

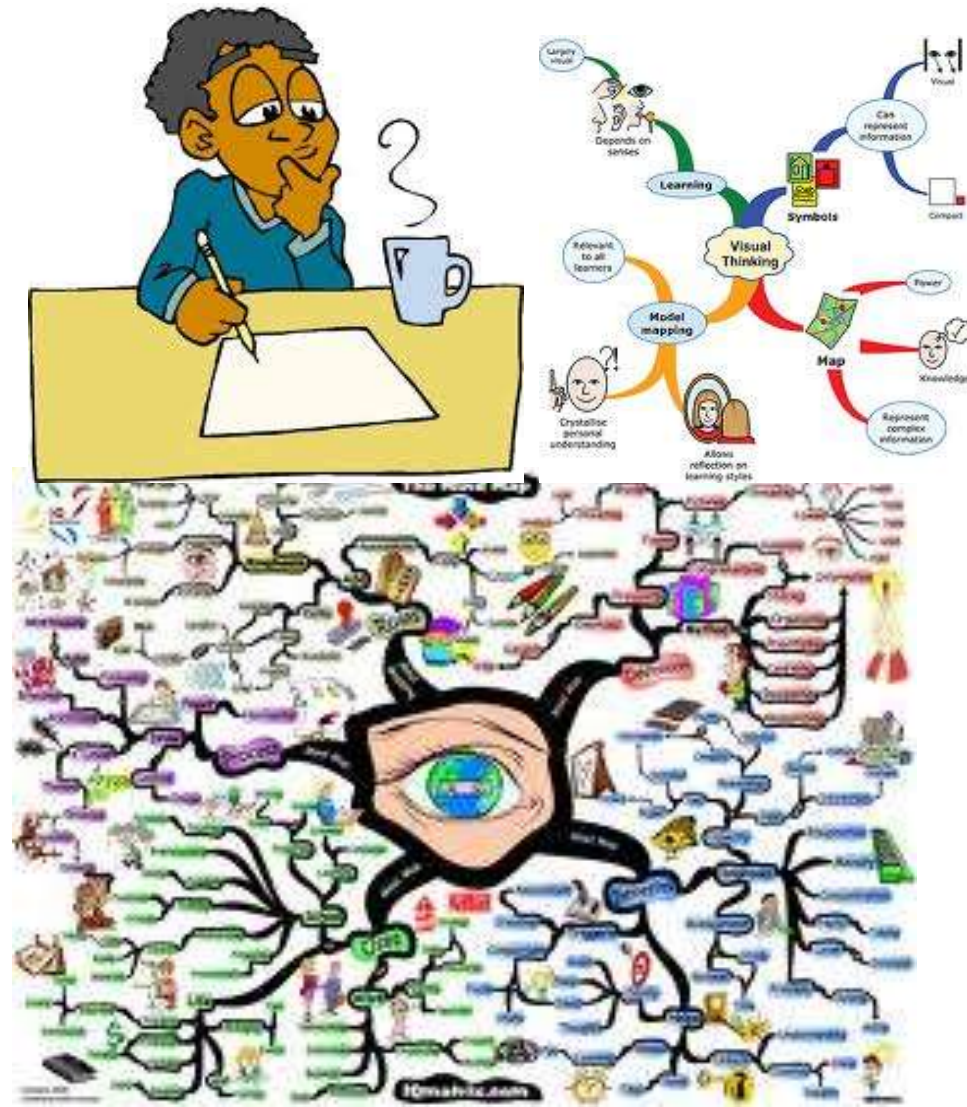


How they drift?

# MIND AND THINKING

# MNTHINK-MIND AND THINKING – AND HOW BOTH DRIFT?

- “It was but yesterday I thought myself a fragment quivering without rhythm, in the sphere of Life. Now I know that I am the sphere and all Life in rhythmic fragments moves within me.”
- Let us begin our study with the question : What is man? In trying to understand this question we will understand the process or internal working of the grey matter which is called, in common parlance, ‘thinking’. Experience shows that whilst engaged in thinking our mind carries a main subject, but off and on we go off the track into other disconnected subjects. Such a process is called drift or drifting (from the main subject).



# TWENCITIES-Two intensities of drifts or thinking process

- There are two intensities of drifts : (a) controllable and (b) uncontrollable or unrecognized.
- (a) This occurs when we drift from the main subject, but in the midst of a drift realize what has happened and bring ourselves back to the main subject.
- (b) This occurs when we drift from the main subject, but are not aware that we have done so and drift further into some other unconnected subject till we end on a subject so different that we are not even able to recollect the original subject or the in-between drifts.
- Both (a) and (b) can take place when an individual is thinking or rather is engaged in the process of thinking. Or this can even happen when a group of people are engaged in light conversation.





