

# Deep Sleep

Ram (James Swartz)

2014-04-09

Source: <http://www.shiningworld.com/site/satsang/read/267>

**Frank:** My friend sent me the following email:

In questions like “Who knows that Doug slept?” “Who knows Doug had a dream?,” the answer is often given in the form “You, awareness, know that.” But then somewhere else it is stated that awareness is not a knower. So there seems to be a contradiction. In my understanding, the one who knows that Doug slept or dreamed can only be the subtle body (as the Intellect). So if the subtle body isn’t available during sleep, and awareness can’t be the knower, how is it known that Doug slept or dreamt? Where is the dream registered, and how? It appears in the memory when the body awakens, but how does it get there?

And here is what I said (I would like your comments):

In deep sleep there is pure awareness, the causal body and a subtle *avidya vritti*. Awareness associated with this subtle *avidya vritti* is called *prajna*. This *prajna* is experiencing no objects. It is the deep sleeper and the experiencer of the bliss of experiencing no objects in full ignorance.

Once the causal body projects the subtle body due to the *vasanas*, *visva* appears. *Visva* can access a memory of an objectless, limitless experience.

**James:** How is this possible, Frank? For a memory you need intellect because memory is a power of the subtle body, i.e. the intellect. But the intellect is not there in deep sleep.

**Frank:** It is proof that I, awareness, was there in deep sleep because *visva* (awareness associated with the subtle body), the waking state entity, does not need inferential evidence to state without a doubt.

**James:** This is an assertion that I don't think you prove. The proof that awareness was there in deep sleep is not established by *visva*'s non-dependence on inference. It is established by the *Upanishad* and by logic.

Why doesn't it? And what is wrong with inference? It is a valid means of knowledge. I think you know that the point of the three-state teaching is not to establish the existence of any experiencer but to establish the existence of awareness by negating all three experiencers. What does the teaching gain by the statement that *visva* knows by direct experience? And does *visva* gain by direct experience, unless by “direct experience” you mean direct knowledge?

Awareness knows deep sleep insofar as *maya* is operating. It knows (i.e. experiences without knowledge) deep sleep as *prajna* but the knowing means nothing to *prajna* because it has no intellect and even if it did it has no way to evaluate the meaning of deep sleep insofar as it has no knowledge of awareness in the other two states. It means something to *visva* because *visva* is awareness plus a subtle body in the

waking state and it can reason. The scripture, which is for the intellect, says that the existence of awareness is established for *visva* by reason. It does not address *prajna* because *prajna* does not have a bondage problem. Awareness minus *maya* has no problem with sleep or any other state. And it does not need logic to establish its existence. The problem as always is caused by *maya* because the three states, like *maya*, both are and are not, depending on the point of view.

**Frank:** “I (was there)” AND “slept blissfully/did not know anything.”

**James:** Why did you omit the word “I” before “slept blissfully/did not know anything”? Who is saying this? It can’t be awareness because awareness is not a doer, a sleeper. It has to be *visva* but not by direct experience because *visva* is not there. Inference works very nicely here. Here is the logic: I, awareness, can’t have not been there because I have to be alive to sleep and I can’t be alive without the presence of consciousness. Therefore I was there. Or to express it without a double negative, I was there because there is no there without me, awareness.

**Frank:** This sentence shows that during deep sleep there is awareness: the statement “I (was there)” has the same doubtless security and confidence as when stating “I exist” in the waking state. It is the security and confidence of awareness knowing itself. That security is self-evident. This is non-experiential confidence. This is non-experiential knowing...

**James:** But is it true that awareness was there, Frank? The implied meaning is that if it was there it was not somewhere else. Awareness is always present. It does not join with the objects that *maya* creates. In fact, there is no “there” for awareness, there is only me. Are you saying that the confidence comes from the fact that it was there? I think not. Awareness is confident knowledge irrespective of the state that appears, so there is no reason why we should focus on the deep-sleep state because whether or not awareness was there only has meaning to *visva* and *visva* does not have to refer to sleep for confidence insofar as it is awareness in the waking state and the confidence comes from knowledge of its non-dual nature.

**Frank:** ...and a subtle *avidya vritti*: the statement “slept blissfully/did not know anything” is the experience of ignorance without experiencing any other objects.

**James:** Again, in this statement you do not have a subject. You have only an object, i.e. “slept blissfully.” We need a who or a what for the sentence to make sense.

**Frank:** The macrocosmic causal body is the storage place of the deep-sleep experience which is the identical ignorant, objectless experience/thought (subtle *avidya vritti*) for all *visvas*.

When *prajna* transforms into *visva*, *Isvara*/macrocosmic causal body “keeps track” of *vasanas*/memories/*karma* and “distributes” those to the appropriate microcosmic causal body and therefore microcosmic subtle body and therefore *visva*. So Doug does not awaken with Richard’s *vasanas*/memories/*karma* and John’s *karma*. He awakens with a memory of his “individual” dreams and a memory of deep sleep. The

deep-sleep memory is not individual but a universal memory and therefore is the same for all *visvas*.

**James:** This is true.

**Frank:** It should be stated in addition that all these bodies described in detail above (subtle, causal, microcosmic, macrocosmic, etc.) are just concepts to describe phenomena that are just an appearance (*mithya*). Only I, awareness, am real. So much ado about a mirage.

**James:** Yes, Vedanta is teaching awareness, not sleep, since sleep is well-known.