

## STEP TWO

*Know that the world is a dreamlike illusion.*

*Know that all of the following are dreamlike illusions:  
(a – f)*

- a. *The world.*
- b. *The body.*
- c. *The universe.*
- d. *All dimensions.*
- e. *All events, motions and actions.*
- f. *Time.*

*Almost all of the words in a dictionary  
describe dreamlike illusions.*

SRI RAMANA MAHARSHI

(214 – 250)

214. From your true being as Awareness alienated and deluded do not pursue appearances, deeming them as real. They are false, since disappear they must. But your own being as Awareness is real and cannot cease to be.

215. The world appears distinctly only in wakefulness and dream with concepts filled.

In concept-free, all empty sleep, one sees no world; so then conceptual is the world's whole substance.

216. The mind bewildered which mistakes the body for oneself conceives the transient world of names and forms, makes it seem real and lovable, and promptly entraps one in the strong, illusive bondage of desire.

217. The empirical world  
of jostling names and forms is false  
and has no real existence in bright, full Awareness.  
Like a ring of fire formed in the dark when one whirls  
fast a glowing joss-stick, 'tis an illusion, mind-created.



218. One ever-present pure Awareness,  
this alone has true existence.  
The world perceived and measured by you is but illusion,  
jaundiced yellow, caused by the ego's concepts false  
and treacherous desires.
219. Seen in the light of Self-experience all this  
phenomenal world is mere appearance, like the sky's  
deep blueness. What the deluded, body-bound ego  
perceives 'out there' is mind-created, nothing more.
220. This villainous vast world so false that cheats  
and churns the minds of all, how did it come to be?  
By nothing else but by the fault of falling from the Self  
instead of clinging firmly to It.
221. The world, like snake in rope, thief in a stump,  
mirage in air, has no real existence.  
Seeming to be, mere appearance, is its nature.
222. By this world That world is concealed.  
And this world is by That concealed.  
Names and forms one sees,  
or else one sees pure Being-Awareness-Bliss.
223. The world that hides the Self is but a dream.  
When the phenomenal world is hidden by the Self's  
bright light, Awareness pure, the Self, abides.
224. The nature of this mind-created world, now seen  
in dream-light dim, is truly known only in that bright  
Being-Awareness which transcends the mind's illusion.
225. Some assert, "This world before our eyes lacks  
permanence, 'tis true. But it is real while it lasts."  
We deny it saying, "Permanence is a criterion of Reality."
226. Some argue, "Though divisible and split up into  
parts, the world we know so well,  
how could it be unreal?" We refute it, saying,  
"Wholeness too is a criterion of Reality."



227. The wise can nohow deem as real a world divided  
and destroyed by time's wheel.  
Whole, eternal, perfect, ever-shining  
and transcending time and space,  
such is the nature of Reality.

228. The goings-on of the empirical world,  
true-seeming and beguiling in the mind's borrowed light,  
are nothing but illusions  
in the bright light of pure Awareness.

229. Only mad folk perplexed because they deem the  
false world to be real find joy in this illusion. The truly  
wise find joy in nothing but Awareness which is Being.

230. What is the Self's self-transformation as the  
world? A twist of straw appearing as a snake?  
Look hard you see no snake at all.  
There was no transformation, no creation, none,  
no world at all.

231. Did the Self lapse from its own wholeness as  
Being, you ask, "How else did this world come to be?"  
It came from ignorance false.  
The Self can never suffer any change at any time.

232. Vast, whole, immutable, the Self reflected  
in the mind's distorting mirror may appear to move.  
Know that it is the image moving,  
the true Self never moves or changes.

233. How can the dark, delusive sense of separateness  
affect the Self which is non-dual?  
It is the mind's divisive vision which sees difference.  
Awareness knows no separateness at all.

234. Those who forget the harm the false world there  
before us does, and cling to it as real and comfortable,  
mistake, alas, a floating bear for a boat  
only to be crushed and drowned in the sea of birth.



235. When will the fool who thinks the body and the world are permanent and clings to them, find peace?  
Only when this folly leaves him and  
he trusts and like a limpet clings to that, the Self within.  
Thenceforward he shall never more know pain.

236. Only by courtesy is the body,  
vulnerable and born to die, called an entity substantial.  
The sole reality, the only thing permanent and ultimate,  
is Self-awareness, That alone.

237. Know that these countless things are pictures  
in a dream and none is real apart from the beholder.  
Shun this phantom world of names and forms  
and dwell in the pure, blissful being of Awareness.

238. O worldly folk who long for and run after  
an endless series of unenduring things,  
'tis wisdom true to seek and know That one thing  
on knowing which all other things will cease to be.

239. When the full identity is reached  
that the Self is all and there is no "other",  
the various perceptions rife in the absence of Self-inquiry  
and Self-abidance are all seen as mere mistakes.

240. One forgets the Self and thinks the body is oneself  
and goes through innumerable births  
and in the end remembers and remains the Self.  
Know this is only like awaking from a dream  
wherein one has wandered all over the world.

241. Seeing this mind-projected world in sheer  
delusion, then taking it as real, and swerving from the  
Truth sublime of one's own Being as pure Awareness,  
one but proves oneself insane.

