

# Consciousness and Its Implications for Human Life Study of Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad

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**Abstract:** *The study of consciousness has been a central focus in various philosophical and spiritual traditions throughout the world. One ancient text that investigates this concept in depth is the Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad, an ancient Hindu text that focuses on the notion of consciousness in the context of human existence. This abstract explores the implications of the understanding of consciousness as revealed in the Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad for human life. In this article, key concepts such as Turiya, atman, and the network of relationships between consciousness and reality will be discussed. Additionally, the practical implications of this understanding for everyday life are also debated. Through a textual and philosophical analysis approach, this abstract aims to expand understanding of consciousness and how this understanding can bring significant changes in human life. In conclusion, this study highlights the importance of in-depth reflection on consciousness in the context of Hindu spirituality and philosophy, as well as its relevance to human life today.*

**Keywords:** Human Life, Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad, Turiya, Atman, Reality

## I. Introduction

Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad is one of the 108 Upaniṣads which are philosophical and spiritual texts in the Vedic tradition of Hinduism. The Upaniṣads are a part of the Vedas and are the most recent part of Vedic literature. The Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad is believed to date from the late Vedic period, and is one of the most famous and important Upaniṣads. The Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad consists of only 12 mantras or slokas, but despite its brevity, the text contains very deep and complex philosophical teachings. This Upaniṣad is part of the Atharvaveda and is specifically related to the philosophical school of Advaita Vedānta founded by Adi Shaṅkarācharya (Deussen, 605-609).

This text discusses very basic and transcendent philosophical concepts, including the nature of the self (*Ātman*) and unity with universal consciousness (Brahman). The Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad also discusses four levels of consciousness (Catur Pāda): *Vaiśvanara /jagrat* (waking consciousness), *taijasa /svapna* (dreaming consciousness), *prājña /susupti* (dreaming consciousness), and *turīya* (transcendental consciousness). The concept of AUM or OM is also explained in depth in the Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad and given deep philosophical significance. AUM is considered a symbol of universal consciousness, reflecting the three aspects of God (Brahma, Viśnu, Śiva), three levels of consciousness (*Vaiśvanara, taijasa, prājña*), and *turīya* which symbolizes transcendent consciousness (Hume, 1921: 391-393).

The Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad is highly revered in the Indian spiritual tradition and is considered one of the most important texts in the understanding of the true nature of the self and universal consciousness. The teachings in the Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad have become the basis for various philosophical and spiritual schools in India, including Advaita Vedānta, which emphasizes the unity of the nature of the individual self with universal consciousness as something true and eternal (Nakamura, 2004: 284-286).

## Etymology

The etymology of Māṇḍūkya comes from the word "Māṇḍūka" in Sanskrit, which means "frog". The Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad is so named because it displays a deep philosophical understanding of reality and the nature of the self by using the analogy of a frog. Frogs live in two different worlds, namely on the surface of the water and in the water. Likewise, humans live in two different states of consciousness, namely waking consciousness (*vaiśvanara*) and dreaming consciousness (*taijasa*). The Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad uses this analogy to illustrate the four levels of consciousness, which are also referred to as the "four aspects of AUM" (A, U, M, and *turīya*) in a philosophical context (Nanditha, 2010: 144-145).

In the Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad text, the frog is considered a symbol of human consciousness which is aware of these two worlds. This text teaches about how humans can achieve higher consciousness, namely transcendental consciousness or *turīya*, which goes beyond waking consciousness and dreaming consciousness. *Turīya* is considered to be pure and true consciousness, which is universal consciousness or Brahman consciousness. Using the analogy of the frog and the different worlds on the surface of the water and in the water, the Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad teaches the importance of recognizing one's true nature and achieving oneness with universal consciousness (Isaeva, 1993: 50). This concept becomes the central teaching in this Upaniṣad and gives it the name "Māṇḍūkya" which describes the deep meaning of this philosophical text.

