

# The Mind

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1. The **living body** is a functionally active, organic unity.
2. The **dead body** is a non-functional, inactive, non-organic, disintegrated disunity.
3. To live is to be **a functionally active integrated organism responding to stimuli with purposeful adjustments and suffused with sentience.**
4. To die is to cease to function, to become inactive, for organisation to break down and **disintegrate**, to fail to respond to stimuli with purposeful adjustments, and to be **insentient.**
5. Because death implies disintegration death is only possible for a **compound** being.
6. To disintegrate is to separate from each other elements which were integrated or fitted together.
7. An existential material body may disintegrate because it is made of separate parts. This is what Buddha meant when he said, "**To the born certain is death**". We might translate it faithfully, "To that which owes its existence to the gathering together of separate elements, it is not impossible that causes may arise which may bring about the separation of these elements again."
8. The **earthy material body of man** is composed of various elements which have been abstracted from **food** and gathered together into a functional organic unity.
9. Because these elements have been gathered together, it is not impossible that at some time they will again separate.
10. Death (or disintegration) is therefore a possibility for the **earthy material body of man.** Which will surprise few of us.
11. But is man merely an earthy material body?
12. Some people, whom we call **materialists**, believe so. Notice we do not say "know so" but only "believe so". No materialist of any intelligence would state that he **knows** that man is merely earth matter.
13. People who say that they are materialists are not always aware of the implications of what pure materialism means. Intelligent "materialists" are faced with the problem of accounting for their own intelligence.
14. Actually today there are no intelligent believers in pure materialism, for matter, "the only reality" of the nineteenth century, has shown itself to be "the only unreality" of the twentieth century.
15. **Matter is now known to be simply energy-mass**, so that today an intelligent man who says "I am a materialist" does not mean what he used to mean.
16. He now means "I consider it to be fruitful enough for my purpose to act as if the energy-masses in the universe had a sufficient degree of persistence to justify my dealing with them in the manner of those men who previously did not know that matter is only energy-mass, and thought it to have entity in itself." Which is a trifle unwieldy.
17. Such a "materialist" knows now that man's **physical body is a system of energy-masses.** But insofar as these energy-masses are integrated together they may at some time lose integration and thus "die".
18. So whether one is a materialist of the old school, or a qualified energy-mass "materialist" of the new school, **the body is still subject to possible disintegration and death.**
19. But man **does not feel to himself** as if he is merely an earthy material body.
20. He has inside him certain processes which are **little touched by earth.**
21. He **thinks** and **feels.**

22. Let us examine first his thinking process and see if possibly this is free from disintegration tendencies.
23. It becomes apparent to us at once that the thinking process may suffer disintegration, because **thinking is the presentation of ideas in the mind**, and each idea, insofar as it is clearly defined, is separate from the others.
24. When we **think**, we **temporally** gather together separate ideas and link them, we integrate them into patterns and so build complex idea-structures.
25. But **because they are gathered together, they may at some time fall apart again**.
26. The thinking process is subject to disintegration, and therefore it is possible to talk about the **death of an idea**, the death of a "brain child".
27. **The earthy material body of man is subject to disintegration or death. The thinking process is also subject to it. Is there any thing in man not subject to death?**
28. Some thinkers would say that the **thinking process** might disintegrate and yet the **mind** may not. These people treat the mind as if it were an **entity in itself**, an entity which conducts in itself a process called thinking, but which still persists when thinking ceases.
29. Whether this is true or not depends on how we define the word "**mind**". Let us define it. But first let us define what we mean by "**definition**".
30. A thing is said to be defined when **its limits are detectible**.
31. An artist might talk of "a well-defined image", meaning an image whose binding contours are clearly see-able.
32. **When we define a word we are indicating the limit of its application.**
33. This is most important to understand. We do not define **things** with our words; the things are, if they exist, **already defined by the fact of their existence**.
34. What we define when we define a word, is **the limits of its application**.
35. If we define the word "box" we simply indicate to what category of things we shall apply the word "box".
36. The **word** is a **sound**, or if written or printed, a **symbol** or group of symbols which we use to **indicate certain contents** of our **consciousness**.
37. All things, situations and events which exist for our consciousness are **defined by their existence**.
38. One of the groups of elements in our consciousness we call "**words**".
39. A **word** is an **element in our consciousness** which we use to **order** other elements.
40. **A word is a sound or sign of something other than itself.**
41. By a word we indicate on what elements of consciousness we shall **concentrate** our attention. (dharana)