242. Destroying through discrimination the basic error  
that I am the body, an object, and rejecting it  
and the world as mere mirages false, the Awareness that  
surviving shines alone as Being, That am I.



243. When one now deeming oneself the mind  
and wandering lost amid phenomena,  
wakes up from this dream-spectacle  
and reemerges in the Self and stands as That,  
this is the inwardness of yoga true.

244. The universe out there appears when scanned.  
But when not scanned, it disappears.  
Turning away from this,  
search keenly for the Self within the heart,  
and think no more of birth.

245. Renouncing this phenomenal world  
which seems to, but does not exist,  
we gain the Self, the Awareness shining all unseen.

246. Seen through the eye of our true being which is  
awareness pure, supreme, what we call "birth" is but the  
folly of thinking that one is the body which forms  
a poor part of this entirely false phenomenal world.

247. Until the snake-illusion goes,  
its ground, the real rope, will not be recognized.  
Until the world of false phenomena disappears,  
the Self, its ground, will not shine clear.

248. Only when the world-illusion goes does the  
blissful light of Self arrive. Life lived in this bright,  
blissful light is our true, natural life.  
Other ways of life are full of trouble and fear.

249. Is there a greater folly than the aching folly of  
supposing that the Self, the I of pure awareness  
which does not see this changing world at all,  
is subject to some change?

250. Pure Being, our Self-nature, That alone exists  
eternally. Apart from That, all objects we perceive  
are clusters of illusive appearances that come and go,  
while That, unmoving and unchanged,  
abides the same for ever.



SRI MURUGANAR  
(251 – 261)

251. Absolute existence, the pure sky of grace  
free from the sorrow of 'I' and 'mine',  
will be attained when, in the mind that sees as the Self  
and has died in that supreme reality,  
the imaginary concepts of the world  
and the physical body have entirely ceased to be.

252. The eye of the Self, consciousness,  
alone constitutes true seeing.  
That eye never perceives anything at all.  
If it be said that the eye perceives anything whatsoever,  
then that eye too, like the thing it perceives,  
is a mental creation. It is not the true eye.

253. Know that the vision of the truth we behold  
when we enter and subside within the heart –  
so that the treacherous ties of worldly bondage  
that attend the illusion of the body are abolished –  
is indeed the gracious state of liberation.

254. In the heart,  
the Self that exists as the eye of grace,  
none of the worlds truly exist.

255. Ignorance will not be eradicated except in those  
who, through the power of Self-inquiry  
conducted assiduously within the heart,  
have attained the victorious absolute vision in which  
the whole panoply of manifestation is transcended,  
being seen as a mere cinema show.

256. The infinite variety of false and treacherous  
modes of existence are merely brightly colored images  
appearing as if in a mirror. We must realize that the  
false and treacherous identification of the 'I' with the  
body is the seed from which these appearances arise  
to ensnare us, and we must reject it with disdain.



257. It is indeed pitiable to spurn, forfeit and lose  
the treasure that consists in dwelling thought-free  
within the Heart,  
on account of the vacillating mind  
that dwells upon the world-dream  
generated by the treacherous senses,  
taking it to be real.

258. The Self,  
revealed as our true nature within the heart  
through the power of Self-inquiry,  
is none other than the peerless reality of the Supreme,  
which alone remains  
after this worldly illusion has faded into nothingness.

259. That which is spoken of as the Life of life itself  
is the true life.

That other 'life' is merely the body.

That illusory knowledge mediated by the senses  
is nothing but delusion.

The pure consciousness that underlies it  
alone is true consciousness.

260. The supreme reality –  
in which the noble nature of pure grace flourishes,  
and which merges with us  
so that all the many false appearances  
such as 'this birth' and 'the next birth' cease to exist –  
shines out as the truth-imbued and flawless 'I'.

261. If I am to affirm who I am, my true nature,  
I am the Self that knows nothing of the fleshly body, life,  
intelligence and mind,  
that is free of all darkness,  
the true 'I' that excels as pure consciousness.



SRI ANNAMALAI SWAMI  
(262 – 270)

262. Mind and body are like the tongue and teeth in the mouth. They have to work in harmony with each other. The teeth do not fight with the tongue and bite it. Mind and body should combine in the same harmonious way. However, if we want to go beyond the body, beyond the mind, we have to understand and fully accept that all the information the senses provide is not real. Like the mirage that produces an illusory oasis in the desert, the senses create the impression that there is a real world in front of us that is being perceived by the mind. The apparent reality of the world is an illusion. It is merely a misperception. When the mind perceives a snake where in reality there is only a rope, this is clearly a case of the senses projecting an imaginary image unto a real substratum. This, on a much larger scale, is how the unreal appearance of the world is projected by the mind and the senses unto the underlying reality of the Self.

Once this happens, we see the superimposition, the unreal names and forms we have created, and we forget about the substratum, the reality that underlies them.

263. We think we live in a real, materially substantial world, and that our minds and bodies are real entities that move around in it. When the Self is seen and known, all these false ideas fade away and one is left with the knowledge: Self alone exists.

