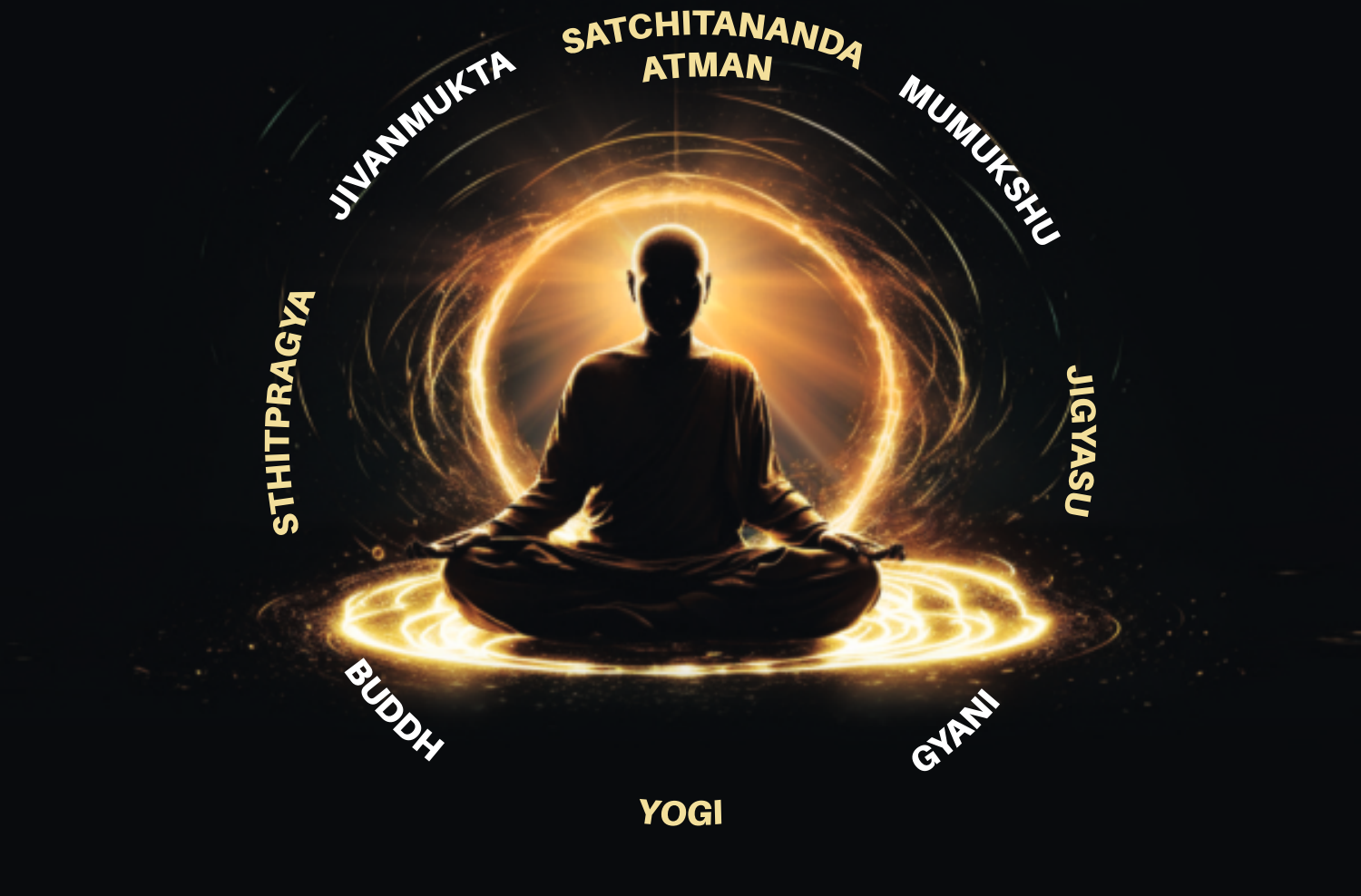


AIR - ATMAN IN RAVI

8 STAGES OF SPIRITUAL AWAKENING



PREFACE

Spiritual Awakening or Enlightenment is about the Realization of the Truth of who we are — the Divine Soul. It is about realizing that God lives in the temple of our heart. It is not just a transformation but a metamorphosis. A caterpillar who has been crawling does not start flying like a butterfly, overnight. So also, seekers of the truth go through several stages before they reach the state of Realization, Enlightenment, Liberation and ultimately, Unification with the Divine.

Enlightenment cannot be achieved with knowledge from a college. It needs Realization of the Truth. For this, one must overcome ignorance. But many of us are ignorant of our ignorance. We are

so enveloped in a blanket of darkness that we live like a frog in a well or like a caveman, believing that success is happiness. We are so lost in this material world that we do not even realize that there is a purpose for our existence. To discover the purpose of our life we must go on a quest and ask questions:

01. Who am I?

02. Why did I come to earth?

03. How did I get this human birth?

04. What will happen in the moment of death?

05. Will I go to a heaven or hell?

06. Who is God? Where is God? What is God?

07. Is reincarnation, a reality?

08. Does the Law of Karma work?

09. What is the Soul? Where does it come from? Where does it go?

10. Everybody will die. Death is certain. The body returns to dust. Then who is reincarnated?

11. Why do bad things happen to good people?

12. Will there be a day of judgement?

13. Will I meet God, face-to-face?

14. What is the cause of suffering?

15. Is there a way to Eternal Happiness?

WHY DO WE NEED TO BE SPIRITUALLY AWAKENED?