# D1)Drift 1.

- Let us now proceed to our study : “What is man, the human being?” and let us watch our thinking process. Drift I.\*
- I refer to a dictionary to find the meaning of the word ‘man’. A dictionary is so essential for spellings and meaning? I think of my spellings and this in turn makes me think of my office stenographer whose spelling makes me doubt my own at times. But how neat she is in her dress and makeup, and how fine is her clear cut nose and her round cheeks and her glances they are full of meanings that no dictionary can give, - but I have drifted. To come back to the meaning of “man:” the dictionary defines this as, “a human being as distinct from the lower animals and from angels or divine beings, with intellectual qualities, peculiar to man.”

***\*The enumeration of the different hypothetical ‘drifts’ though fanciful and perhaps needlessly tedious, plays an important part in elucidating later chapters. The reader is counseled to have patience.***



## D2)Drift 2.

- My eyes glanced over the phrase, “half-a-man.” I looked up, turned round and asked my friend who was near, “Say ! What is half-a-man?” My friend said, “One who is unmarried” and for some inexplicable reason left the room very annoyed. It was clear he was angry. But I have drifted again!



# D3)Drift 3.

- Coming back to the dictionary and to the meaning of “man”, - “as distinct from lower animals and from angels or divine beings.” “Darling”, I called to my wife and said, “Here, read this. If you are a human being, you are not an angel. I will call a spade a spade and no more will I call you ‘my angel’.”
- “Not a bad decision, and I will not call you names of any lower animals”, she retorted, “would it not be a better idea to call your office stenographer an angel?”
- she asked and I could see she was hurt. But blessed Lord, I have drifted again!





# D4)Drift 4.

- To come back to the dictionary and to the meaning of “man” It says, “man, as distinct from lower animals”. Man is, therefore, not expected to behave like an animal. Animals do not build fine houses and wear good clothes and have rich ornaments, nor deal in diamonds and currency, I thought. I visualized myself, in possession of a lovely marble villa at every hill station or health resort, richly decorated and furnished with servants attending in uniforms, skills and nylons everywhere and what more-in every villa a fair damsel with a diamond necklace round her shaped neck? But what on earth am I doing? I have drifted again.



# D5)Drift 5.

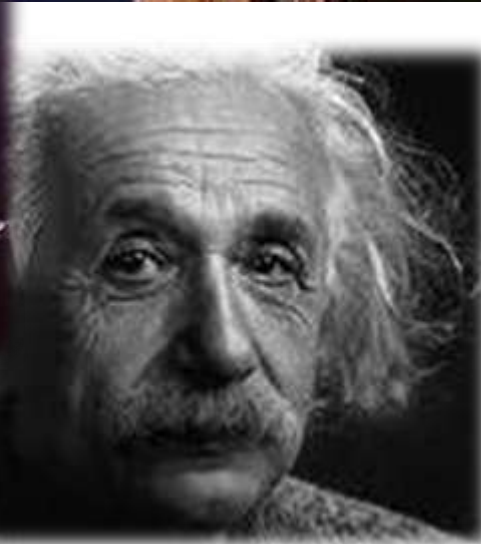
- To come back to the dictionary and to the meaning of “man”. It says “lower animals.”
- Are there higher animals? Is man lower than a higher type of animal?
- Could a woman be higher?
- But often, when a woman looks at another woman, she does it with jealousy; does man betray no such envy? But I have drifted again.
- I think, I will have to hold my mind firmly with both my hands and stop it from drifting any more. But can only hold my head with my hands not even my brain, let alone the mind- and who has been seen the mind of man? But I must stop drifting and go back to my dictionary and to the meaning of “man”.