## Author

There is no definitive record of who the actual author of the Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad was. The Upaniṣads are a very ancient part of Hindu Vedic literature, and many of the Upaniṣads have no clear authorial attribution. Hindu tradition considers the Upaniṣads to be divine revelations received by the Ṛṣis (sages or holy poets) in deep meditation or spiritual experiences. In this tradition, the knowledge contained in the Upaniṣads is considered eternal and does not originate from humans, but from universal consciousness or Brahman (Stephen, 2009).

The Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad is particularly associated with the Advaita Vedānta philosophical school, and many subsequent commentators and scholars have provided interpretations and comments on this text. One of the famous commentators of the Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad is Adi Śaṅkarācharya, a Hindu philosopher and spiritual figure who lived in the 8th century AD. Śaṅkarācharya provided an in-depth interpretation of the Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad and developed the teachings of Advaita Vedānta which emphasizes the unity of self-nature with universal consciousness (Olivelle, 1996).

Although no author's name is known for certain, the Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad remains respected as one of the most important philosophical and spiritual texts in the Hindu tradition. The content and teachings in the Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad have provided inspiration for many people in their search for meaning and understanding of the nature of the self and universal reality (Olivelle, 1996).

### The Nature of the True Self

The Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad highlights four levels of consciousness, including *jagrat* consciousness (waking consciousness), *svapna* (dreaming consciousness), *susupti* (dreaming sleep consciousness), and *turīya* (transcendental consciousness). Through understanding these levels, individuals can achieve awareness of the true nature of themselves that transcends physical identity and ego (Woodhouse, 1978).

Understanding the true nature of self is a process of deep and introspective understanding of the essential nature of ourselves that transcends physical identity and ego. It includes awareness of the deepest aspects of ourselves, which are unaffected by social role, status, or worldly desires. Understanding the nature of the true self is a search to find the meaning and purpose of our existence in this world. Māṇḍūkya Kārikā (2.20) states:

*prāṇa iti prāṇavido bhūtānīti ca tadvidah |  
guṇā iti guṇavidastattvānīti ca tadvidah || 2. 20 ||*

Those who know only Prāṇa, call it (*Ātman*), *Prāṇa*, those who know *Bhūta* call it *Bhūta*, those who know *Guṇa* call it *Guṇas*, those who know *Tattva*, call it *Tattva*.

*Prāṇa* means *Prājñā* (Jīva associated with deep sleep) and *Bijātmā* (causal self). All entities from *Prāṇa* to *Sthiti* (subsistence) are just various effects of *Prāṇa*. These and other similar popular ideas, imagined by all creatures, are like the imagination of a snake, etc., in a rope, etc. This occurs because of ignorance imagined in this *Ātman* which is free from all distinctions. This delusion is caused by a lack of determination of the true nature of the Self. This is the meaning of this *śloka*. No attempt is made to explain the meaning of every word in the text starting with *Prāṇa*, etc., because such an attempt is futile and also because of the clarity of the meaning of these terms. Here are some important aspects of understanding the true nature of the self:

1. Awareness of One's Uniqueness: Understanding the nature of one's true self involves realizing that each individual is unique and valuable in a unique way. It goes beyond the labels and roles we may have in the outside world, and invites us to appreciate the uniqueness of each individual (Raina, 1985).
2. Know Yourself Deeply: To understand the true nature of yourself, we need to know ourselves deeply. This involves honest reflection and introspection about who we really are, including recognizing our strengths and weaknesses.
3. Awareness of Spiritual Essence: Understanding the true nature of self also involves awareness of the spiritual aspect of ourselves. This means realizing that we are not just body and mind, but also have a deeper and eternal spiritual aspect.
4. Oneness with Universal Consciousness: Understanding the true nature of self involves awareness of our oneness with universal consciousness or a greater source of consciousness. This means realizing that we are part of a wider universe, and have a close relationship with everything that exists (Sullivan (1997).
5. Brings Meaning to Life: Understanding the true nature of self helps us find meaning and purpose in our lives. When we realize who we really are and how we relate to the world around us, we can live more meaningfully and purposefully.
6. Self-Acceptance and Love: Understanding the true nature of self brings deep self-acceptance and love. When we recognize and accept who we really are, including all our strengths and weaknesses, we can love ourselves fully and sincerely (Sarma 1996).