42. **The word orders the content of consciousness**, and possibly of unconsciousness also.
43. When we use the word "**mind**", to what elements in consciousness are we directing attention?
44. Language may be a great tyrant and rule us to our disadvantage.
45. If we say
46. **"the mind is that which contains and arranges ideas",**
47. we have suggested that ideas are contained and arranged in and by something. We have given the mind entity status in which to **contain ideas**, and power with which to **arrange them**.
48. When we define a word we are indicating the **limits of its application to some elements in consciousness**.
49. **What are the elements** in consciousness to which we are limiting the application of the word "mind"?
50. An **idea** we can image because an idea is a **form in consciousness**. A series of related ideas we can also image for the same reason.
51. But where in consciousness is the element to which we limit the application of the word "mind"?
52. An idea has a form we can recognise, a **characteristic binding line** which defines it.
53. **Has the mind such a characteristic binding line?**
54. We cannot find one in consciousness.
55. To what, then, does the word "mind" refer?
56. It refers to **the space in which ideas are presented singly, or in groups, simultaneously or serially.**
57. The word "mind" refers to that which has **no form of its own**, but in which the forms called "**ideas**" **appear and relate themselves**.
58. We have used the word "**space**" here, and therefore, to distinguish it from the space which we say exists between earthy material bodies, we shall call it "**mental space**" or "**mind space**".
59. **Mental space is that in which ideas appear and are patterned.** It is simply a **zone in consciousness** in which we **observe** ideas presented and related together.
60. This zone is **marked** by the presented idea-patterns.
61. **Apart from these idea-patterns the zone would be undetectable as mind.**
62. **The mind with no ideas in it is no mind.** This is the Buddhist doctrine of "**No Mind**".
63. **If the content of consciousness is eliminated then there is no mind.**
64. **Only where consciousness is presented with some content can we say that mind exists.**
65. The word "mind" comes from a root word meaning to **count**, or to **evaluate**.
66. **When there is a process of counting or evaluation in consciousness then it is permissible to use the word "mind" to indicate the zone where this process is taking place.**
67. Where there is no such process occurring it is incorrect to refer to it as "mind".

68. **Counting or evaluating is a process in which words are used to determine the quantity or quality of elements in consciousness.**
69. Because the words represent **forms** or **ideas** we can say that counting and evaluation is a **thinking** process.
70. **“Thinking”** is the general term we use to cover all kinds of processes in consciousness which are conducted by means of the **presentation of forms or ideas**.
71. What is the **origin** of the forms in consciousness?
72. They are simply **the product of the play of power of the Infinite**.
73. When the infinite sentient power **acts**, its **motions** produce within it various **patterns**.
74. These patterns constitute the contents of the Infinite Consciousness. [Skr. ‘vrttis’ – rotations, turnings]
75. In any given locality the formal pattern may be **stressed** in some degree **more** or **less** than in others.
76. When the stress is **very heavy** we say that there is a **thing** existing there.
77. Where the stress is **less**, we say that there is **thinking** there.
78. Where the stress is ever finer and its edges are ill-defined we say there is **feeling** there.
79. Where the stress is absolutely undetectable we say there is no thing and no thinking or feeling
- there. We say there is **nothing** there.
80. We might say that **thinking is lightly stressed thinging**, or that thinging is heavily stressed thinking.
81. The difference between a thing and a think (an idea) is only a difference of lightness or heaviness of **stress** of a **form in consciousness**, which is basically merely a **mode of action** of the infinite sentient power.
82. Ultimately we have to say that all **things** we know, all the **ideas** we think, and all the **feeling** states we experience, the totality of phenomena of all worlds, are merely **modalities of the motion initiated and sustained by the Infinite Sentient Power** we call God. As we may use the word “mind” wherever there is a content of consciousness, it is permissible to talk of the mind of God.
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