264. There are dream consequences for the bad acts committed in the dream, and while you still take the dream to be the reality, you will suffer the consequences of your bad behavior. Do no evil and have no hate. Have equanimity towards everything.

265. Since the Self is infinite and immaterial, what it 'sees' is infinite and immaterial.



266. Bad thoughts make bad dreams  
and good thoughts make good dreams,  
and if you have no thoughts you don't dream at all.

267. Your real state is the Self,  
and in that Self there is no body and no mind.

268. This life is all a dream, a dream within a dream.  
We dream this world, we dream that we die and take  
birth in another body. And in this birth we dream that  
we have dreams. All kinds of pleasures and suffering  
alternate in these dreams, but a moment comes when  
waking up happens. In this moment, which we call  
realizing the Self, there is the understanding  
that all the births, all the deaths,  
all the sufferings and all the pleasures  
were unreal dreams that have finally come to an end.

269. You are looking for satisfaction  
in the outside world because you think that all these  
objects you see in front of you are real. They are not.

270. If you abide as the Self, you will see the world  
as the Self. In fact, there will be no world at all.

SRI NISARGADATTA MAHARAJ  
(271 – 316)

271. What do you know of me,  
when even my talk with you is in your world only?

272. Questioner:  
Is your world full of things and people as is mine?

Maharaj: No, it is full of myself.

273. The world you can perceive  
is a very small world indeed.  
And it is entirely private.  
Take it to be a dream and be done with it.



274. However long a life may be,  
it is but a moment and a dream.

275. In reality only the Ultimate is.  
The rest is a matter of name and form.  
And as long as you cling to the idea  
that only what has name and shape exists,  
the Supreme will appear to you non-existing.  
When you understand that names and shapes  
are hollow shells without any content whatsoever,  
and what is real is nameless and formless,  
pure energy of life and light of consciousness,  
you will be at peace –  
immersed in the deep silence of reality.

276. To take appearance for reality is a grievous sin  
and the cause of all calamities.

277. Within the prison of your world appears a man  
who tells you that the world of painful contradictions,  
which you have created, is neither continuous nor  
permanent and is based on a misapprehension.  
He pleads with you to get out of it,  
by the same way by which you got into it.  
You got into it by forgetting what you are  
and you will get out of it by knowing yourself as you are.

278. When you shall begin to question your dream,  
awakening will be not far away.

279. Your world is transient, changeful.  
My world is perfect, changeless.

280. In my world nothing happens.



281. Maharaj:  
My world is real, while yours is made of dreams.

Questioner: Yet we are talking.

Maharaj: The talk is in your world.  
In mine – there is eternal silence.  
My silence sings, my emptiness is full, I lack nothing.  
You cannot know my world until you are there.

282. Your mistake lies in your belief that you are born.  
You were never born nor will you ever die,  
but you believe that you were born at a certain date  
and place and that a particular body is your own.

283. It is in the nature of desire  
to prompt the mind to create a world for its fulfillment.

284. Desire can produce a universe;  
its powers are miraculous.

285. In reality nothing ever happens.

286. The only thing that can help  
is to wake up from the dream.

287. Treating everything as a dream liberates.  
As long as you give reality to dreams, you are their slave.  
By imagining that you are born as so-and-so,  
you become a slave to the so-and-so.

288. Only reality is, there is nothing else.  
The three states of waking, dreaming and sleeping  
are not me and I am not in them.

289. The main point to grasp  
is that you have projected unto yourself  
a world of your own imagination,  
based on memories, on desires and fears,  
and that you have imprisoned yourself in it.  
Break the spell and be free.



290. Stop attributing names and shapes to the essentially nameless and formless, realize that every mode of perception is subjective, that what is seen or heard, touched or smelt, felt or thought, expected or imagined, is in the mind and not in reality, and you will experience peace and freedom from fear.

291. You cannot be rid of problems without abandoning illusions.

292. Truth is permanent. The real is changeless. What changes is not real, what is real does not change.

293. He who knows the state in which there is neither the world nor the thought of it, he is the Supreme Teacher.

294. In pure consciousness nothing ever happens.

295. The real does not die, the unreal never lived.

296. You are neither the body nor in the body – there is no such thing as body.

You have grievously misunderstood yourself; to understand rightly – investigate.

297. My heart wants you awake.

I see you suffer in your dream

and I know that you must wake up to end your woes.

When you see your dream as dream, you wake up.

But in your dream itself I am not interested.

Enough for me to know that you must wake up.

298. Do not be misled by my eating and smoking, reading and talking.

My mind is not here, my life is not here. Your world, of desires and their fulfillments, of fears and their escapes, is definitely not my world. I do not even perceive it.

299. Without imagination there is no world.



300. The moment you allow your imagination to spin, it at once spins out a universe. It is not at all as you imagine and I am not bound by your imaginings.

301. The intelligence and power are all used up in your imagination. It has absorbed you so completely that you just cannot grasp how far from reality you have wandered. No doubt imagination is richly creative. Universe within universe are built on it. Yet they are all in space and time, past and future, which just do not exist.

