

Adi Sankaracharya's
APAROKSHANUBHUTI*
(SELF-REALISATION)

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Commentary by James Swartz

- 1. I bow to the all-pervading pure Awareness, the First Teacher, destroyer of Ignorance, and the cause of the Creation.*
- 2. Those who are pure of heart should constantly meditate on the truths contained in this treatise on liberation.*

Qualifications for Self realization

- 3. The qualifications or means of attaining the knowledge that causes liberation, are acquired by devotion to God, simple restrained living, and the proper performance of duties pertaining to one's social position and stage of life.*
- 4. Pure Dispassion is a state of mind that treats sense enjoyments with the same indifference it does the excreta of a crow.*
- 5. Discrimination is the settled conviction that only the Seer, Awareness, is permanent and seen objects are impermanent.*

6. Abandonment of desires as they arise is called Shama and restraint of the external functions of the organs is called Dama.

7. Turning away from sense-objects is Uparati and patient endurance of all sorrow or pain is known as Titiksha. These are conducive to happiness.

8. Implicit faith in the words of the Vedas and the teachers who unfold their meaning is known as Shraddha and concentration of mind on the Self is Samadhana.

9. A burning all-consuming desire to be free is called Mumukshutva.

10. Those in whom these means are highly developed should constantly desire Self knowledge for their own good.

By implication a person who does not have these qualifications will not be successful in the quest for enlightenment. This does not mean that one should necessarily abandon one's quest, only that the qualifications need to be acquired 'by devotion to God, simple restrained living, and the proper performance of duties pertaining to one's social position and stage of life.'

It is further implied that dropping out to pursue liberation because of an inability to cope with life's

problems does not work. The list of qualifications might profitably serve as a statement of emotional and mental maturity...which can only be gained by meeting life's challenges head on and proper assimilating their meaning.

..... What is
Inquiry?

11. Just as objects are not revealed without the presence of light, Self Knowledge does not occur by any means other than Inquiry.

Because reality is non-dual, seeking the Self as a discrete liberating experience is pointless; everything anyone experiences at any time is the Self. The failure to stand free of objects then can only be due to ignorance concerning the ability of objects to permanently satisfy one's desire for wholeness. Ignorance can only be removed by knowledge and since knowledge does not happen on its own one needs to seek it.

12. Inquiry is investigation into the nature of the Self, how the world is created, who created it and of what substance it is made.

13. Inquiry is the conviction that I am other than the ten senses and the body, a combination of material elements.

14. Inquiry is understanding that the thoughts in the mind are the creator, that thoughts are produced by ignorance and that they dissolve with the dawn of Self knowledge.

One's life is created by one's thoughts. Two 'root' thoughts stand behind the myriad daily thoughts and feelings expressing in the mind. Desire is the thought that if object X is attained it will make me happy. Fear is the thought that if object X is avoided it will make me happy. The belief that desired objects will complete oneself is based on ignorance of the nature of objects, the nature of the mind, and the nature of the one who desires. The 'dawn of Self knowledge' is the realization that desire and fear are useless life strategies because the Self is always complete.

15. Just as earth is the material cause of a pot, Awareness is the material cause of ignorance and the thoughts it produces. This is the way of Inquiry.

Awareness, the Self, does not consciously set out to create ignorance of itself. In fact, it is absurd to think that the Self ever forgets who or what it is. However, because Awareness is limitless it has limitless power and if it did not have the power to forget it would not be limitless. Nonetheless, Self forgetfulness is not limitless. If it were reality would not be non-dual as scripture claims and our epiphanies reveal it to be. Because inquiry reveals

that everything that is ultimately resolves only into Awareness, Awareness is said to be the cause of Self ignorance. Ignorance in Vedantic literature does not refer to ignorance of subtle or gross objects, only to ignorance of the Self.

16. “Without doubt I am the non-dual witnessing unchanging ever-existent knower.” This is the way of inquiry.

The modern idea of Self inquiry is to simply pose the question, ‘Who am I?’ and then wait for an answer. This whole text makes it clear such a question is not inquiry because the answer is well known. Even if it weren’t known and the answer somehow appeared out of the blue how would someone who didn’t know they were the Self, know what it means to be the Self?