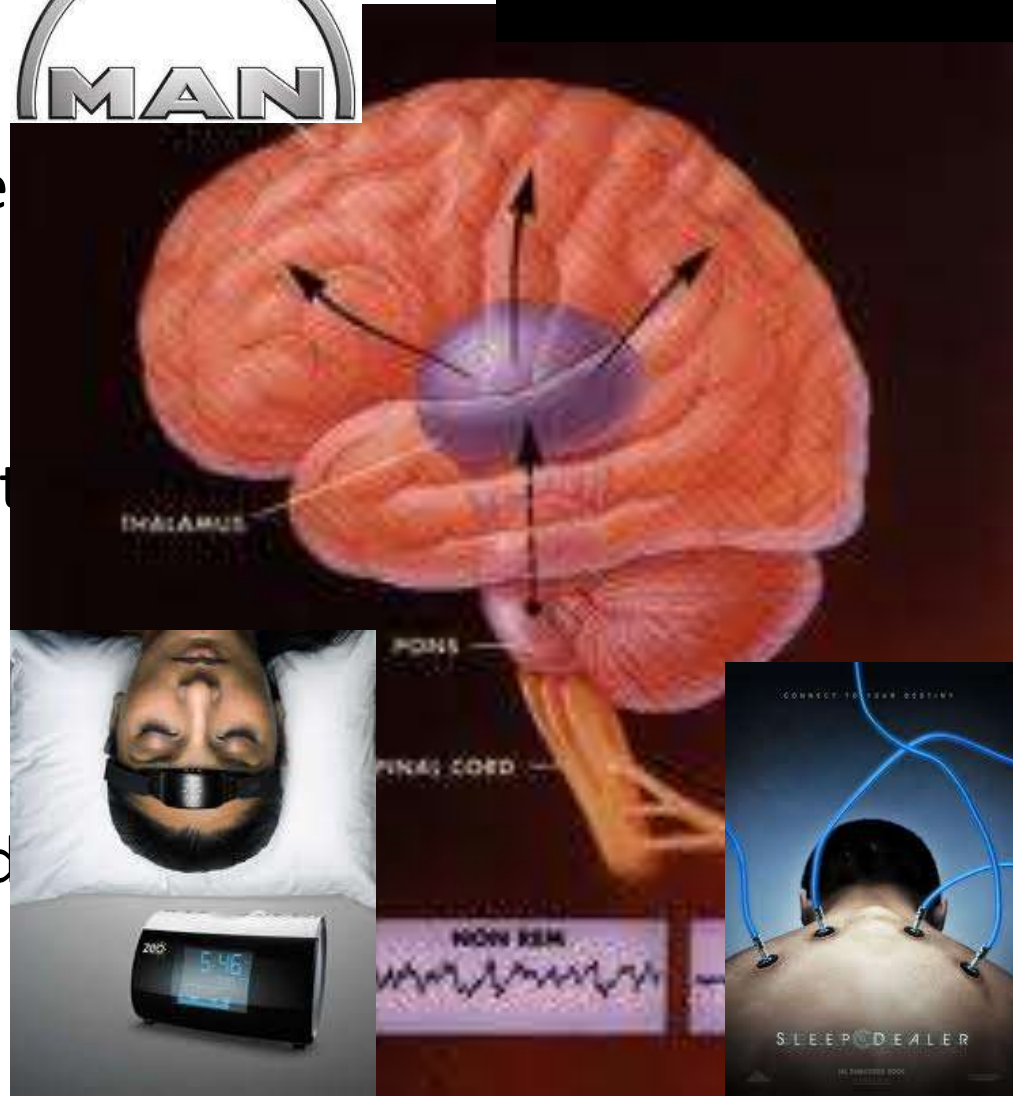
# D6)Drift 6.

- “Man is distinct from the angels.” Perhaps he is greater than the angels? Has he not created a few miracles? The millions of start in all the galaxies perhaps have no creature on them, equal to man on earth. Perhaps the universe is empty and all is for the glory of man. Perhaps, there is no equal of man who has conquered Nature and bent her to do his will. What can he not do tomorrow? I saw myself flying faster than light to distant stars. (Example of an unrecognized drift)