302. Maharaj: This body appears in your mind; in my mind nothing is.

Questioner:

Do you mean to say  
you are quite unconscious of having a body?

Maharaj: On the contrary,  
I am conscious of not having a body.

Questioner: I see you smoking!

Maharaj: Exactly so. You see me smoking. Find out for yourself how did you come to see me smoking, and you will easily realize that it is your 'I-am-the-body' state of mind that is responsible for this 'I-see-you-smoking' idea.

303. Questioner: If all that passes has no being, then the universe has no being either.

Maharaj: Who ever denies it?  
Of course the universe has no being.

304. I am offering you exactly what you need –  
awakening.

305. Engrossed in a dream  
you have forgotten your true Self.



306. Nothing dies. The body is just imagined.  
There is no such thing.

307. There is no body, nor a world to contain it;  
there is only a mental condition, a dreamlike state,  
easy to dispel by questioning its reality.

308. I am trying to wake you up, whatever your dream.

309. It is by your consent that the world exists.  
Withdraw your belief in its reality  
and it will dissolve like a dream.

310. Cease from looking for happiness and reality  
in a dream and you will wake up.

311. The world cannot give what it does not have;  
unreal to the core, it is of no use for real happiness.  
It cannot be otherwise. We seek the real because we are  
unhappy with the unreal. Happiness is our real nature  
and we shall never rest until we find it. But rarely we  
know where to seek it. Once you have understood that  
the world is but a mistaken view of reality, and is not  
what it appears to be, you are free of its obsessions.  
Only what is compatible with your real being  
can make you happy;  
and the world, as you perceive it, is its outright denial.

312. Do understand  
that what you think to be the world is your own mind.

313. Once you have seen that you are dreaming,  
you shall wake up. But you do not see, because you want  
the dream to continue. A day will come when you will  
long for the ending of the dream, with all your heart  
and mind, and be willing to pay any price;  
the price will be dispassion and detachment,  
the loss of interest in the dream itself.

314. I do not need the world.  
Nor am I in one.



315. However great and complete is your world, it is self-contradictory and transitory and altogether illusory.

316. If you seek real happiness, unassailable and unchangeable, you must leave the world with its pains and pleasures behind you.

### THE SUPREME YOGA (317 – 511)

317. Neither freedom from sorrow nor realization of one's real nature is possible as long as the conviction does not arise in one that the world-appearance is unreal.

318. All enjoyments in this world are deluded, like the lunatic's enjoyment of the taste of fruits reflected in a mirror. All the hopes of man in this world are consistently destroyed by time.

319. In this world there is nothing, high or low, that time does not destroy.

320. Neither the world of matter nor the modes of creation are truly real; yet the living and the dead think and feel they are real. Ignorance of this truth keeps up the appearance.

321. As long as the highest wisdom does not dawn in the heart, the person revolves in this wheel of birth and death.

322. The materiality of the creation is like the castle in the air, an illusory projection of one's own mind – imaginary.

323. When this notion of the object is firmly rejected and removed from the subject, then consciousness alone exists without even an apparent or potential objectivity.



324. The wrong notion that this world is real  
has become deep rooted  
on account of persistent wrong thinking.

325. What is known as liberation is indeed the absolute  
itself, which alone is. That which is perceived here as 'I',  
'you' etc., only seems to be, for it has never been created.

326. In truth, this world  
does not arise from the absolute nor does it merge in it.  
The absolute alone exists now and for ever.

327. All this is mere imagination or thought.  
Even now nothing has ever been created;  
the pure infinite space alone exists.

328. Cosmic consciousness alone exists now and ever;  
in it are no worlds, no created beings.

329. Even as an unreal nightmare produces real  
results, this world seems to give rise to a sense of reality  
in a state of ignorance.  
When true wisdom arises, this unreality vanishes.

330. Changes in the unchanging are imagined  
by ignorant and deluded people.

331. This world and this creation is nothing but  
memory, dream: distance, measures of time like a  
moment and an age, all these are hallucinations.

332. Liberation is the realization of the total non-  
existence of the universe as such. This is different from a  
mere denial of the existence of the ego and the universe!  
The latter is only half-knowledge.

333. In dream, the dream-body appears to be real; but  
when there is an awakening to the fact of dream, the  
reality of that body vanishes. Even so, the physical body  
which is sustained by memory and latent tendencies  
is seen to be unreal when they are seen to be unreal.



334. There is no universe, no distance, no barriers.

335. It is the nature of appearance to appear to be real, even though it is unreal.

336. In the mind of the deluded, the unreal manifests itself; and when the delusion has been dispelled there is no longer an ignorant fancy. This fanciful conviction that the unreal is real is deep-rooted by repeated imagination.

337. The physical body is only the creation of one's ignorant fancy, not real.

338. No creation takes place in the Supreme Being or the infinite consciousness; and the infinite consciousness is not involved in the creation.

339. When there is notion of creation, the creation seems to be: and when, through self-effort, there is understanding of non-creation, there is no world.

340. Even as liquor is able to make one see all sorts of phantasms in the empty sky, mind is able to make one see diversity in unity. Even as a drunkard sees a tree moving, the ignorant one sees movement in this world.