Self inquiry is the consistent application of a questioning state of mind to everything the mind presents, the practice of discrimination between the Self and its many forms and the consistent affirmation of one’s non-dual identity in light of the mind’s conviction that the self is limited, inadequate and incomplete.

The following statements are meant to guide inquiry.

17. It is ignorance to identify the body as the Self because the Self is partless and the body has many

parts.

18. The Self is internal and rules the body which is external.

19. The Self is pure Awareness and the body is impure matter.

20. Pure Awareness illumines the insentient body.

21. The Self is eternal because it is Existence itself. The body is transient.

22. Unlike the light produced by fire, which is limited in its ability to illumine objects, the Self illumines all objects.

23. If a person knows that a tree is not his or her self how strange that he or she identifies the self as the body...which is only an object like a tree.

Taking a stand in Awareness as Awareness

24. I am limitless, always the same, and peaceful. My nature is what is...limitless Awareness. I am not the apparently existent body. This is called true Knowledge by the wise.

25. I am without any change, without any form, free from all blemish and decay. I cannot be objectified.

26. I am not subject to disease, I am beyond comprehension and free from all objects. I pervade everything. I cannot be objectified.

27. I am without attribute and perform no activities. I am eternal, ever free, and imperishable. I cannot be objectified.

28. I am free from impurity, I am immovable, unlimited, holy, undecaying, and immortal. I cannot be objectified.

Verses 24-28 instruct the mind how to think about the Self. It needs instruction...the opposite thought...because it is firmly convinced that it is limited, inadequate, and incomplete. Unless this belief is destroyed by the truth it will never realize the Self.

29. Only the ignorant believe that the blissful ever-existent Self, which resides in the body yet is other than it, is non-existent...even though its existence is established by the teachings of Vedanta.

The qualifications for inquiry listed above and the teachings of Vedanta are the means for Self knowledge. The purpose of inquiry is to see if one's beliefs and opinions about the nature of reality are in harmony with reality...or not.

An inquiring mind might question the validity of Vedanta's teachings about the nature of reality. Are they scientific? Are they based on observation and experience? Are they merely the fantasies of light headed mystics or the speculations of philosophers? Are we meant to believe that they are given by God? And if they are who or what is God? On what does their authority rest?

The reason for doubting the fundamental contention of Vedanta...that reality is non-dual Awareness and not the multiplicity that it appears to be...is rooted in the nearly universal conviction that the body is real and that reality is limited to sense objects.

But the senses do not know what they are experiencing. They are only instruments that receive and transmit data. The means of knowledge for the senses is the mind. It is in the mind that sense information is interpreted.

And, while the average person caught up in the business of life has no reason to investigate the mind in so far as psychological knowledge does not pay the rent or obviously provide pleasure, there have always been human beings whose investigations were not completely dictated by physical and emotional necessities. When survival is not an issue one's attention is free to travel elsewhere.

Although psychology as a science is in its infancy in the West, the exploration of the mind or consciousness has been going on elsewhere along scientific lines for thousands of years, probably forever. Although a considerable portion of the Vedic texts are dedicated to cosmology one is particularly impressed by the wealth of information about the mind and its many states of consciousness. Because of the depth and consistency of this information it is immediately apparent that it is neither speculative or philosophical but the result of painstaking observation and experiment. Yoga, for example, is body of scientific information and practice that gives a human being a certain degree of control of the mind and its many states of consciousness.

In the West the study of the mind is generally referred to as the study of consciousness, although in Vedic literature the word consciousness does not refer to the mind. But if the investigation of the mind is thorough an interesting fact emerges, one that the texts of Vedanta are quick to point out: the mind is not conscious.

What is the mind, then? Like the senses and the elements it is actually a very subtle material instrument of experience. It is like a mirror, capable of bouncing light on objects, but it does not know itself, although to the untrained observer it seems to

be conscious.

What, then, knows the mind? Awareness knows the mind. It is the conscious principle. The bulk of the teachings of Vedanta are not related to the cosmos nor to the mind but to the study of Awareness. The hundreds of thousands...perhaps more...subjective scientists who investigated the reaches beyond the mind left a shining body of irrefutable knowledge about the nature of Awareness, the non-dual reality behind the mind and body.