Why should there be a Spiritual Awakening? Many people question the need for this additional complication in life. There are enough things to deal with in our life. Our duties, responsibilities, financial commitments and social obligations. Why add Spiritual Awakening to the list? Little do we realize that Enlightenment and being spiritually evolved is the answer to all our problems. It will lead us to a life of Eternal Happiness, Divine Love and Everlasting Peace. If we continue to live with our realizations, we may be enlightened with the truth. Then, at death, we will attain freedom from the cycle of death and rebirth and attain unification with the Divine.

While people are curious about Spirituality but most people think that being Spiritual means renouncing the world. One usually thinks, 'If I wish to pursue Enlightenment, I will have to leave my home and head to the forest. I must leave behind all the pleasures of life, all the wonderful people that I love and live in seclusion, eating leaves from trees and meditating all 24 hours of the day.' Spirituality is not about leaving this world but living in this world with the realization of the truth. When we are Spiritually Awakened, we realize the truth as we overcome ignorance.

When one is ready to go on a quest, that is just the beginning of the journey of Enlightenment. Just wishing to be awakened will not give Enlightenment,

for Enlightenment is all about our sincere pursuit of overcoming ignorance and realizing the truth. So, are you ready to start the most important journey of your life? The road map is in your hands. This booklet will talk about each stage of Spiritual Awakening in brief.

The Spiritual Journey has 8 Stages,
It is the same for all ages.
One who is free from the prison of wages,
One who escapes from all life's mazes,
He is liberated from this world's cages,
But only if he passes through these 8 Phases.

MUMUKSHU

The first stage is *Mumukshu*. A *Mumukshu* is one who yearns for the Divine and Liberation. We all want to be happy. We seek pleasure and we do not want pain. Many of us pray to God but our passion is not strong enough either to attain the ultimate peak of happiness or to pass through Self-Realization and reach God-Realization. To be Spiritually awakened, one must not just desire God but yearn deeply for God. It is said that the *Mumukshu* develops a triple yearning for the Divine — a yearning that is more than a miser's yearning for gold, more than a lover's love for his beloved and more intense than a crying child's pain for its mother whom it has just lost. Unless we develop this triple yearning, we cannot reach the state of *Mumukshutva*.

JIGYASU

The second stage of Spiritual Awakening is *Jigyasu*. It is when one is deep in the quest to realize the truth. It is seeking knowledge and spending time with a Spiritual Master, a Guru, to overcome ignorance. Unless one has a *Jigyasa* or the thirst for Enlightenment, one will not be Spiritually Awakened. Therefore, both *Mumukshu* and *Jigyasu* are like two pillars, like our two feet on which we stand. When we are seeking the truth, we start to question everything. We do not accept the myth that we have grown up with. We do not just follow the herd. It is with *Mumukshutva* and *Jigyasa* that one can cross the two stages and reach the third. And because these two stages are not easy, less than 1 in 100 seek Spiritual Awakening.

GYANI

The third stage of Spiritual Awakening is *Gyani* – it is when one has accumulated a lot of knowledge and some of this knowledge has become Realization. There is a lot of difference between the two. The person who goes through the third stage does not just read and understand what is in a book but goes through the process of contemplation and Realization. Without the third stage of becoming a *Gyani*, one will be imprisoned in the lies. If there is a deep yearning and seeking, one will succeed in the third stage and become a *Gyani*, the wise one. However, it is very difficult to pass this stage without the help of an enlightened Guru, a Spiritual Master. Many people think that they are *Gyani*.

What they do not realize is that they have not overcome ignorance. They live with their proud ego, thinking that they know everything when in reality, they know nothing.

A Learned one is Truly Wise,
On the Spiritual Peak, he will Rise,
He will Overcome lies that come in Disguise,
As his Guru helps him Open his Real Eyes!

YOGI

If we want to be Spiritually awakened, we must evolve to the fourth stage of living like a *Yogi*, one who lives in Yoga. Such a *Yogi* is ever-connected with the Divine. Unfortunately, even though the whole world is fascinated by Yoga, the majority do not understand what it means. We think that Yoga is just about some physical exercises, the *Asanas* or it involves breathing techniques, the *Pranayama*. The *Asanas* and *Pranayama* are just preliminary steps of Yoga and the one who thinks, 'I am doing Yoga,' does not realize that we cannot do Yoga. We have to be in Yoga. One must live as a Yogi and this means that one must not sink in *Bhoga* or the desires of the material world. One can be in Yoga through *Dhyana* Yoga or meditation,

Bhakti Yoga or devotion, *Karma* Yoga or action, *Gyana* Yoga or education, or *Prema* Yoga, the Yoga of Divine love.