Understanding the true nature of oneself is a spiritual journey and deep search. This is not always easy, and may take time, reflection, and life experience. However, when we achieve this understanding, we will feel inner peace, happiness, and a deeper awareness of ourselves and our relationship to the world around us (Jayatilleke, 2010).

## II. Discussion

According to the Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad, forms of consciousness are divided into four levels of consciousness. The Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad is one of the 108 Upaniṣads in the Vedic teachings, which are ancient Hindu philosophical and spiritual texts (Sarma 1996: 137). From the ordinary empirical point of view, *Viśva*, *Taijasa* and *Prājña* generally correspond to the three states, namely wakefulness, dreaming and deep sleep. But these three states are understood from the perspective of the waking state only. That dreams and deep sleep are two states that have different characteristics, which are known only in the waking state. Therefore, both become known to consciousness while awake.

Apart from awakeness, in so far as it indicates the absence of knowledge of Reality, also *jāgrat* includes the states of dream and sleep. The three conscious persons known as *Viśva*, *Taijasa* and *Prājña* are actually one, for the large number of persons perceiving in the same state, that is, while awake, and in the same body is an absurdity, as it would preclude the possibility of continuity of perception, as revealed through memory. Therefore, the three different senses are identical and their apparent differences are due to their identification with the three states (Sarma 1996: 137). Here Māṇḍūkya Karika (1.2) explains as follows:

*dakṣiṇākṣimukhe viśvo manasyantastu taijasaḥ |*  
*ākāśe ca hydi prājñastridhā dehe vyavasthitāḥ ||1.2||*

*Viśva* is one who knows with the right eye, *Taijasa* is one who knows the mind within, and *Prājña* is one who forms *Ākāśa* in the heart. Thus, the one *Ātman* is (considered) threefold in (one) body.

This text is intended to show that the three experiences of *Viśva*, etc. (*Taijasa* and *Prājña*) are realized in the waking state only. *Dakṣiṇākṣi*: the means of perception (of gross objects) is the right eye. The presence of *Viśva*, who knows gross objects, is especially felt there. *Śruti* also says, “The person in the right eye is known as *Indha*: the Radiant One” (Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad). *Indha*, which means the Radiant One, is *Vaiśvānara* and is also known as *Virāt Ātman* (whole gross body), which perceives the sun, the same as the eye perceives.

*Śruti* says, “One brilliant existence is hidden within all beings.” *Smṛti* also says: “I also know, O Arjuna, as *Kṣetrajña* (who knows the body) in all *Kṣetra* (bodies)” (Gītā, 13.2). “it cannot be divided, but it exists as if divided into forms” (Gītā, 13. 16). Although *Viśva*'s presence is felt equally in all the sense organs without distinction, the right eye in particular is chosen (as the main instrument for his perception), because he (*Viśva*) uses the right eye more in observing objects. (The right eye is created here to represent all the sense organs) (Sarma 1996).

The person whose right eye is fixed, after observing the (external) forms, closes his eyes; and then remembering them in the mind, seeing the same (external objects) as in the dream, as manifestations of impressions (memories). As it is here (when awake), so it is with dreams. Therefore, *Taijasa* that perceives in the mind, within, is actually the same as *Viśva*. With the cessation of the activity known as memory, the perceiver (in the waking and dream states) merges with the *Prājña* in the *Ākāśa* of the heart and becomes in fact a mass of consciousness, for then there is a cessation of mental activity.

Both perception and memory are forms of thought, in the absence of which the seer would remain undifferentiated in the form of *Prāṇa* in the heart alone. For, *Śruti* also says, “*Prāṇa* Himself draws all this within.” *Taijasa* is identical with *Hiraṇyagarbha* because its existence is realized in the mind. Thoughts are indicative of characteristics (of both). This is supported by scriptural verses such as “This *Puruṣa* (*Hiraṇyagarbha*) is all thoughts,” etc. (King 1995).