One interesting fact that emerged from the investigations of the Vedic seers is that what an uninformed person identifies as his or her self is not actually the self, in so far as the two basic candidates, the body and the mind, are not conscious and a self by definition is conscious. That we are conscious is so obvious it does not bear mention.

Why is Vedanta a body of 'teachings' and not just body of factual knowledge about the nature of reality? The most interesting fact about Vedanta is not its identification of the Self as Consciousness but the importance of Self knowledge in the human quest for happiness.

Factual knowledge doesn't help much in the search for fulfillment. One needs to know the significance of the facts at one's disposal and how to use those

facts to achieve one's ends. It is a fact that reality is non-dual Awareness and I am Awareness. But what does that mean? What am I supposed to do now that I know this fact? How does it impact on my search for lasting happiness?

The verse tells us that Vedanta establishes the existence of the Self (for someone who doesn't know) but by far its most important contribution lies in the how to use Self knowledge to obtain lasting happiness. Therefore, the 'teachings' of Vedanta, instructions on how to use the mind to find fulfillment the only place it is to be found...in one's identity as Awareness.

30. The Self ignorant should...with the help of the teachings of Vedanta and reasoning...try to know Existence, their own Self which not a void and is different from the body.

Inquiry is also using the logic of one's experience to dismiss erroneous notions about the nature of the Self. In fact the Self is not completely unknown to anyone because it is the nature of everyone. If one thinks deeply about what one has experienced one will realize that one has often experienced non-duality and that the experience of non-duality...if taken seriously...actually contradicts the everyday way of seeing. This gives one the confidence to apply Self knowledge even when the mind is not experiencing non-duality.

- 31. The limitless Self, the 'I', is one but the bodies are many. How can the body be the Self?**
- 32. The fact that the body is referred to as 'mine' establishes it as an object to the "I". Therefore the body can't be the Self.**
- 33. It is the immediate experience of everyone that the 'I' doesn't change and that the body does. How can the body be the Self?**
- 34. From the teachings of Vedanta the wise understand that there is nothing other than the Self. So how can the body be the Self?**
- 35. The Purusha Sukta declares that everything is the Self. So how can the body be the Self?**
- 36. The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad says that the Self is partless. So how can the body...which is only composed of parts...be the Self?**
- 37. It also states that the Self is self luminous. So how can the insentient body...which requires illumination from some other source...be the Self?**
- 38. Even the karmic portion of the Vedas says that the Self is other than the body, remains after the body dies and goes on to reap the fruits of the actions done in life.**

Verses 31-38 are meant to dismiss the most

entrenched and obvious example of Self ignorance...I am the body. These excellent logical meditations are meant to train the mind how to think about the body when the 'I am the body thought' arises...which is does frequently.

39. The Subtle Body too consists of parts and is unstable. It is an object of perception, changeable, limited and only apparently exists. So how can it be the Self?

The Subtle Body is the mind, intellect and ego, the source of one's feelings, thoughts and actions. By including the Subtle Body as 'not Self' the text has negated everything...material and psychological reality...that an ordinary person thinks he or she is.

This negation...which should go on all the time...is one half of the process of self inquiry.

40. The immutable Self, the substratum of the Subtle Body, is different from Gross and Subtle Bodies. It is the ruler of everything and the essence of everything. It is present in every object but transcends all objects.

The verses of Vedantic texts are statements to be verified by inquiry. The Subtle Body is the mind/intellect instrument. It does not stand alone but is sourced in its cause, Awareness, and different from it. The 'ruler of everything' means that without Consciousness or Awareness nothing exists. The sun, for example, could be considered the 'ruler' of

the earth even though most of its rays are simply lost in the vastness of space. It 'rules' the earth because without its heat/light life on earth would not exist. Similarly, without the 'light' of Awareness we are nothing but inert matter vestures.

41. Thus the difference between the Self and the body has been asserted by logic and reason.

42. Thus the view that the body is the Self has been negated.

43. Awareness is always non-dual and never changes. Even individuality is a delusion, like the appearance of a rope as a snake.