341. When the mind entertains notions of objects, there is agitation or movement in the mind; and when there are no objects or ideas, then there is no movement of thought in the mind. When there is movement, the world appears to be; when there is no movement, there is cessation of world-appearance.

342. In truth, there is no creation, and hence no division at all.

343. When the world is assumed to be real, the Self is not seen: but when this assumption is discarded, consciousness is realized.



344. The seer alone is real,  
the object being hallucination.

345. When Self-knowledge arises and the object ceases  
to be, the seer is realized as the sole reality.

346. It is the mind that makes things appear here.  
It brings about the appearance of the body, etc.,  
naught else is aware of the body.

347. The infinite consciousness alone IS.

348. Some arrive at this understanding soon,  
others after a very long time.

349. When we inquire into the nature of the mind,  
all the created objects or all appearances are seen to be  
its creations; only the infinite consciousness remains  
as uncreated by the mind.

350. The enlightened one knows that  
there is only one reality – the infinite consciousness.

351. This world is nothing but pure hallucination.

352. The mind veils the real nature of the Self and  
creates an illusory appearance with many branches,  
flowers and fruits.

Destroy this illusion by wisdom and rest in peace.

353. The seed of this world-appearance is ignorance.

354. It is only the limitation of thought  
that perceives the world-appearance.  
This world-appearance is delusion: it is better not to let  
the very thought of it arise again in the mind.

355. It is only in a state of ignorance  
that the mind dreams of the world-appearance,  
not when it is awake or enlightened.



356. Such indeed is the nature of this utter ignorance, this delusion, and this world-process: without real existence there is this illusory notion of egotism. This egotism does not exist in the infinite Self. In the infinite Self there is no creator, no creation, no worlds, no heaven, no humans, no demons, no bodies, no elements, no time.

357. There is no creation. The infinite has never abandoned its infinity. THAT has never become this.

358. The power of nescience is capable of creating a total confusion between the real and the unreal.

359. Nescience and the Self cannot have any relationship.

360. Thought alone creates all these divisions and illusions. When it ceases, creation ceases.

361. Only as long as the delusion of this world-appearance lasts is there this existence of the world as an object of perception.

362. This world-appearance is experienced only like a day-dream; it is essentially unreal.

363. There is no cause and effect relation between the Supreme Being and the universe.

364. The world is not seen in the supreme non-dual consciousness.

365. Mind alone by its thinking faculty conjures up what is known as the body: no body is seen where the mind does not function!

366. It is the mind that creates the body with all its limbs. Mind itself is both the sentient and the insentient beings; all this endless diversity is nothing but mind.



367. It is the mind that 'creates' the body by mere thoughts.

368. The ignorant man with a gross physical vision sees the physical body as different from and independent of the mind.

369. It is indeed true to say that there are no waves in the ocean; the ocean alone exists.

370. The physical body is nothing but the fruit of the fancy of the mind;  
the physical body is not an existential fact independent of the mind.

371. This world exists only in appearance or imagination and not because one sees the material substances. It is like a long dream or a juggler's trick.

372. Each individual sees only those objects which are rooted in his own mind. When the ideas in the mind do not bear fruits, there is a change in the mind; there follows a succession of births to suit these psychological changes. It is this psychological connection that creates the conviction in the reality of birth and death and in the reality of the body. When this conviction is given up, there is the cessation of embodiment.

373. The notions of 'I' and 'the world' are but shadows, not truth.

374. He sees the truth who sees the body as a product of deluded understanding and as the fountain-source of misfortune; and who knows that the body is not the Self.

375. He sees the truth who is not deluded into thinking that he is the body which is subject to illness, fear, agitation, old age and death.

376. He sees the truth who knows that the Self alone exists and that there is no substance to objectivity.



377. Mind alone is this universe.

378. Consciousness reflecting in consciousness shines as consciousness and exists as consciousness; yet, to one who is ignorant, though considering oneself as wise and rational, there arises the notion that there has come into being and there exists something other than this consciousness.

379. The mind alone is this world-appearance, this world appearance has arisen in it and it rests in the mind. When the objects as well as the experiencing mind have become tranquil, consciousness alone remains.

380. There is no world in reality.

381. All this creation takes place only as in a dream. This creation is not real; it merely appears to be so.

382. These universes arise and vanish again and again. But these are different from the one infinite consciousness.

383. All this is unreal, like the creations seen in a dream. Hence the question: "How did all this arise in the one infinite consciousness?" is immature and childish. The creation appears to take place on account of the intentions of the mind.

384. This creation is nothing but the creation of the mind: this is the truth; the rest is but a fanciful description.

385. The repetition (creation and dissolution) of infinite number of universes, with the infinite variety of creators in them, is nothing but the fanciful perception of the ignorant and the deluded.

