

necessarily, have some substratum, changeless and real, which is common to all three.

Something in us remains, as it were, unchanged all through our changes, holding the vivid experiences together as a thread holds the beads in a necklace. On closer analysis, it becomes clear that it can be nothing other than the Self in us, the Pure Awareness. Experiences that have come under one's awareness do not constitute any vital aspect of one's own Self; life is the sum total of experiences that have been devised by the touch of one's illuminating Consciousness. In childhood, I was conscious of my childhood-life; in my youth, I was conscious of my youthful life; and in my old age, I am again conscious of my present experiences. The Consciousness remaining the same, endless experiences came under it, got illumined and died away. This Awareness by which I become conscious of things in my life --- because of which I am considered as alive, but for which I will have no more existence in this given embodiment --- "That" Spiritual Entity, Eternal and All-Pervading, Unborn and Undying, the One Changeless Factor, is the Infinite in me. And this *Atman* is the Real.

Men of knowledge and wisdom have known the essence, the meaning and the implication of both these: the Self and the non-Self, the Real and the Unreal, which in their mysterious combination constitute the strange phenomenon called the world.