44. Just as ignorance instantly causes a rope to appear as a snake pure Awareness appears as the phenomenal universe without changing its nature in any way.

The Self 'becomes' the world, but it does not cease to be what it is when it does. What kind of 'becoming' is it? It does not become the world like milk becomes cheese. Milk surrenders its nature to become cheese. The Self 'becomes' the world like a clay becomes a pot or gold becomes a ring or the ocean becomes a wave. It fashions itself into myriad objects without undergoing any modification.

45. The Self is the material cause of the phenomenal

universe. Therefore the universe is only the Self.

46. Vedanta says that everything is the Self. Therefore the idea that the Self pervades everything is untrue. If this is true how can one distinguish between cause and effect?

47. Vedanta says the Self is non-dual and that it is the cause of the universe so how can the universe be different from it?

48. The Upanishad says that ‘the one who is deceived by Maya sees multiplicity and goes from death to death’.

‘Death to death’ does not mean physical death. Death is a metaphor for change. It means that when you see the world as separate from yourself you suffer many changes and whatever you gain in life you eventually lose.

49. Inasmuch as all beings are sourced in the Self they can only be the Self.

50. Vedanta has clearly stated that the Self alone is the substrate in which all names, forms and actions appear.

51. Just as a golden item like a ring has no existence apart from gold, any being that comes from the Self is also the Self.

52. Anyone who makes the slightest distinction between the individual Self and the universal self will suffer fear.

Fear, the primary human emotion, is the result of dualistic thinking. There is nothing to fear because you are not separate from anything.

53. Ignorance causes duality which causes otherness. Identify with the Self and no other appears.

54. When one is identified with the Self there is no delusion or sorrow.

55. The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad states that the Self, the essence of everything, is limitless.

It is true that everything in the world is limited but this does not mean that the Self is limited. The misunderstanding that the self is limited that causes suffering. That 'I' feel love limited, time limited, knowledge limited, power limited, wellness limited, etc. is brought about by a lack of discrimination between the Self and the objects appearing in it.

56. Our everyday world serves certain practical purposes but it is like a dream because it is negated the moment one falls asleep or dreams.

57. Dream experience doesn't exist in the waking state, the waking experience doesn't exist in the

dream state and neither exist in the deep sleep state.

58. Thus all three states are unreal inasmuch as they are created by the three Gunas. But Awareness, the reality behind them, is non-dual and eternal.

This is a snippet of the complete teaching of the three states of consciousness found in the Mandukya Upanishad. The 'gunas' are the unmanifest forces of nature that produce all states of mind. Perhaps a better reason to dismiss experience as unreal is the fact that it is never the same from moment to moment. Reality never changes.

59. One no longer sees the Self as an individual when the individual is realized to be nothing but the Self just as one no longer sees a ring as separate from the gold from which it is fashioned.

60. An earthen pot is usually called a pot even though it is just earth. Similarly the Self is thought of as an individual even though it is nothing but limitless Awareness.

61. Just as blueness is projected on the sky the universe is projected on the Self.

62. Just as a ghost is projected by the mind under certain conditions the universe is projected on Awareness.

63. Just as an ocean takes the form of waves the Self, limitless Awareness, takes the form of the whole universe.

64. Just as clay is called a pot or thread a cloth, the Self appears as the universe. The Self can be known by negating the names.

Does it matter if a ring is a ring or if it is gold? If you are starving it does not solve your problem to understand that the ring on your finger is just a ring. It would be helpful, however, to know that it is gold. If you are starving for happiness it does very little good to cling to the belief that you are just a name representing a long series of transitory experiences. If, however, you negate your name and everything associated with it, you will discover that you are happiness itself.

65. Just as a person may not realize that a pot is actually only clay, most people think they are doers even though no actions are possible without the Self.

There are many factors involved in action apart from the efforts of the doer; the Self, the Gunas, the senses, vital forces, mind and intellect and the elements.

66. Reasoning and the teachings of Vedanta show that there is a causal relationship between the Self

and the universe just as common sense establishes the relationship between clay and a pot.

