

## 7. Instincts and impulses must be put down

**K**nowledge of the *Atma* (*Atma-jnana*) can be won only by the triple path of (1) giving up impulses (*vasanas*), (2) uprooting the mind, and (3) analysing experience in order to grasp the reality. Without these three, the knowledge of the *Atma* will not dawn.

The instincts and impulses prod the mind on toward the sensory world and bind the individual to joy and misery. So, the impulses must be put down. This can be achieved by means of discrimination, meditation on the *Atma*, inquiry, control of the senses, control of desires, renunciation (*viveka*, *Atma-chinthana*, *vicharana*, *sama*, *dama*, *vairagya*), and other such disciplines.

The mind is a bundle of impressions (*vasanas*). Verily, the mind is creation (*jagath*) itself; it is all the world for the individual. While in deep sleep, the mind doesn't function, so creation is practically non-existent for the individual. Creation is born (or "enters into the consciousness") and dies (or "disappears from the consciousness") according to the cognitive powers of the mind. Therefore, when the mind is destroyed, the world is also destroyed and one is free, one is liberated, one attains *moksha*.

Whoever succeeds in controlling the consciousness (*chittha*) can have a vision of the *Atma*. Consciousness is the grown-up tree, while the seed is the "ego", the feeling of "I". When the seed "I" is cast aside, all the activities of the consciousness also vanish automatically.

The spiritual aspirant who is earnest for these results has to be ever vigilant. At any moment, the senses might regain their lost mastery and enslave the individual. The aspirant might lose much of the ground already gained. That is why spiritual aspirants are warned away from attachments to the world.

Be ever and always immersed in the search for truth. Don't waste time in the multiplication and satisfaction of wants and desires. One source of pleasure craves another source as a corollary. Thus, the mind seeks again and again to acquire the objects it has given up. So don't yield to the vagaries of the mind. Turn back, even forcibly, from sensory attachment. Why, even prayer can't be done according to the mind's vagaries. One has to stick to the same place and time! The *Atma* itself will sustain such spiritual aspirants and give them strength and steadiness.