

Six Levels of Awareness
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Paper V09MP

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(pp. 1-2)

CONTENTS:

Six levels of awareness (from lowest to highest)

- 1) Nature (Physis): man's selfhood unconscious to itself**
- 2) Brute sense experience: sense of pathos in living body; instinctual understanding; fleeting consciousness**
- 3) Discursive reason: human cognition; identification with imaginative activity**
- 4) Higher activity unattended by imagination**
- 5) Pure self-consciousness: subject and object united; experiences determined by membership in the Nous; self intensely alert**
- 6) Experience of the One**

BOOKS QUOTED FROM OR REFERENCED:

- Plotinus, *The Enneads* (MacKenna translation, 4th ed.)

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NOTES:

- **RETYPE AD PAPER presented in class (V09MP).**

- This is **1982 03/26c = Six Levels of Awareness Paper**, and the third entry associated with this date. **1982 03/26a = Plotinus; Nature Class. 1982 03/26b = “Consciousness in Plotinus” Book Notes. 1982 03/26d = Nature Outline. 1982 03/26e = Astronoesis Introduction Paper. 1982 03/26f = Astrology, Classifying the Types**, for which there is no audio or notes — might refer to something misdated.
- This retyped paper incorporates AD and AS handwritten edits. To see actual handwritten edits please refer to the Scan File.
- Selected in 2022 for possible inclusion in a book of Anthony Damiani inspirational essays (*From the Heart*), in honor of his 100th birthday.

SIX LEVELS OF AWARENESS

[File 1982 0326PC-16R15.PDF Begins (pp. 1-2)]

Man's selfhood -- pure intelligence reaches downwards to the depths of Nature (Physis). There in Nature it is unconscious to itself. Should the Atman function only as Nature, we could say that it is only that, and would not know of the higher and highest powers of the soul. . . they would be unconscious to it.

Then there is brute sense experience. Through this, again the higher powers of the soul would be unknown. This kind of knowing is what animals have -- the sense of pathos in the living body. An (instinctual) understanding but without general ideas. Slightly distinct from the material world, reason can never be known to this mode. A fleeting consciousness, with dreams for memories and fleeting premonitions of subjectivity.

Then there is the apprehension of the thoughts, (of dianoia), the activity of discursive reason due to recollection of ideas. This is generally the level of man -- human cognition (par excellence). The ideas of reason become conscious to the imagination which links both sides of his nature, and he usually identifies himself with the imaginative activity. There are many powers available to this imagination, some dealing with the lower and others indicating higher. Man can engage in habitual activity and such an act is unconscious. He is following his dispositions and this can become stronger than his conscious part.

Now it may be that man can be unconscious of one part and consciously doing another -- that attracts his attention. The limited attentive power of the soul can only attend to one thing or a few at a time.

Next Plotinus points to a higher activity unattended by imagination. . . without an accompanying of image. When we are intensely concentrating, for instance, reading, we do not reflect on the fact that we are reading. . . A man it is true cannot be virtuous without knowledge. . . he cannot act courageously if he knows no fear. Virtue in cases escapes part of the man, i.e., imagination. So he is exchanging one kind of awareness or attention for another. That is an imaginative one for an unimagined one. He tends to identify with dianoia, a step beyond the pseudo-self-consciousness of the imagination.

Then again a level of pure self-consciousness is reached when he is the knower. Subject and object are existentially united and here the self has its experiences determined by its membership in the Nous. It knows the rest of the Nous from its own particular point of view. These experiences are self-directed, the object of its own contemplation. The self here is not unconsciously but intensely alert -- having left behind the lower.

And finally the Self or experience of One and this contemplation of the One is by a power which is the root of the Self."

[File 1982 0326PC-16R15.PDF Ends (pp. 1-2)]