

## Thoughts

What are thoughts? Before one can learn to control thoughts, one must know what they are. When objects penetrate through the senses and ultimately reach the objective aspect of consciousness, an image is formed. More precisely, when an object from outside penetrates through the senses, it shines as an image in the objective consciousness, which means that it is perceptual.

When a larger portion (or only a group of images) shines in the objective consciousness, then *aham*, the I-principle, knows it as object. This means that the subjective consciousness is becoming conscious of what is happening. There is always this relation to the I-principle (*aham*) and the objective consciousness. All knowledge of or derived from the cosmic world is thus related to the subjective consciousness. However, the images shining in the objective consciousness do not directly arrive from the cosmic world through the senses, but rather they are brought into it from within.

When the I is in relation to the objective consciousness, this appears as thought. Those inner elements that are reflected on the objective consciousness are the prototypes of the perceptual pattern and they are individually colored. The perceptual knowledge of the objects only gives a very crude, rough picture of the thing. For instance, seeing a light has its perceptual form, which is the rough knowledge of this light. But when one gets to know more about it and perhaps can compare it with other forms of light, a greater knowledge of the thing is obtained. And yet, from where does the rest emerge?

It is furnished from within, acquired as it is in other ways. It is as if the raw material, that penetrates from outside (from the senses) is processed within and transformed into a different thing. And that is thought: the transformation of the perceptual patterns, by one's own characteristic ways, into new patterns.

Thoughts have many levels—the elementary, subtle, etc. In thought, memory has a predominant role. Memory does not only mean remembering things, but also all storing up of impressions in the unconscious aspect of mind, the *hridâya*. It is very much via this *smriti*, or memory, that things are brought into the objective consciousness where they shine forth as thoughts.

Thoughts are based on perceptual knowledge but are refined and transformed into new patterns with the aid of one's memory and thinking, which generally works in the form of impulses. Inference also plays an important role in the formation of thoughts. Inference always operates according to the particular education or training one has received in life. All this comes under the thought-category. Thus one can see that, however simple a thought may be, it is yet a complicated process.

In addition to thinking based on perception along with inference applied in the thought-pattern, there is also *agama*—direct and indirect communication, whether received verbally or in writing, which induces thinking. This may not be considered as belonging to the perceptual process, and yet any material grasped through reading or as sound-forms accrues to one's perceptual knowledge. So long as one is not only hearing the sounds and seeing the lines, but is also grasping the material, then this too contributes to produce thought. And all these are *vrittis*:

*Pratyaksa* – perception

*Anumâna* – inference

*Âgama* – direct and indirect communication



*Pramâna*

Thoughts are mostly formed in relation to certain groups of objects of the cosmic field. Objects of thoughts exist in this cosmic world and can be directly or indirectly verified. One cannot think a thought, which is not directly or indirectly connected with something concrete from the cosmic world. Thinking is always the prototype of something, previous or present, objectified in the cosmic world. One simply cannot think anything not existing one way or another in the cosmic world.

However, beside this gross kind of thought, there are other thought-patterns, which cannot be objectified and verified in the cosmic world. These are of an exceedingly refined character, with no counterpart that could be seen in a tangible manner. These belong to the *vikalpa* category, or spiritual and philosophical. While mathematics or higher scientific thought, for instance, can be regarded as dealing with rarified thought, even these cannot ultimately function with retaining a dependency upon a concrete and material basis.

On the other hand, spiritual thoughts are by definition non-material, and therefore can't be verified. In Patanjali's Yoga Aphorisms, "*vikalpa*" is translated as "certain sounds that release no meaning; a peculiar combination of sounds." However, this should read differently. "*Kalpa*" is indeed knowledge, while the prefix "*vi*" indicates a specialized, particularized faculty. Rightly translated, the term "*vikalpa*" means "differing from other type of knowledge."

Most of the average person's thoughts are of the sensory knowledge type. Whenever they convey their inherent meaning, they become an intellectual pattern of thought, which is given still another pattern when they are colored with emotion. Thoughts can be of different types—sensory, intellectual or emotional—according to the predominating factor at a particular time. There are also brighter or darker forms of emotions that may be involved, thus rendering the thoughts as bright and constructive or dark and destructive. Most thinking is generally sensory or intellectually colored or affected with emotion; rarely, thinking may also

be spiritual. This is the general thinking pattern.

As to thought-control and its meaning, the materialization of human will has 2 phases: 1) a manifestation through physical instruments, and; 2) a will which manifests directly. Here, will control means that the volitional impulses can materialize without hindrances.

Thus, control is that power which originates from the will and then comes to the point of conation, from which the connection is made with the physical instruments of manifestation. It is through these physical instruments that the originally desired impulses are conducted towards realization. (The final destination of the control may be the will, or desire, or any part of the body.)

Before the will is excited, there is a desire. For the purpose of control, first a mental picture is to be formed—some idea which is the desire. From that desire, volition arises. If the will impulse is sufficiently strong, it will come to the conation point and conduct the particular impulses through the nerves to their destination (such as a certain muscle or group of muscles) so as to produce a movement of some kind. Ordinary types of movements do not require special will power, but well controlled, definite and complicated muscle movements do require more will power to produce the complicated pattern when it comes to the conation-point. This is definitely the case when, for instance, one wishes to use the involuntary muscles to initiate a reverse peristaltic movement in the alimentary canal.

Control is particularly necessary at the physical, nervous, mental and emotional levels. Generally, people are emotionally unbalanced and prone to easily surrender to emotions. Even intellectually bright persons suffer a lack of control in daily life, whether or not it may show to outsiders. This is most likely due to emotional infatuations and excesses of all kinds.