386. Your birth is unreal.



387. The Self is devoid of the senses.
388. That alone can be regarded as the truth which has always been and which will always be.
389. Mind alone is the seed for this delusion of world-appearance; it is the mind that gives rise to the false sense of "I" and "mine."
390. Nothing in this world is truly enduring.
391. What you see as the world is only an illusory appearance.
392. The Self is real, birth and death are imaginary.
393. I am the unborn in whom the world-appearance has vanished.
394. It is only in the eyes of the ignorant that even your form exists.
395. This cosmic illusion leads the unwary mind into endless difficulties.
396. When one is firmly established in Self-knowledge, which is infinite, unlimited and unconditioned, then the delusion or ignorance that gave rise to world-appearance comes to an end.
397. The sun and the worlds become non-objects of perception to them who have gone beyond the realm of objective perception and knowledge.
398. The ignorant man does not realize the unreality of the objects because he has not realized the reality.
399. When you have gained Self-knowledge and when your consciousness has infinitely expanded, your mind no longer falls into the cesspool of this world.



400. There is no way other than Self-knowledge  
for the cutting asunder of bondage  
and for crossing this ocean of illusion.
401. The supreme Self  
has no relationship with this world-appearance.
402. The ignorant person accepts as real  
whatever he sees in this world; not so the wise one.  
Even as a piece of wood and water in which it is reflected  
have no real relationship,  
the body and the Self have no real relationship.
403. This universe has been conjured up in empty  
space merely by mental conditioning: it is not a reality.
404. There is no duality; there are no bodies and  
therefore there are no relationships among them.
405. Be not deluded.  
Abandon false perception and behold the truth.
406. When the mind abandons the movement of  
thought, the appearance of the world-illusion ceases.
407. Caught up in his own conditioning, whatever the  
person sees, he thinks that to be real and gets deluded.  
And on account of the intensity of the conditioning  
and the fancy, he discards his own nature  
and perceives only the world-illusion.
408. This entire creation is pervaded by ignorance  
which sustains it.
409. Birth and childhood lead to youth;  
youth leads to old age; and old age ends in death –  
and all these are repeatedly experienced by the ignorant.
410. Nothing has really become physical or material.



411. That which has a beginning has an end.  
When all things that have a beginning are ruled out,  
what remains is the truth  
which is the cessation of ignorance.

412. This house known as the body has not been made  
by anyone in fact! It is only an appearance, like the  
two moons seen by one suffering from diplopia. The  
moon is really only one; the duality is an optical illusion.  
The body is experienced to exist only when the notion  
of a physical body prevails in the mind; it is unreal.

413. There are thousands of such bodies which have  
been brought into being by your thought-force.

414. By continually entertaining notions such as "This  
is it.", "This is mine." and "This is my world." such  
notions assume the appearance of substantiality.  
The permanency of the world is also an illusion:  
in the dream-state what is really a brief moment is  
experienced by the dreamer as a lifetime. In a mirage  
only the illusory "water" is seen and not the substratum:  
even so, in a state of ignorance one sees only  
the illusory world-appearance but not the substratum.  
However, when one has shed that ignorance,  
the illusory appearance vanishes.

415. For your spiritual awakening I declare again and  
again: this world-appearance is like a long dream.  
Wake up, wake up.  
Behold the Self which shines like a sun.

416. You have nothing to do with birth,  
sorrow, sin and delusion.  
Abandon all these notions and rest in the Self.

417. The infinite consciousness alone exists,  
naught else exists.

418. Consciousness does not truly undergo  
any modification nor does it become impure.



419. Since that omnipresent infinite consciousness alone is present at all times,  
diversity is absurd and impossible.
420. The reality is beginningless and endless  
and it is not even reflected in anything:  
that is the reality.
421. Nothing is created in or by cosmic consciousness  
for it remains unchanged and unmodified.
422. The mountain seen in a dream  
only appears to exist in time and space.  
It does not occupy any space  
nor does it take time to appear and disappear.  
Even so is the case with the world.
423. This world-illusion has arisen  
because of the movement of thought in the mind;  
when that ceases the illusion will cease, too,  
and the mind becomes no-mind.
424. The unreal alone dies  
and it is the unreal that is born again  
apparently in another body.
425. Wherever the world is seen,  
that is but an illusory world-appearance.  
This illusion, and therefore bondage,  
is sustained by psychological conditioning.  
Such conditioning is bondage  
and its abandonment is freedom.
426. Because the "world" is in fact only an appearance,  
it is in reality emptiness, void and unreal.
427. The world-appearance is illusory.
428. That which is born of the unreal must be unreal,  
too. Hence, though this world appears to be real, as it is  
born of the unreal concept, it should be firmly rejected.



429. Just as one who is immersed in the dream sees the dream as utterly real, one who is immersed in this creation thinks that it is utterly real.

Just as one goes from one dream to another, one goes from one delusion to another delusion and thus experiences this world as utterly real.

430. It is on account of ignorance that this long-dream world-appearance appears to be real.

431. It is by Self-knowledge that the unreality of the concepts concerning worldly objects is realized.

432. Consciousness does not undergo any change: the only apparent change is the illusory appearance which is illusory and therefore not real!

433. The external phenomena are utterly useless.

434. There is but one consciousness which is pure, invisible, the subtlest of the subtle, tranquil, which is neither the world nor its activities.

