

In common parlance, we call the Self I or Ego, and oppose it to what is immediately before us, because we are dimly conscious that it is much larger and wider than any momentary experience.

Nevertheless what we at any time know of it, its existence and essence for us, is simply our experience in its totality.

And so we may call it the "experient" and contrast it with our experience. But, in reality, the two are identical, as expressed in the following equation:

$$\text{Experient} = \text{Experience.}$$

As often as we regard our experience as a whole, and any momentary experience as a portion of this whole, we take the synoptic view and call it our Self or Ego. Whenever we fix our attention on what is immediately before us, singling out as we usually do some portion, some parts or features within it, we call it our experience, referring it as something else to our total experience or our Self. The difference then between Experient and Experience is that the same thing appears to us either as one or as many.

To this idea of the Self we shall return later on in a different connection. At present we have to note the fact that although all our knowledge refers ultimately to experiences which we have had in the past, and although, outside of the totality of this experience, nothing really exists for us, we are nevertheless compelled to speak of an external experience as forming a special part in the totality of our whole experience, and are equally compelled to give this outer experience a separate existence, maintaining that it has, as