One who is Ever-United with God,
One who lives in Union with the Lord,
Such a Yogi is Free from all Fear,
Such a Yogi lives in Bliss, Joy and Cheer,
Such a Yogi is Liberated from Misery on Earth,
Such a Yogi is Free from Rebirth!

BUDDH

The fifth stage of Spiritual Awakening is *Buddh*, being enlightened, being awakened. People think that *Buddh* is the ultimate or final stage but it is not the final stage. Will a doctor, who has finished his theory exams, be allowed to perform a heart or brain surgery? No. That would be a disaster. Medical science ensures practical tests before one is certified. We may reach the fifth stage or *Buddh* and we may have realized the truth about life but it is just the beginning of being awakened. Spiritual Awakening has two sparks. The first spark is reaching the fifth stage of *Buddh*. This stage is commonly known as Self-Realization. Now, one must get into the subject more intensively, so in this stage, there is an essential need for a Spiritual Master or a Guru. When one

experiences the second spark that I am not the body, mind and ego, I am the Divine Soul, it is time to even more intensely yearn and seek, till one evolves from that state of Realization to Liberation.

The Buddh is Awakened that
he is the Divine Soul,
To become One with the Lord is his
Ultimate Goal,
The Buddh lives with a Divine Glow,
In Acceptance and Surrender,
his life does Flow!

STHITPRAGYA

The sixth stage of Spiritual Awakening is the stage of being a *Sthitpragya*. Self-Realization is when one has realized, 'Who I truly am.' But unless one transcends their Mind and Ego, ME, one will not flip over to that state of Consciousness in which the intellect is activated. We, human beings, are the only ones who are blessed with an intellect. Only a human being can discriminate and realize the truth. But every time we use our intellect, the mind will intercept and stop us from going to the stage beyond Self-Realization. Therefore, we must live as a *Sthitpragya*, one who lives with a steady intellect and who is no more a slave of the mind, rather a master. When a *Mumukshu* becomes a *Jigyasu* and then a

Gyani who lives as a *Yogi*, then he can become a *Buddh*. Without passing through these stages, one cannot arrive at the sixth stage of being a *Sthitpragya*.

Only if we live as a Sthitpragya,
There will be Discrimination,
Which will Certify and give Validation!

JIVANMUKTA

The seventh stage is popularly known as *Mukti* or freedom. People presume that with spiritual knowledge, they will be liberated and attain God but that is a myth. Unless we live in that state of *Buddh* - one who has realized the truth, with a steady intellect, being a *Sthitpragya,* we cannot attain *Jivanmukti* or Liberation. The seventh stage is that of a *Jivanmukta,* one who has successfully attained Enlightenment and is awakened. Now, they face the final test – Are they going to live as the Divine Soul or will they let their mind take control and make them think, blink and sink?

SATCHITANANDA ATMAN

The eighth and ultimate step of Spiritual Awakening is living as a *SatChitAnanda Atman*, a liberated Soul living in Eternal Bliss that comes from the Consciousness of the Truth. The *SatChitAnanda Atman* cannot slip back into the material world, in most cases. But even a person who has evolved to this eighth stage needs to live as a Divine Soul to achieve the ultimate goal of Liberation from this world and Unification with the Divine.

The Satchitananda Atman lives
in a state of Truth Consciousness,
With Love, Joy, Peace and Happiness!
He lives Joyously till his last Breath,
And is United with the Divine,
In the Moment of Death!

BEYOND THE 8 STAGES – MOKSHA

What lies beyond Spiritual Awakening? What happens when one is awakened, enlightened and liberated? When one is enlightened, he is not just liberated from the triple suffering on earth but is also liberated from the cycle of death and rebirth. The world understands this state as *Moksha*, *Nirvana* or Salvation. One can reach this state only in the moment of death of the body. Therefore, it is not part of the 8 Stages of Spiritual Awakening. However, if one has sincerely passed through the 8 Stages, who is genuinely realized as a *Buddh* and is free from the clutches of the body, mind and ego and living as a *Jivanmukta,* such a Soul who lives as a

SatChitAnanda Atman can become one with the Divine. This is the ultimate goal of life.

Moksha is Liberation from
Returning to Earth,
Nirvana is being Free from
the Cycle of Rebirth!
Salvation can only happen
when we lose our Breath,
Liberation and Unification can
only happen at Death!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR – AiR

AiR — *Atman* in Ravi, is a Spiritual Mentor, Transformational Author, Singer, Philanthropist and Happiness Ambassador. He is on a mission to help people discover the way to Eternal Happiness through Enlightenment.

AiR was an iconic entrepreneur who transformed retailing in India, only to walk away from the mega retail empire he had created. He shut down his business when he was 40 and started making a difference doing - Humanitarian, Inspirational and Spiritual work. AiR opened three destitute homes known as AiR Humanitarian Homes spread across Bengaluru, that today, care for over 800 homeless and needy people.