

