The unmanifest (*Avyākṛitā*) is characterized by the absence (knowledge of) time and space. Although *Prāṇa*, in the case of a person who identifies himself with a (particular) *Prāṇa*, seems to manifest (during waking and dreaming), yet even in the case of a person who (thus) identifies himself with an individual *Prāṇa*, the *Prāṇa*, during deep sleep, loses its particular identification, which is due to its limitations by the body, and is actually the same as the unmanifest (Sarma 1996).

Just as in the case of those who identify themselves with the individualized *Prāṇas*, their *Prāṇas*, at the time of death, cease to be their manifestation, so in the case of those who consider themselves identified with the individualized *Prāṇas*, the *Prāṇas* it reaches a state like that which is not manifested, in a state of deep sleep. This *Prāṇa* (deep sleep) then contains the seed (cause) of (future) creation (as is the case with *Avyākṛitā*). The knower of the two states of deep sleep and *Avyākṛitā* is also one (i.e., Pure Consciousness).

People who are in deep sleep are identified with different knowers by identifying themselves with the conditioned (in waking and dreaming states) and therefore attributes such as “oneness”, “the aggregate of all consciousness”, etc. , as explained above, can be reasonably applied by a person in deep sleep. Other reasons, already mentioned, support it. How exactly can the word *Prāṇa* be applied to *Avyākṛita* (the unmanifest)? This is supported by *Śruti*'s passage, “Oh, very good, the mind is attached to *Prāṇa*.” (King 1995).

Sat is recognized as something that contains the seed or cause (creation). Although Sat, i.e. Brahman, in the verse is indicated by the word '*Prāṇa*', the Brahman indicated by the words Sat and *Prāṇa* (in connection with it) is not free from its qualities as the seed or cause that creates all creatures. Because if in *Śruti*'s reading, Brahman, which has no cause-and-effect relationship (i.e., the Absolute) is to be explained, then *Śruti* will use expressions such as “Not this, not this,” “Where does speech turn from,” “It is something other than the known and the unknown,” and so on.

*Smṛti* also states, “This is neither Sat (existence) nor *Asat* (non-existence)” (Gītā). If what is meant by a text is (Absolute) that has no cause-and-effect relationship, then the return, to the realm of relative consciousness, of those who are deeply asleep and

united with Sat at the time of *Praḷaya* (cosmic dissolution), cannot occur. Furthermore, (in this case) the liberated souls will return to the realm of relative consciousness; for the absence of a seed or cause (capable of giving birth to the world of names and forms) would be the common characteristic of both (King 1995).

Furthermore, in the absence of a seed (a cause, i.e. in the time of *Suṣupti* and *Praḷaya*) that can be destroyed by Knowledge (alone), Knowledge itself becomes futile. Therefore, the word Sat (the text of the Chāndogya Upaniṣad, the section under discussion) is in the aspect attributed to causality, indicated by the *Prāṇa*, and has therefore been explained in all the Śrutis as cause. The word Sat is for This reason also is that the Absolute Brahman, separated from its causal attributes, has been indicated in Śruti's verses such as "He is beyond the unmanifest, which is higher than the manifested", "He has no cause and is the lower layer of external (consequences)." and internal (causes), "Where do words come from...", "Not this, not this", etc. (King 1995).

What is called *Prājñā* (when viewed as the cause of the phenomenal world) is described as *Turīya* separately when it is not viewed as a cause, and when it is free from all phenomenal relations (such as relations to the body, etc.), that is, in its true aspect, true Real. Causal conditions are also actually experienced in this body from the knowledge of the person awakened from deep sleep, such as "I did not know anything (during deep sleep)." Therefore, it is said that (one) Ātman is considered triple in (one) body.

*anyathā gr̥hñataḥ svapno nidrā tattvamajānataḥ |  
viparyāse tayoh kṣīṇe turīyaṃ padamaśnute (1.15)*

*Svapna* or dream is a wrong understanding of Reality. *Nidrā* or sleep is a state where one does not know what Reality is. When false knowledge in these two cases disappears, *Turīya* means realization.