67. Just as it is possible to realize that a pot is nothing but clay when one thinks about a pot, so the realization that the phenomenal world is nothing but Awareness can flash in the mind when one deeply inquires into the nature of the world.

68. The Self is thought to be made up of parts by those ignorant of its nature but is known to be a partless whole by the wise.

69. Just as a pot is only clay, the body is only Awareness. For no good reason the ignorant divide the Self into a self and a not-Self.

70- 72. Just as a rope is taken to be a snake or thread to be cloth or clay to be a pot the Self is taken to be the body.

Verses 73 to 86 give an additional number of similes to illustrate the way that ignorance projects the 'I am the body idea' on the Self. Many of these are repetitions and it serves no purpose to list them all.

87. Thus the delusion 'I am the body' appears. It disappears with the realization of the Self.

88. When one realizes that what moves and what doesn't move is nothing but the Self, it is not

possible to say that the body is the Self.

89. The enlightened are not distressed when they receive the results of their actions because they know they are the Self.

Knowing you are the Self means that you know that you are not the doer. If you are not the doer the results of action do not accrue to you.

90. We now refute the notion that the results of one's actions still affect the individual once the Self is realized.

91. When the Self is realized the body is known to be a dream. Just as a dream no longer exists when one wakes up the body no longer exists for the Self realized.

92. Karma done previously but fructifying now is called Prarabdha but there is no Prarabdha for the Self realized because he or she is the Self and the Self is not a doer.

93. The physical body is a projection just as a dream body is a projection. How can a projection be born, do action and reap the fruits of action?

94. Vedanta texts say that Self ignorance is the cause of the belief that the material world is real, just as an unthinking person does not realize that a pot is only clay. When Self ignorance is destroyed

how can the belief in the reality of the material world be sustained?

95. Just as a confused person can mistake a rope for a snake, a Self ignorant person takes the phenomenal world to be the reality.

96. When the rope is known the snake no longer appears. When the Self is known the phenomenal world is no longer taken to be real.

Self realization does not mean that the physical world disappears. What disappears is the notion that it is anything other than Awareness, one's own self.

97. Because the body is part of the phenomenal world and the phenomenal world is only a dream how can there be Prarabdha Karma? It is to educate the Self ignorant that Vedanta speaks of action and its results.

As long as you take yourself to be the author of 'your' actions you need instruction in how to act. There are other texts, particularly the Bhagavad Gita, that address the doer and discuss karma in detail.

But this text presupposes that the issue of action has been largely resolved.

98. The use of the plural 'actions' in the Upanishad statement "And all the actions of a person perish when the Self...which is both the higher and the lower knowledge...is realized" is meant to negate all

karmas including Prarabdha.

99. If a person ignores the knowledge contained in this statement and continues to believe in doership and the results of action he or she will not realize the Self. Therefore the truth of this statement should be embraced.

101. The Self that is absolute existence and knowledge cannot be realized without constant practice. So one seeking Self knowledge should meditate long and hard on the Self.

This Vedanta text also addresses a doer and prescribes a subtle action...inquiry, the result of which is Self knowledge. But like any ritual, whether or not it bears fruit depends on whether or not the rules of inquiry are followed carefully. The scriptures of Vedanta explain the rules.

Verse 101 is meant to refute the perennial, persistent and pig-headed belief that enlightenment is some kind of mystic happening or the result of 'transmission' from a guru. Self inquiry is hard work. It is not an easy glamorous path. You will not just walk into a Neo-Advaita satsang and 'get it.' And if you do you can be sure that you will lose it before long.

It is hard work because mystic experiences do not permanently remove Self ignorance. When the experience wears off and ignorance returns the

mind again begins to think from a dualistic platform...and all the old problems return. Self inquiry is a complete 'brainwashing' program, a reorientation of the thought process around the idea of non-duality until all the beliefs holding up Self ignorance are no long in play. When this happens ignorance collapses for want of support.

100. Now I will enumerate the fifteen steps for the attainment of Self knowledge. Practice these all the time.

The following steps are a good example of thought reorientation. In every age most spiritual seekers are action oriented doers and take to some form of Yoga, spiritual practice, often involving considerable and systematic discipline. These practices produce many types of mystic experiences which are almost always fascinating, temporarily liberating, and pleasurable.