435. There is no such thing as creation.  
You are neither the doer of actions  
nor the enjoyer of experiences.  
You are the all, ever at peace, unborn and perfect.

436. The world has no basis at all.

437. It is the movement of thought  
that appears as this world.

438. This world-appearance is like a dream.

439. On the awakening of the inner intelligence, the world-perception ceases and there arises psychological freedom or non-attachment.  
That is known as emancipation.

440. There is nothing other than the Self.



441. What appears to be the world  
is the expansion of one's own notions or thoughts.

442. It is only when the eyes are blinded by ignorance  
that one perceives the world of diversity.

443. Creation has not taken place.  
It is but an appearance like the mirage.

444. You are a knower. Whether you know something  
or do not, remain free from doubt. When you realize  
that you are the unborn, infinite consciousness,  
then all ignorance and foolishness cease  
and this world-appearance ceases.

445. All these worlds, etc. come into being and cease to  
be as notions and nothing more.  
Consciousness does not undergo any change in all these.  
In consciousness there is no experience of pleasure  
or pain,  
nor does a notion arise in it as "This I am."

446. There is the unreal experience of this world  
and what is known as the other-world,  
though all these are false.

447. He who does not abandon  
his confirmed conviction in the existence of diversity  
is not abandoned by sorrow.

448. When one falls into this illusion of world-  
appearance, he is at once preyed upon by countless other  
illusions which arise in the original illusion.

449. If you close your eyes,  
the vision of the external world is blotted out: if you  
remove the notion of the world from your consciousness,  
pure consciousness alone exists.

450. The world and the "I" exist only as notions,  
not as fact nor as reality.



451. Creation, world, movement of consciousness, etc. are mere words without substance. When such ideas are abandoned, the "world" and the "I" cease to be and consciousness alone exists, pure and immutable. This unconditioned consciousness alone is, naught else is – not even the nature of diverse objects here.
452. The illusory appearance of objects is of no practical use.
453. When you affirm the reality of the illusory appearance, you invite unhappiness; when its unreality is realized there is great happiness.
454. The notion of the reality of the objects of this world arises only in ignorance.
455. Confusion or delusion is unreal and the unreal does not exist.
456. In their mind, my body seems to be real; but to my illumined intelligence, their physical existence is unreal, as it is to a sleeping person.
457. When one is fully established in the Self, then this world-appearance ceases like dream during deep sleep.
458. As surely as it is a certainty that where there is sunlight there is illumination, where there is experience of the essencelessness of the worldly objects, there occurs spiritual awakening.
459. The world-appearance arises in ignorance and wisdom puts an end to it.
460. When what exists is realized as it is, the world-appearance ceases.
461. Do not be deluded by this illusory world-appearance.



462. To the man of Self-knowledge  
what the ignorant man thinks real  
(time, space, matter, etc.) are non-existent.

463. In the eyes of the wise man there is no world.

464. That is known as the attainment of the highest  
in which one abandons the notions of the existence of  
objects and in which one rests in one's own pure Self.  
When all divisions are given up,  
the indivisible alone remains.  
It is pure, one, beginningless and endless.

465. When wisdom is strengthened and confirmed,  
and when the impurity of conditioning is washed away,  
the holy one shines with an extraordinary radiance.  
Both the inner notion  
and the external perception of the world cease for him.

466. Behold the entire universe composed of you, I,  
mountains, gods and demons, etc. as you would behold  
the creations and the happenings of a dream.

467. I saw many universes and their diversity aroused  
my curiosity. I wanted to roam more and more to see  
the magnitude of creation. After some time,  
I abandoned that idea knowing that it was delusion  
and remained established in the infinite consciousness.  
Instantly,  
all this perception of diversity vanished from my sight.  
There was the pure consciousness, nothing else.  
This is the truth: all else is imagination, notion, delusion  
or illusory perception.

468. There is no such thing as earth or matter.

469. Duality or diversity is false:  
the one mass of infinite consciousness alone is real.

470. There is no such thing as the world.



471. This body is but pure void, it seems to exist on account of the mental conditioning. When the latter ceases, the body ceases to be seen or experienced, just as the dream-object is not experienced on waking up.

472. Neither the subtle body nor the gross body is seen even in the waking state when the mental conditioning ceases.

473. This universe has no form, no body, no materiality, though it seems to have a form.

474. You imagine that I have a body. It is on account of this notion existing in you that I produce this sound known as speech. You hear it even as a sleeping person hears sounds in his dream.

475. The diversity perceived in a dream does not create a diversity in the dreamer; even so the notion of a creation does not create a division in consciousness. Consciousness alone is, no creation; the dream-mountain is the dreamer, not a mountain.

476. The world is an appearance and not existence.

477. What is unreal is unreal, even if it has been experienced for a long time by all.

478. Neither in the waking state or in dream is there a real world.

479. When sleep has ceased, the world-appearance rises; when that ceases there is pure consciousness. That "nothing" which remains after everything has been negated as "not this, not this" is pure consciousness.

480. In the vision of the knowers of the truth, there is nothing other than the pure and infinite consciousness, and the objective universe is completely and totally non-existent.