In the dream and waking states when a person misperceives Reality such as the perception of a snake on a rope, he is said to be experiencing a dream. *Nidrā* or sleep, characterized by ignorance of Reality, is the common characteristic of all three states. *Viśva* and *Taijasa*, because they share the common features of *Svapna* (dream) and *Nidrā* (sleep), form one class. *Nidrā* (sleep) which is characterized by the predominance of wrong understanding (of Reality) is a state of inversion, namely *Svapna* (dream).

But in the third state, *Nidrā* (sleep), alone, characterized by no understanding of Reality is the only inversion. (This forms the second or other class implied in the text which speaks only of dreams and sleep which include the three states.) Therefore, when these two classes are effect and cause, it is characterized by misunderstanding and non-understanding respectively (Reality), disappears with the destruction of the reversal marked by effect and cause, with the knowledge of the nature of the Ultimate Reality, only then does one realize *Turīya* which is the goal. So, one will not find this condition in *Turīya*, the characteristics of which are these two things (effect and cause), and thus one becomes steadfast in the Ultimate Reality that is *Turīya* (King 1995).

## 2.1 Experience of Oneness with Brahman

The Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad teaches that AUM or OM represents universal consciousness or Brahman, which is the source of all that exists. In meditation and contemplation of AUM, individuals can experience the experience of oneness with the universal source of consciousness, which brings a sense of spiritual closeness to an existence greater than themselves (Shankarananda, 2006). Māṇḍūkya Kārikā (2.28) states:

*sṛṣṭirīti sṛṣṭivido laya iti ca tadvidāḥ |  
sthītirīti sthītividaḥ sarve ceḥa tu sarvadā || 2. 28 ||*

The All-Knower of creation calls it creation; People who know dissolution describe it as dissolution and people who believe in subsistence believe it to be subsistence. In fact, all these ideas are always present in the Atman.

The experience of oneness with Brahman is the most profound and transcendent spiritual experience in the Hindu tradition. Brahman is the concept of universal consciousness which is the source of all existence, energy and essence in the universe. The experience of oneness with Brahman involves realizing the unity of our true nature with this universal consciousness. This experience is often described as a feeling of limitlessness, transcending physical and ego boundaries, and feeling at one with everything that exists. In this experience, feelings of separation and egoistic identity disappear, and the individual feels himself as part of the whole universe, as part of Brahman (Jayatileke, 2010). Some of the characteristic features of the experience of oneness with Brahman are as follows:

1. **Feeling of Spiritual Closeness:** The individual feels a strong feeling of spiritual closeness to everything that exists. This means feeling that there is a close bond between oneself and the universe and all creatures in it.
2. **Awareness of Oneness:** Feelings of separation, difference, or duality disappear, and the individual realizes that all phenomena and entities are part of one inseparable whole (Collins 2009).
3. **Experience of Universal Energy and Power:** The experience of oneness with Brahman is often accompanied by a feeling of the flow of universal energy and power beyond ordinary human understanding.
4. **Mental Stillness and Inner Tranquility:** This experience is also accompanied by a feeling of deep inner calm and mental stillness, as the conscious mind dissolves into transcendent unity (Raina, 1985).

5. Feeling of Enlightenment or Deep Understanding: The experience of oneness with Brahman is often associated with a feeling of enlightenment or deep understanding of the true nature of the self and the universe.

It is important to remember that the experience of oneness with Brahman is a very deep and personal spiritual experience. This experience can occur through meditation, contemplation, or a spontaneous, life-changing spiritual experience. Although difficult to put into words, this experience is believed to be the pinnacle of spiritual quest and enlightenment in the Hindu tradition, and many Hindu spiritual figures have described it as the highest goal in human life (Collins 2009).

