

The Sense of "I am" (Consciousness)

When I met my Guru, he told me: "You are not what you take yourself to be. Find out what you are. Watch the sense 'I am', find your real Self." I obeyed him, because I trusted him. I did as he told me. All my spare time I would spend looking at myself in silence. And what a difference it made, and how soon!

My teacher told me to hold on to the sense 'I am' tenaciously and not to swerve from it even for a moment. I did my best to follow his advice and in a comparatively short time I realized within myself the truth of his teaching. All I did was to remember his teaching, his face, his words constantly. This brought an end to the mind; in the stillness of the mind I saw myself as I am -- unbound.

I simply followed (my teacher's) instruction which was to focus the mind on pure being 'I am', and stay in it. I used to sit for hours together, with nothing but the 'I am' in my mind and soon peace and joy and a deep all-embracing love became my normal state. In it all disappeared -- myself, my Guru, the life I lived, the world around me. Only peace remained and unfathomable silence.

- Nisargadatta Maharaj