

Potential

The desire to deepen our awareness, to know the true Self and to explore the full potential of our consciousness, is evidence of a profound truth; we are not limited human beings, we have a great role to play in the universe.

The parallel approach

While our imagination soars far beyond mind, body, time and space, the physical body is like an organic atom in the ocean of life. We often take it for granted and rarely appreciate what we have. We crave something that is beyond our reach, often far in the distance. There is an overpowering desire to be ubiquitous, but the laws of physics and the laws of nature do not permit us to achieve this in a physical sense. We can understand the laws of nature but we cannot go against them. Our bodies are fragile and vulnerable. Natural phenomena such as sleep, hunger, ageing and death cannot be absolutely overcome. It is possible to resist or delay their effects temporarily by using our vast stores of knowledge, our technology and our ability to work within nature, but ultimately, the physical body is finite. Here is a beautiful, mystical, cosmic paradox: in our finite bodies, we each have a unique and infinite spirit.

In truth, each of us knows deeply that he or she is an invisible, infinite spirit, sustaining and operating the limited physical body. The mind is a bridge between the physical body and the invisible spirit.

Consciousness means, in the normal sense, awareness of oneself, of others, of nature and of one's surroundings. In the evolution of all beings, especially humans, consciousness developed predominantly in the head region, a manifestation that we recognize as the mind. *The mind is but a by-product of our consciousness. The mind is not the whole of consciousness as is usually believed in psychology; consciousness is much deeper than the surface-manifested faculty we call the mind. For example, a mother can empathize with a child, whereas a child cannot understand what it is to be an adult.* This deeper consciousness motivates the mind towards understanding the physical truth of the universe through experiment, study, research and discussion. This process of exploring that particular dimension is how we have come to understand science and to develop technology.

The Self beneath our minds and hearts intuitively impels us to search for truth, love, meaning and the deeper experiences of life, a learning experience, a study of what is referred to as metaphysics, hyperphysics or spirituality. Thoughts and feelings exist as parallels – science and spirituality, mind and heart, logic and emotion. We try to embrace creation with parallel approaches to life. One approach brings us pleasure, excitement, entertainment, knowledge and comfort. The other leads us to profound spiritual experiences that add more meaning to our lives, resulting in contentment, peace, realization and enlightenment.

Over the course of time, we continue to adapt ourselves to different ways of understanding and experiencing our most essential being, the true Self. Some schools of thought developed into religions and some have become exclusively specialized so that they understand and experience one particular flavour of truth. However, all schools of thought have had one

common aim, which was to find fulfilment in life. However, as we have advanced intellectually and intuitively through the evolution of human consciousness, we have become increasingly global. We embrace all that is possible in human life.

It is our innate desire to be adventurous and explore both our internal and external worlds. Our curiosity to journey, touch and experience the outer world does not stop upon reaching our intended goals and targets. However, it is the next step of embarking on an *inner* voyage with the objective for each of us of discovering the true Self that brings fulfilment.

There are two possible approaches to exploring our inner and outer universes. The curiosity we harness in approaching disciplined forms of study is straightforward, logical and direct; this is the method applied to learning within school and university. The alternative approach is the one we apply to experiencing the non-physical part of our existence. The first draws abundant energy from us but returns little, while the latter uses little energy but provides us with abundant peace, inspiration, insight and intuitive wisdom. The advantages derived from this spiritual approach also result in physical benefits.

With this alternative route to discovering the true Self and the treasures lying beneath the inner sea bed of consciousness, it is necessary to observe mystic silence and to redirect energies and resources from the mind to the heart in preparation for the voyage. Those who are determined to explore the inner side of their existence search for inspiration and seek out spiritual guidance or books to provide insight. *They search for truth.* It is through this inward journey, from the surface consciousness to the core of our inner consciousness, that we enjoy so many mystical and spiritual experiences. Each time we re-acquaint ourselves with our inner nature, we become increasingly connected to nature outside ourselves.

Over the last century, people have become more aware of raising consciousness, of the welfare of others, and of our earth's physical health, beauty and spiritual well-being. Beyond this, we have also started to explore the possibility of life elsewhere in the universe.

The desire to deepen our awareness, to know the true Self and to experience various states of consciousness are all signs of the truth, which is that we are not limited physical beings but infinite spiritual beings who have a great role to play in the universe. There is an invitation, outside of time, for us to explore the inner universe; the outward physical journey alone is not enough.

The physical journey in the outer world is symbolic, and reminds us that we should also journey into the mystical dimensions of our consciousness. There we will acquire the knowledge, awareness, intuition and guidance to embrace the beauty of creation with our hearts and spirits.