



## Consciousness of the Silent Mind

To understand who we are and what meditation is, we must grasp the nature of the correct relationship with thinking. Such a relationship can only begin after we have access to our true self. Real meditation begins with awakening. There are several things to understand here. Who are we beyond thinking? What is the mind? What types of thoughts can it produce? What is the purpose of thinking? What constitutes the connection between our pure nature and the mind?

Throughout the history of spirituality, there have been many debates on this matter. Buddhism, being more a path of the mind, has naturally tended towards a more positive perception of it. In Zen, for instance, the concept of eliminating the mind was seen as heretical. Masters such as Hui Neng and Lin Chi argued that trying to stop the mind is entirely unnatural. On the other hand, those schooled in Hindu mysticism tended to be more extreme in the other direction, advocating the complete elimination of the mind as a spiritual goal. For instance, Ramana Maharishi spoke about 'killing the mind'; he did not acknowledge its positive role in our existence and spiritual evolution. Others simply accept the mind as a necessary evil, but is it really evil? The mind is a friend of those who are wise and an enemy of fools.

There were, of course, many views in-between, but nowhere can we find an approach which offers a reasonable description of how to properly relate to thinking. What most are lacking is the very recognition that we are actually in a *relationship* with the mind. The mind has typically been seen as a kind of machine which works by itself – all we can do is put ourselves in a position in which we are not overly disturbed by it. But this picture does not reflect with any accuracy what the mind actually is. Why? Because it is not founded upon an understanding of the nature of me and the fact that each thought is directly linked to the identity of that me: each thought is thought by *us*.

We must see that our human mind is something much more than arising thoughts. We can actually *use* our mind to think; we can actively and creatively participate in the thinking process. We can choose to change the direction of our thoughts or decide to break their momentum while letting go into our deeper self. We can abide in the silence of the mind, not because we control or repress it but because we surrender to who we are beyond thinking. To let thoughts arise while one is abiding beyond thinking is fine. Still, if we continuously dwell in our pure nature, constantly cognizing it, the mind itself becomes profoundly affected and there are hardly any thoughts to arise.

The correct relationship with the mind and the proper understanding of its true function can only be established once pure consciousness is awakened. Only consciousness has the power to transcend the mind and to embrace it with higher understanding. It gives us the actual platform, the internal depth, from which we can begin to relate to the mind properly. The mind in itself is

innocent. Its unconscious nature is simply an indication that something fundamental is lacking – consciousness.

Consciousness is of the soul. In the absence of the soul, we are locked in our mental existence. As such, consciousness is our salvation. It is the higher light of cognition, the true ruler of the mind, the one that brings peace and stillness to the movement of thoughts. It is the one that brings love and freedom to the mind.

So the awakening of consciousness is the base to transform the mind. However, for this awakening to be complete, we must use that base to establish the correct relationship with the mind. Consciousness does not guarantee reaching that correct relationship. For instance, we often come across the notion that whether we think or don't think does not matter because we are not the mind anyway. This notion has been invented to justify being unconscious. The majority of those who say these things are not awakened in any way; they only have the mental conviction that they are something or someone beyond the mind. However, even if some of them have awakened their consciousness to a degree, they still remain completely fragmented in the mind. Why are they fragmented? Why does their mind remain chaotic? Why can they not reach the condition of a silent mind? The root of this problem is a lack of integration between the awakened state and the mind, and the root of this lack is not having the proper tools with which to relate to the mind in a positive and intelligent way.

One of the main elements in facilitating this integration is the awakening of conscious me, which in some traditions has been called awareness. Zen, for instance, aspires towards the awakening of consciousness while, in addition, developing the quality of awareness. Here, even though the issue of the correct relationship with the mind is not properly understood, adepts can more easily reach integration between the silence of consciousness and the relative silence of the mind. This is because Zen practices solidify the presence of the observer or, indirectly, the conscious me, which serves as a natural counterforce to the arising of thoughts. Due to the presence of conscious me, one is simply more conscious, and hence there is less subconscious thinking. Conscious me is both our identity beyond thinking on the level of me and the center of the conscious mind. Conscious me is the one who actually puts a stop to thinking, if it chooses to do so. However, its ability to master the mind can only work effectively when it is rooted in pure consciousness, in the soul. Conscious me is the intermediary between consciousness and the mind.

Having said this, the matter of the correct relationship with the mind goes deeper than the awakening of awareness. It requires us to go deeper into the subtle dimensions of our holistic human consciousness. Once one has awakened consciousness, there are in fact two dimensions of consciousness that coexist to constitute our sense of self: the consciousness of I am and the consciousness of me. Me is the bridge between I am and thinking, and as with any bridge, it goes both ways – towards I am and towards the mind. Me is the one who brings recognition into I am as well as being the one who participates in the movement of thoughts. Therefore, thinking cannot be transformed unless our me is integrated. Me cannot reach that integrated condition unless it is first unified and integrated with I am. Based on this understanding, we can see why those who have awakened the I am of consciousness are still fragmented on the level of the mind. Above all, it is because their me is not merged with I am.



So the bottom line is that to reach true peace, it is not enough to be beyond thinking. The thinking mind has to be embraced and transformed by our holistic consciousness. For that to happen, our me must first reach integration with I am: me must embody I am through surrendering to it. Through the unification of me with I am, we reach a higher consciousness on the level of me, which allows us to embrace the consciousness of I am and the mind as one consciousness. When the mind is penetrated by the consciousness of our soul, enveloped by the light of I am, and me is unified, only then does the mind become silent. A silent mind is not without thoughts. It is a mind whose thoughts have the energy of silence; it is free from chaotic, compulsive thinking. It thinks in a contemplative way, in slow motion. There is space and intervals between thoughts, and thinking is not arising from me but from pure consciousness. A thought is no longer creating a center of me; it is thinking without a thinker, which is the true meaning of intelligence. Me is still the subject to thoughts, but because in the very instant it attends to a thought it is also surrendering into I am, it is unable to re-create a separate sense of self outside of the soul. This is how the integral, unified consciousness of our complete self operates – embracing the human and soul dimensions of our existence as one.

Within the integrated mind, there are two kinds of thoughts arising: conscious and subconscious. The difference between them is that subconscious thoughts have a higher level of spontaneity, while in conscious thinking we have the sense of cooperating with the thinking process more. Trying to eliminate the subconscious fully is against nature and brings too much control into the mind, causing imbalance in our psyche. In the natural state, there has to be enough spontaneity for the spirit of pre-conscious, uncontrolled wisdom to run through our existence. This is what constitutes the healthy balance between awareness and consciousness within the holistic space of our integral self. However, the gentle manifestation of subconscious thoughts should not be confused with ordinary subconscious thinking. Here, each thought is contained in the light of pure consciousness. It might not be conscious of itself, but it is embraced by the consciousness of the soul. Even when subconscious me is producing a thought, our deeper me is consciously surrendering to I am. That surrender naturally allows the incoming thoughts to be put at rest. We can call this kind of subconscious thinking conscious-subconscious thinking.

A mind that is integrated with our higher consciousness is silent even when it thinks. The more we are integrated, the less there are thoughts. The mind becomes increasingly absent until we reach the condition of the minimum-mind. The minimum-mind is the natural mind of an awakened being. It is the positive mind which is fully aligned with our higher consciousness. Such a mind is an expression of our creativity and functions in natural harmony with universal intelligence. Each thought that is experienced from the place of silence and surrender is a form of light and carries the energy of the bliss of the soul.

Blessings,

Anadi

*For a glossary of the terminology used in this teaching and for further resources, you may visit our website [www.anaditeaching.com](http://www.anaditeaching.com)*