## 2.2 Pure Presence and Inner Peace

Through understanding *turīya*, individuals can attain a state of pure and serene mindfulness. Awareness in *turiya* is the most basic and serene form of consciousness, bringing a feeling of deep inner peace. Pure presence and inner calm are two important aspects of spiritual experience and heightened awareness. The two are interrelated and reflect a solemn and serene state of mind and mind (Sullivan (1997). The following is an explanation of pure presence and inner calm:

1. Pure Presence: Pure presence refers to a state of mind where a person is completely present and focused on the present moment. When we are in pure presence, our thoughts do not drift to the past or future, and we are not caught up in a frenzy of thoughts or worries. Instead, we are fully present in the moment, with full awareness and without judgment. It is an inner state in which one is aware of current reality and experiences without being influenced by turbulent thoughts.
2. Inner Calm: Inner calm is a deep feeling of peace and tranquility within a person. When one attains inner calm, the conscious mind rests in a state of calm and peace. No worry or restlessness disturbs this inner peace. It is an inner state in which a person feels stable, without excessive emotional turmoil (Sarma 1996).

Pure presence and inner calm are often associated with the practice of meditation and contemplation. In meditation, one hones the ability to be fully present in the moment, focusing attention on the object of meditation or the breath. With regular meditation, one can achieve greater pure presence in daily life. When one contemplates the deeper existence and its spiritual essence through meditation or inner reflection, inner calm can be achieved. In inner calm, a person feels peaceful and serene, even in the midst of life's challenges and stress (Garfield & Priest 2003).

Pure presence and inner calm are spiritual abilities and achievements that can bring great benefits to human life. With pure presence, we can better appreciate the moment and reduce stress caused by thoughts about the past or future. Meanwhile, inner calm brings deep happiness and peace, creating balance and a better quality of life.

## 2.3 Introduction to the Symbolic Meaning of AUM

The Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad teaches that AUM consists of three syllables "A," "U," and "M" representing three levels of consciousness: *jagrat* (A), *svapna* (U), and *suṣupti* (M). The silent sound after AUM represents *turīya*, transcendental consciousness. Understanding the symbolic meaning of AUM can help individuals in meditation and living daily life with higher awareness (Indisch, 2000). Māṇḍūkya Kārikā (1.23) states:

*akāro nayate viśvamukaraścāpi taijasam |*  
*makāraśca punaḥ prājñam nāmātre vidyate gatiḥ || 1. 23 ||*

The sound (letter) A helps the devotee attain *Viśva*, U to *Taijasa*, and M to *Prājña*. In “Without a Voice” there is no achievement.

Having identified the place of the *Ātman* with the sound (letter) Aum, due to the general characteristics mentioned above, he who realizes the nature of the sound Aum, described above, and meditates on it, attains *Viśva* through the help of A. It means he who meditates on Aum with A's support becomes *Vaiśvānara*. Likewise, the meditator U becomes *Taijasa*. Once again the voice of M directs the meditator to *Prājña*. But when M also disappears, causality itself is negated. Therefore, regarding such Aum, which becomes soundless, no attainment can be predicted.

*Īśvara* and *Prājña* are the causes of waking and dream state experiences and where these ultimately cease. *Īśvara* is also the cause of the universe and the final disappearance of the universe. The meditator on M combines A in U and U in M. That is, he merges the gross universe of the waking state into the world of ideas experienced in the dream and finally realizes the dream as one with the state of deep sleep.

AUM (or OM) is a very important symbol and mantra in Hinduism and Indian spirituality. Introduction to the symbolic meaning of AUM is an understanding of the symbolic and philosophical aspects contained in this symbol. AUM is one of the most sacred symbols and means a lot to many Hindus and yoga practitioners (Raina, 1985). Following are some of the symbolic meanings of AUM:

1. Representation of the Three Aspects of God: AUM consists of three syllables: "A," "U," and "M." Each syllable represents three aspects of God in Hinduism, namely Brahma (creator), Viśnu (protector/maintainer), and Śiva (destroyer). AUM as a whole encompasses the unity of these three aspects as manifestations of the Supreme God (Brahman).