# D7)Drift 7.

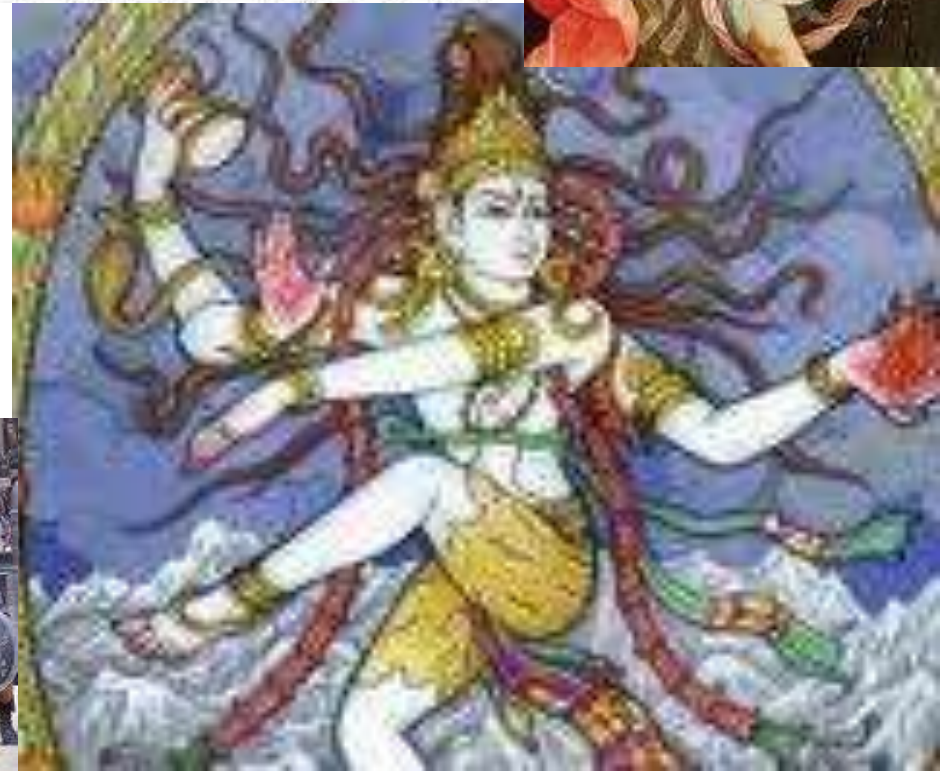
- Maybe I thought, as yet he does not understand what the substance of life is, nor perhaps can he understand what that elusive state of sleep is, nor does he know what tomorrow will bring, neither can he succeed in separating himself from his own shadow. But I have drifted once again.





# D8)Drift 8.

- But to come back to the dictionary and to the meaning of “man”. It says, “as distinct from divine beings.” Are these beings superior to man? Has not man come through the hardest test Nature could subject him to-the survival of the fittest? I thought of the Ice Age and the Stone Age and then of the days of the Romans and the gladiators and how the spectators would shout ‘Kill’ ‘Kill’, and how pretty women dressed gaily, found joy and entertainment then, even as today when in the stadium one boxer rains in blows for a knockout; our modern version of ‘Kill’, and even today pretty women dressed gaily shout and enjoy the spectacle. Of course man always believed that such sport was and is manly? My poor brain, where am I? The dictionary remains in my hand and my mind, God alone knows how it roams and where?





# D9)Drift 9.

- To come back to our main subject. The dictionary says, “as distinct from angels and divine beings”. But in Roman days and the days of the gladiators, I thought of a man who was crucified for His great faults—for his grave crimes against humanity for teaching, guiding and healing mankind? Jesus-the Christ. Could one call such a person a human being or a divine being? In so far, how is man distinct from divine beings? The Cross, once a symbol of torture for the wicked, became then and onward, the emblem of hope, tolerance, and charity.

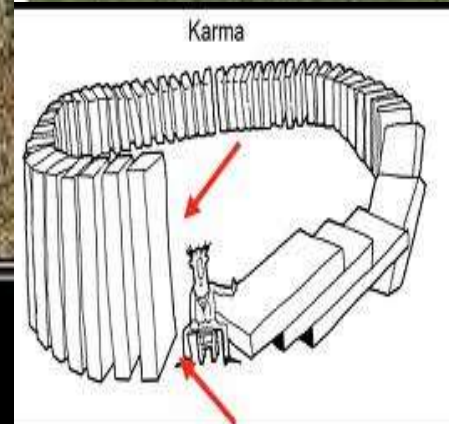
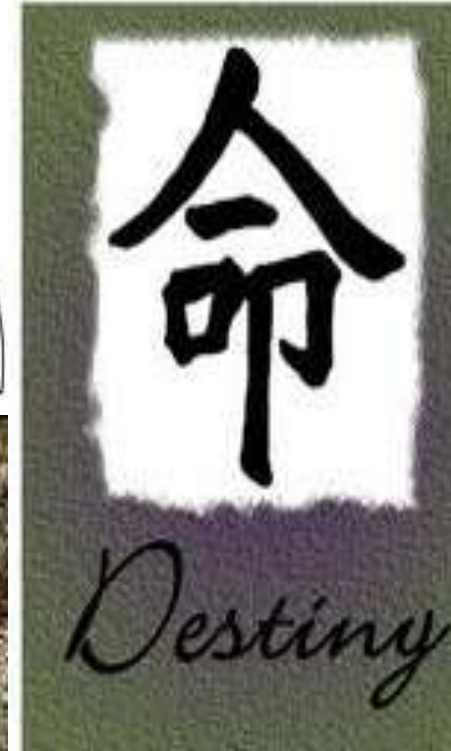


# D10)Drift 10.

- But to come back to our main subject. The dictionary says, “with intellectual qualities peculiar to man”. Why only intellectual qualities I thought, and not spiritual qualities? And why are spiritual qualities not peculiar to man? Are such qualities peculiar to divine beings? Then surely man is not expected to be divine?
- Then why should there be Karma or destiny that is so unforgiving to man and so exacting?
- If there be no cause and effect, then there could be no predestination either and that too in spite of man’s endeavour as it appears today. Is man then a machine? Has man’s birth therefore no purpose? But I have drifted again.