481. Besides this there are other universes  
of which I have not told you.  
For of what use is investigation into the nature of the  
world and others which are but of the nature of a dream;  
wise men do not waste their time  
talking about useless things.

482. When Self-knowledge arises,  
the illusory notion of a world-existence vanishes.

483. Though the body-notion is unreal  
it is experienced as if it were real,  
just like the dream-object.

484. Even the original creation is like a dream.  
It is but an illusory appearance. Though devoid of earth,  
and all the rest of it, it appears to have earth, etc.

485. The original dreamlike creation of the world and  
also the dream that we experience now are both unreal.

486. There is no death,  
and by the same token there is no birth either.

487. Realize that this world-appearance  
with all its contradictions  
is nothing more than appearance which is non-existent.

488. That which is firmly believed to exist  
is experienced by that person physically,  
for the body is only mind.

489. Just as some people remember their dreams,  
some people also remember their past existences.

490. Consciousness is infinite peace  
which exists forever unmodified.

491. It is good to remind yourself  
that all this is but a long dream.



492. Just as the dream-mountain is realized as pure void when the dreamer wakes up, even so are all these forms realized to be non-existent when one is enlightened.

493. When the wise one realizes that this world is like a dream-city, his hopes are not centered in it.

494. Only when it is realized that there is no creation at all does real Self-knowledge arise which leads to liberation. Such liberation is unending, infinite and unconditioned.

495. The objective universe is delusion or illusion; it does not disappear except through persistent practice.

496. Whatever objects are perceived in this world are the mind only, even as the dream-objects are the mind only.

497. In this subtle body there arise the thoughts or concepts of physical bodies and their component parts, concepts of birth, activity, etc., concepts of time, space, sequence, etc., as also concepts of old age, death, virtue and defect, knowledge, etc. Having conjured up these concepts, the subtle body itself experiences the objective universe composed of the five elements as if it existed in reality. But all this is surely illusory, like dream-objects and dream-experiences.

498. When there is the notion of reality in unreal phenomena, there is bondage.

499. Something which is unreal does not arise in the real.

500. There is no illusion in the infinite.

501. This illusion of world-appearance vanishes when one is awakened and enlightened. Then one realizes that it has never been, it is not and it will never be.



502. The unreal does not exist at all at any time.

503. When dream is realized as dream,  
the false notion vanishes.  
Awareness drops its object  
and rests in the infinite consciousness.

504. This world has arisen like a dream.

505. Nothing, not even this body,  
has ever been created.

506. Like a frog in the blind well,  
foolish and ignorant people base their understanding  
on the experience of the moment and,  
on account of their perverse understanding,  
they are deluded into thinking that the body alone  
is the source of experience or awareness.

507. What you have called the body does not exist  
in the eyes of the sage.

508. There is no "dream" in the infinite consciousness.  
There is neither a body nor a dream in it.

509. Though this universe seems to have existed for a  
long time and though it seems to be a functional reality,  
still it is pure void  
and it is no more real than an imaginary city.

510. Nothing exists here  
and therefore there are no concepts of objects;  
there is nothing other than the Self  
and the Self does not conceive of an object.

511. It is only as long as you are not fully enlightened  
that you experience apparent diversity.



## SRI SANKARA

(512 – 524)

512. Where has the world gone?  
Who has removed it, or where has it disappeared to?  
I saw it only just now, and now it is not there.

513. The products of natural causation,  
from the idea of doership down to the body itself  
and all its senses, are also unreal  
in view of the way they are changing every moment,  
while one's true nature itself never changes.

514. Give up identification with this mass of flesh  
as well as with what thinks it a mass.  
Both are intellectual imaginations.  
Recognize your true Self as undifferentiated awareness,  
unaffected by time, past, present or future,  
and enter Peace.

515. The living organism,  
which is thought to belong to oneself  
through its identification with the intellect,  
does not really exist. On the other hand,  
the true Self is quite distinct from it,  
and the identification of oneself with the intellect  
is due to misunderstanding.

516. The mistaken imagination of illusion  
is not a reality.

517. As the darkness, that is its opposite,  
is melted away in the radiance of the sun, so, indeed,  
all things visible are melted away in the Eternal.

518. Reaching bodiless purity,  
mere Being, partless, the being of the Eternal,  
the sage returns to this world no more.



519. I see not, nor hear, nor know aught of this world;  
for I bear the mark of the Self,  
whose form is being and bliss.

520. The belief in this world is built up of unreality.

521. The world no longer is,  
whether past, present, or to come,  
after awakening to the supreme reality,  
in the real Self, the Eternal,  
from all wavering free.

522. All changing forms in nature  
beginning with personality and ending with the body,  
and all sensual objects; these are unreal,  
because subject to change every moment;  
but the Self never changes.

523. There is no freedom for him  
who is full of attachment to the body and its like; for him  
who is free, there is no wish for the body and its like;  
the dreamer is not awake,  
he who is awake dreams not;  
for these things are the opposites of each other.

524. In as much as all this world, body and organs,  
vital breath and personality are all unreal,  
in so much THOU ART THAT,  
the restful, the stainless, secondless Eternal,  
the supreme.