2. Symbol of Universal Consciousness: AUM symbolizes universal consciousness or Brahman consciousness which is the essence of all existence. The sound AUM is believed to reflect the basic vibrations of the universe and reflects the origin of creation.
3. Representation of Three Levels of Consciousness: In the context of the Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad, AUM also represents three levels of consciousness: *jagrat* (awake consciousness), *svapna* (dreaming consciousness), and *suṣupti* (consciousness during dreamless sleep). The silent sound after AUM, which symbolizes *turiya* (transcendental consciousness), reflects pure consciousness that transcends all three levels (Raina, 1985).
4. Philosophical Meaning in Yoga: In yogic practice, AUM is used as a mantra used for meditation and uniting the mind with universal consciousness. The sound AUM is considered the primary sound or "brahman tone" which is the source of consciousness and spiritual connection.
5. Symbol of Unity in Diversity: AUM can also be interpreted as a symbol of unity in diversity. AUM includes all the vowel sounds in Sanskrit and represents everything that exists in the universe. This reflects the concept of unity between all beings and existence (Jayatilleke, 2010).

In practice AUM is pronounced by pronouncing each syllable long, such as "A-A-A-U-U-U-M-M-M." In meditation, contemplation of the sound AUM and its meaning can bring inner peace, direct the mind inward, and assist in achieving oneness with universal consciousness. The recognition of the symbolic meaning of AUM is rich and varied, and each individual may have a unique and profound interpretation based on their spiritual practices and beliefs (Sullivan (1997).

#### 2.4 Experience True Happiness

Through union with Brahman and understanding the true nature of oneself, individuals can achieve the experience of true happiness that is independent of external factors. This happiness comes from awareness of a deeper and eternal source of happiness. The experience of true happiness is a deep and lasting inner state, which is unaffected by external conditions or changes in life. This is happiness that goes beyond temporary satisfaction and physical pleasure, but is a deep feeling that arises from within a person. The experience of true happiness is often associated with a deep understanding of the true nature of the self and oneness with universal consciousness (Jayatilleke, 2010). Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad (7) states:

*nāntaḥprajñam na bahiḥprajñam nobhayataḥprajñam na prajñānaghanam na prajñam nāprajñam |  
adṛśyamavyavahāryamagrāh yamalakṣaṇama cintyamavya prapañco paśamaḥ śāntaḥ śivamadvaitaḥ caturthaḥ manyante  
sa ātmā sa vijñeyah || 7 ||*

Turiya is not that which is conscious of the internal world (subjective), nor that which is conscious of the external world (objective), nor that which is conscious of both, nor that which is the aggregate of all feelings, nor that which is conscious is simple consciousness, nor is consciousness which cannot be felt. (It is) invisible (by any sense organ), unrelated to anything, incomprehensible (by the mind), inconclusive, inconceivable, inexplicable, is essentially the nature of Self-forming Consciousness alone, negation towards all phenomena, the Peaceful, all Bliss and Non-dual. This is what is known as the fourth (*Turiya*). This is the *Ātman* and it must be realized.

The statement that "It should be known cannot be done correctly with regard to the incomprehensible non-dual *Ātman*, and so on. This objection is, no doubt, valid from the *Turiya* point of view where no one knows the *Ātman* separately. But *Turiya* is of course unknown from the point of view of any of the three states, and from that dual point of view it is perfectly legitimate to call Brahman something "to be known." Some typical characteristics of the experience of true happiness are as follows:

1. Inner Calm and Emotional Balance: The experience of true happiness is accompanied by a deep feeling of inner calm and emotional balance. One feels peaceful and calm, even amidst challenges and difficult circumstances.
2. Not Dependent on Externals: True happiness does not depend on external conditions or material achievements. This is happiness that originates from within a person and does not depend on external factors.
3. Feeling Connected to Everything: A person who experiences true happiness feels connected to everything that exists. They realize the unity between themselves and the universe, and feel connected to other beings.
4. Pure Presence and Awake Awareness: The experience of true happiness often occurs when one is fully present in the moment and aware of reality with full awareness. Pure presence and awake awareness enable a person to experience deep and authentic happiness (Garfield & Priest 2003).
5. Not Dependent on Future Achievements or Conditions: True happiness does not depend on future achievements or unrealized hopes. A person feels satisfied with what exists at the moment and feels happiness in this moment.
6. Understanding of the Nature of the True Self: Understanding of the nature of the true self and awareness of oneness with universal consciousness are often key factors in the experience of true happiness.