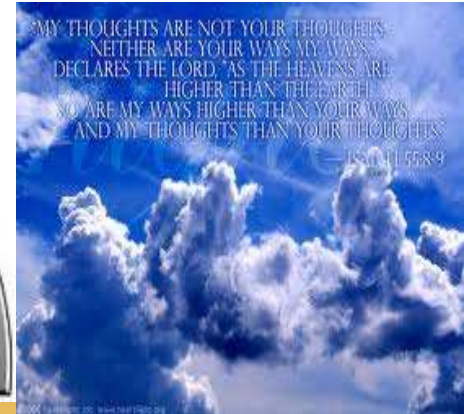
Karma  
It's A Fact





# D11)Drift 11.

- Let us come back to the main subject. The dictionary also further says, “humanly possible” as “so far as man’s knowledge and skill are concerned, apart from divine help”. Now what does, “apart from divine help”, mean? Where is this divine source? Is it within us or invisible, in the air or very high in the sky, or on the distant stars, or in the depths of the oceans, or on the top of the highest mountain, or in all these places and everywhere? Can anyone tell us how we can ask for this divine help? Is there a regular way or method of asking for this divine help, and is it ever given, or does it come to a select few by accident or by some arbitrary decision? Does it imply prayers? Are prayers answered? Can we pray as Jesus did?





# D12)Drift 12 (unrecognised)

- This reminds me of what Omar Khayam says :  
“That inverted bowl we call the sky, Underneath which we creatures live and die, Lift not your hands to it in prayer For it revolves as impotently as you or I.”
- Do not people pray in every conceivable manner and yet remain miserable all their lives? Then what is this Divine help?
- Is man subject to predestination? i.e., do the laws of cause and effect operate? Does man have free will within however small or large a measure or is he a kind of domestic animal serving some other beings as domesticated animals serve man?
- Or does everything happen according to the will of some Super-Being-so man has to submit quietly to that Divine Will? Is he born once only on this planet and then disappears for all time and eternity or does he take birth to return again and again?
- (Unrecognised drift)



# Unrecognized drift:



- If he has no choice, if his life is already charted out and he cannot deviate; if he has no free will or choice to act in a particular manner then his birth if once or many times on this planet or elsewhere, is meaningless, for he is then a plaything in the hands of some other Being. Even the existence of that “some other” Being is meaningless if this is His only full-time occupation? If there be, God surely He, as Creator of this immensity, of this gigantic universe, of this vast array of law and order, cannot be credited with sentiments and qualities which would not be a credit even to man, His creation, and yet we see around us indignity, injustice, death, diseases, chaos, with man struggling, plodding and groping in the dark, seemingly helpless, and frustrated. What then is the purpose? Is man a Divine Being capable of becoming a part of God Himself or is he condemned to be only dust in spite of all his aspirations?
- But I drift again?



# By the end we loose the link with the first.

- This is dear reader, thinking like an average person and “drifting” during thinking. Whenever we have a main subject, there are associated ‘pictures’ in our mind which slowly take hold of the mind, and, before we realize it, the last picture we end up with the first picture we began with, seem to bear no relation or link.





# We have domesticated the animals but not yet started domestication of our own minds.

- Our minds,; if not trained, will always act in this manner even during our most serious thinking. We shall feel exasperated for what we call lack of concentration on the main subject. Picture forming and the associating of pictures is the supreme quality of our mind.\* what then is the remedy?
- \* *Vide Hume's Theory of Associations.*



Fortunately there are other higher centres:

- Fortunately, this habit of drifting is not the quality of the entire mind but of a part only. Let us, therefore, first study the proper methods of training the mind so as to separate the functions of its different portions. Thus we come to the higher aspects of concentration, insight, identification, and higher stages.
- An average human being thinks that : “it is easy to concentrate or meditate?” Let us take this very thought for serious thinking as our main subject for about fifteen or thirty minutes and note the drifts of the mind. Then read the next chapter.