Yoga has both an upside and a downside. The upside is that they it invariably produces non-dual experiences which whets one's appetite for Self realization. The downside is that they do not address the limitation of experience and the problem of doership.

In any case the Yoga in question is Raja Yoga or Astanga Yoga, a path with eight steps leading to Samadhi, a thought free state of mind which is defined as liberation. Buddhism, meditation, is

essentially a yogic path. The Buddha's eightfold path is another formulation of Astanga Yoga.

Shankar was a great Vedanta master who had an amazing knack for changing people's way of thinking. What he has done here is to co-opt the terms used by Raja Yoga to describe the path to enlightenment and convert them into Vedantic teachings. Raja Yoga does not teach Self inquiry or Self knowledge, only certain mental and physical disciplines.

Verse 104 is an excellent example of this conversion. The first stage of Raja Yoga is called Yama, control of the senses. But this control is to be effected by an act of will. One simply uses one's will power to keep the senses from engaging their objects. The idea behind this practice is that sense contact is bad because it produces attachment. Shankara suggests a simpler and more effective way. He does not dispute the idea that attachment is a problem, only that the way to deal with it is not by will power but to see everything as the Self.

Seen from the Self's point of view, the senses are not a problem. In reality the senses do not struggle to experience. They are automatically hooked up with their respective objects by the Gunas, unconscious forces. The actual problem is desire, the belief that hooking up the senses with a particular object will somehow make me more

whole, more complete than I presently am. But if the Self is non-dual and everything is the Self including me, then I am already whole and complete and therefore I need not create some kind of experience that will make me feel good. Therefore, the idea that I am whole and complete will automatically prevent gratuitous attempts to produce experiential happiness.

There is nothing wrong with experiential happiness per se but it produces vasanas, attachments, and keeps the doer locked in the whirlpool of samsara, an endless cycle of desire and activity. And, it so happens that experiential happiness is actually the bliss of the Self although it seems to be inherent in certain objects and activities. So it is suggested that one short-circuit the whole karmic process, forego indirect object happiness and take the happiness directly from within by contemplating on the Self. Whatever the mind contemplates it becomes and since the Self is bliss the mind becomes full of bliss when it contemplates on the Self.

There is no need to critique Raja Yoga here and explain its stages. It is a useful path for extroverted people and can prepare the mind for Self inquiry, even though that is not its stated aim.

102-103. The steps, in order, are: control of the senses, control of the mind, renunciation, silence, space, time, posture, restraining the root

(Mulabandha), bodily equipoise, firmness of vision, control of the vital forces, withdrawal of the mind, concentration, Self-contemplation and complete absorption in the Self.

104. Restraining the senses with the knowledge “Everything is the Self” is properly called Yama. It should be practiced continually.

105. The continuous flow the Self thought to the exclusion of all other thoughts is called Niyama. When regularly practiced it causes great bliss.

106. Renunciation is abandoning the belief in the reality of the phenomenal universe by seeing that it is the ever-conscious Self. It is immediate liberation.

Generally renunciation is considered to be the abandonment of certain activities by someone striving for liberation. It is thought that once all activities are renounced one will be liberated.

But if you don't want to wait for liberation abandon the belief that the objects and activities in the world are real. If they are not real what use is it to pursue them? ‘Unreal’ doesn't mean non-existent, only that they are not permanent. If you are quite happy when a situation that was formerly producing happiness stops producing it or starts producing pain, then party on and forget liberation.

107. The wise should always be one with that silence from which speech and mind rebound.

108-109. Known only to sages, congenital silence is that from which speech and the mind rebound. Observing silence by restraining speech is recommended for the Self ignorant.

110. That solitude wherein the universe does not exist in the beginning, end or middle but by which it is always pervaded is known as space.

111. The non-dual partless Self is called 'time' because in the twinkling of an eye it brings into existence the Creator and all beings.

112. The true posture is the spontaneous and continuous meditation on the Self and not the meditation on objects that destroys one's happiness.