The experience of true happiness is a very deep and personal inner experience. Each individual may experience true happiness in different ways, and the path may vary, depending on their beliefs, values, and spiritual practices. True happiness is often a goal that many people seek in life, and the journey to true happiness often involves a search for meaning, reflection, and personal growth (Sarma 1996).

## 2.5 Spiritual Development

The implication of consciousness according to the Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad is spiritual growth. Through a deep understanding and practice of consciousness and Turiya, individuals can develop the spiritual aspect of themselves and achieve a deeper understanding of the nature of existence. Spiritual development is a process of growth and increased awareness that aims to develop the spiritual dimension within a person. It involves exploration, reflection, and deep experience of the nature of the self, existence, and relationship to universal consciousness or God (Sullivan (1997)). Spiritual development is a personal journey that is unique to each individual, and it involves several important aspects:

1. Search for meaning and purpose in life: Spiritual development often begins with a search for deeper meaning and purpose in life. It involves questions about the meaning of life, the meaning of existence, and the search for deep inner happiness and satisfaction.]
2. Self-Reflection and Introspection: Spiritual development involves honest introspection about ourselves, getting to know ourselves more deeply, and recognizing our strengths and weaknesses. Self-reflection helps us understand our motivations and values, and how they impact our actions and decisions (Raina, 1985).
3. Spiritual Practices: Spiritual practices are an integral part of spiritual development. This includes meditation, prayer, contemplation, yoga, or other practices that help increase awareness, connect with a greater being, and bring inner peace.
4. Developing Spiritual Qualities: Spiritual development involves developing spiritual qualities such as love, understanding, patience, humility, and compassion. These qualities help us in strengthening our personal qualities and creating peace in our relationships with others.
5. Experiences of Transcendence and Inner Silence: Through spiritual practice and reflection, we can experience moments of transcendence and deep inner silence. These are the moments when the conscious mind rests in a state of calm and peace, and we feel connected to universal consciousness.
6. Finding Unity and Spiritual Connection: Spiritual development helps us in finding unity and spiritual connection with others, the universe, and universal consciousness. It is a profound experience of existence as part of something larger and creates a feeling of spiritual closeness to life (Sullivan (1997)).

Spiritual development is a journey that has no end point, but is an ongoing process of achieving a deeper understanding of the true nature of self and connection to the world around us. It is an attempt to live with greater awareness and enrich life experiences with greater meaning and depth (Garfield & Priest 2003). The implications of consciousness according to the Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad offer a view of deeper and more meaningful spiritual experience and life. With an understanding of universal consciousness and the true nature of oneself, individuals can live with higher consciousness and achieve the goal of enlightenment and a deep understanding of existence (Shankarananda, 2006).

## III. Conclusion

The implications of the concept of *Catur Pāda* in the Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad for human life are very broad and profound. The concept of consciousness in the Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad teaches humans to go beyond identification with the physical, emotional, and intellectual aspects of themselves, and to realize their true infinite nature, namely *Ātman*. It drives humans to seek a deeper understanding of who they really are, beyond their perceived roles and identities in the material world. Understanding and experiencing the various levels of consciousness described in the Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad can help humans achieve emotional and mental balance. By becoming aware of the deepest depths of thought and consciousness, individuals can overcome mental and emotional disturbances and achieve a state of greater inner calm.

The concept of consciousness has deep implications for human attitudes and behavior. Understanding that true consciousness is infinite and one with Brahman can change the way humans interact with the world around them. This can encourage them to act with compassion, wisdom, and justice in all aspects of their lives. The main implication of consciousness in the Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad is to lead humans to greater well-being and liberation from the cycle of birth and death (samsara). By realizing the true nature of themselves and the universe, humans can attain a deeper understanding of their life's purpose and achieve high spiritual liberation (mokṣa). Understanding the concept of consciousness in the Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad can provide a new perspective on the meaning of life and human experience. This helps them to see life as an opportunity for spiritual growth and a search for absolute truth, rather than simply as a series of limited material experiences.

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