113. That perfect merger of the mind into the Self, the support of the universe and the origin of all beings, is known as 'the accomplished posture.'

114. That limitless Awareness in which all existence is rooted should be the basis of a yogin's restraint of mind.

115. Absorption of the limbs of the Subtle Body in limitless Awareness is true equipoise, not the mere balancing of the physical limbs.

116. The noblest vision is the conversion of the samsaric way of seeing into non-dual vision, not gazing at the tip of the nose with the physical eyes.

117. Direct your attention to the place where the seer, sight and the seen are non-different, not to the tip of the nose.

118. Pranayama is the restraint of modifications of the mind brought about by understanding that the mind is the Self alone.

119-120. Rechaka, breathing out, is the negation of the phenomenal world and the thought 'I am the Self' is Puraka, breathing in. The steadiness of mind that comes from this practice is called Kumbhaka, restraint of breath. This is the true Pranayama not the yogic torture of the nose.

121. Seekers of liberation should practice Pratyahara, the withdrawal of the mind. It is complete absorption in the Self brought about by the understanding that the Self is in all objects.

122. Dharana, concentration, is a steady mind brought about by the realization of the Self in every thought.

123. Dhyana, meditation, is the independence from objects brought about by complete confidence in the thought "I am limitless Awareness." It produces

supreme bliss.

124. Samadhi, also known as Self knowledge, is the non-attachment to thought brought about by complete identification with the thought “I am the Self, limitless Awareness.”

125. This Samadhi reveals one’s natural bliss which arises spontaneously as one clings to the thought “I am limitless Awareness.”

126. This leads to the understanding that the Self can never be objectified, practice stops and the realization of one’s natural freedom ensues.

127-128. While practicing Samadhi many unavoidable obstacles occur: lack of inquiry, idleness, desire for sense-pleasure, sleep, dullness, distraction, tasting of joy, and the sense of blankness. One desiring liberation should patiently remove these obstacles.

129. As one thinks of an object the mind tends to identify with it. When thinking of the void it becomes void, whereas by the thought of the Self it becomes perfect because the Self is perfect. Therefore one should always think of the Self if one wants freedom.

130. Those who abandon the purifying thought “I am the Self’ are little better than animals.

131. Blessed and respected are the virtuous ones who develop their consciousness of the Self.

132. Only those in whom the consciousness of the ever present Self grows to maturity attain the release of liberation, not those whose liberation is merely verbal.

133. Those who are clever discussers of the Self but have no realization and are attached to worldly pleasures are reborn over and over as a consequence of their lack of Self realization.

134. Those pursuing liberation should never be without the thought of the Self.

135. A cause inheres in an effect but an effect does not inhere in the cause. In the absence of an effect there can be no cause.

136. By continual contemplation of the clay and the pot or the ring and gold or a similar metaphor illustrating the relationship between the Self and the world one should understand that when the effect is dismissed only the pure Self...which is beyond speech...remains.

137. As a result of this meditation a state of continual awareness of the Self arises in the pure minded. Eventually, this awareness of the Self is merged into the Self.

138. The inquirer should first look for the Self, the cause, by dismissing all objects as 'not Self' and then look for Self by seeing It in the objects.

139. Once the cause is seen in the effect...the Self in the objects...the objects should be dismissed. What remains the inquirer is.

140. The mind becomes what it meditates on with diligence and conviction.

141. A wise person always sees the visible, invisible and everything else as Awareness and knows that he or she is only Awareness.

142. When the visible is reduced to the invisible the universe appears as Awareness. This understanding fills the mind with endless bliss.

143. This process of inquiry is called Raja Yoga. For those whose worldly desires are only partially attenuated it is to be combined with Hatha Yoga.

144. For those whose minds are purified Raja Yoga alone will result in Self realization. Purity of mind is quickly attained by those devoted to the teacher and the Self.

* The word Aparokshanubhuti is a compound. Paroksha means 'what is far away.' When 'a' is added it means 'what is near. In this case it refers to the 'nearest of the near', one's Self. Anubhuti means to realize, to experience. So the word means 'Self realization.'" It can also be translated as 'direct realization' or 'immediate realization' meaning realization without the need of 'media',

objects.

