

- I. 4 Levels of Consciousness move from innermost to outermost, like Russian nesting dolls.
- II. Sleep or Dream State:
 - A. Has to do with the subconscious, which is what we take as reality when we are dreaming. So this is also called the dream state.
 - B. Dreams are important and useful, but this is a state of sleep from the Work point of view because it is not seeing all of reality.
 - C. When we are dreaming all 3 centers are engaged in the subconscious, reacting to whatever is happening.
 - D. We don't awaken by working it out at the level of the dream state; that is we can only awaken from higher influences. In the case of a person in the Dream State, the Waking State itself is a higher influence. As soon as we reach the Waking State, we are 'risen' or 'reborn'.
- III. Waking State:
 - A. The Work says this is also sleep.
 - B. This is the state that we overlook, says Gurdjieff, because we take ourselves to already be properly conscious.
 - C. This is the level of Man Number 1, 2 and 3 as we discussed last week.
 - D. The word 'mechanical' made sense in Gurdjieff's time since a machine was the most elaborate and sophisticated material object. Nowadays we have more relevant descriptors in our vocabulary, such as programs, or neural networks, or as Bohm put it, reflexes.
 - E. This level of consciousness is not bad. It is just sleep because it is not seeing reality.
 - F. What we see from this state is what Bohm calls fragmentation, or what Iain McGilchrist describes as the dominance of the left brain hemisphere.
 - G. The left brain hemisphere sees separate objects, it sees duality. This is not bad. It is useful to see separate and unrelated objects in order to tell food from poison, for example. All living creatures have this function. But as Bohm described it, we mistake this way of seeing for reality as it is. This is what the Work calls sleep.
 - H. This left hemisphere dominance reveals itself in our assumptions about the nature of reality—for instance the notion that the concrete is more important than the abstract, or that fragmentation seems real and wholeness seems like just an interesting idea.
 - I. Jesus's parables such as the one on the workers' wages can expose how dominant our left hemispheres are, which apparently has been the case for many centuries.
 - J. Another feature of this Waking State of consciousness is that we are afraid of our subconscious, which includes our animal nature as well as our instinctive nature, which is the part of us that is closest to the cosmos of the atom.
 - K. Unlike awakening from the dream state, which is automatic, we do not automatically awaken from the Waking State. The Work says outside force is required.
- IV. State of Self Remembering:
 - A. This is the first conscious state of consciousness.
 - B. As we observe non-critically and engage with the cosmological aspects of Work ideas, we encounter our subconscious more deeply and accept our true Self. This gives rise to a new level of consciousness, which is at the level of Balanced Man or Man 4, as well as Man 5 who recognizes wholeness.
 - C. This is known in the Work as the State of Self Remembering, which means consciousness of the whole self. It observes both the world of the False Self and that of the subconscious, knowing they are not I.
 - D. In terms of the brain, at this level of consciousness instead of seeing through the dominant dualistic left hemisphere, we see in a balanced way through both hemispheres working in harmony.

- E. The hemispheres do not combat or try to cancel one another. Rather as Iain McGilchrist suggests, the right hemisphere functions as the master while the logical, practical left is its emissary. Quote Iain McGilchrist: “So, how would the right hemisphere conceive truth? Rather than conceiving it as a thing, it would experience it as a process, one that, in this case – not just for now, but in principle – has no ending. More importantly, it would see that truth is a relationship. Instead of seeing a subjective realm and an objective realm which should as near as possible mirror one another, it would see a constant reverberation between two (never completely distinct) elements within our consciousness – thoughts and experiences – whereby they ‘answered’, or co-responded to, one another; this ever better accord, or attunement, would be the evolving truth. It would be intrinsically incomplete, but constantly in the process of completing itself; and uncertain, though constantly approaching nearer to certainty; incapable of being grasped except through embodied being, through a consciousness that is in the flesh and engaged in the world.”
- F. This is Balanced Brain. The abstract and the concrete inter-exist. Matter and spirit are not separate. They inter-exist as the form of God, or the Christic. The horizontal and the vertical, inter-being.
- G. Thus Balanced Man is the one that sees the self through this balanced brain, and Man 5 sees the whole everywhere. As the whole self seeing of Balanced Man recognizes more and more the wholeness within reality, the human evolves to Man 5; all of this is within the State of Self Remembering.

V. Objective Consciousness:

- A. Although the perception of Man 5 can reach very far, including the depths of the cosmos of the atom and that of the stars, it is still limited in terms of consciousness. Beyond this state of consciousness is what the Work refers to as Objective Consciousness, which is to see through the consciousness of the whole rather than an individual. This is seeing things as they are.
- B. The 13th Century poet Rumi had a story to tell about this, in which he said “You are not a drop in the ocean; you are the ocean in a drop”.
- C. This seeing is the highest level of consciousness in the Work, the level of objective consciousness or reality as it is. Beyond the Self.
- D. Rumi’s story goes something like this: Imagine the whole is an ocean, and in the middle of the ocean there is a wave. This wave produces a nice amount of mist, with many fine water droplets shimmering together. Now imagine one of these little water droplets believes it is an individual self. It would seem to be true at the level of the senses—there would seem to be this one separate little water droplet, with all these other separate little water droplets around itself. It fears more than anything losing its identity as a water droplet. It is terrified of returning to the ocean.
- E. Now imagine what would happen if this scared little water droplet could see that it is fact is the ocean, only temporarily manifesting as a water droplet, but not actually separate from the ocean. Wouldn’t this little water droplet gladly relinquish its mistaken identity as an individual droplet in order to take up its true identity as the Whole?
- F. This is the level of Man 6 and 7, the level called in the Work Objective Reality.
- G. A statement of how things really are comes from Jesus: “the Father and I are one.”
- H. Jesus’s commandments are descriptions of Objective Consciousness. In this state there is perfect love, or love with all one’s heart, soul, mind and body. There is also awareness of the reality that all of humanity is one just as the drops of the wave are one ocean. The neighbor is oneself.

The Four Levels of Consciousness

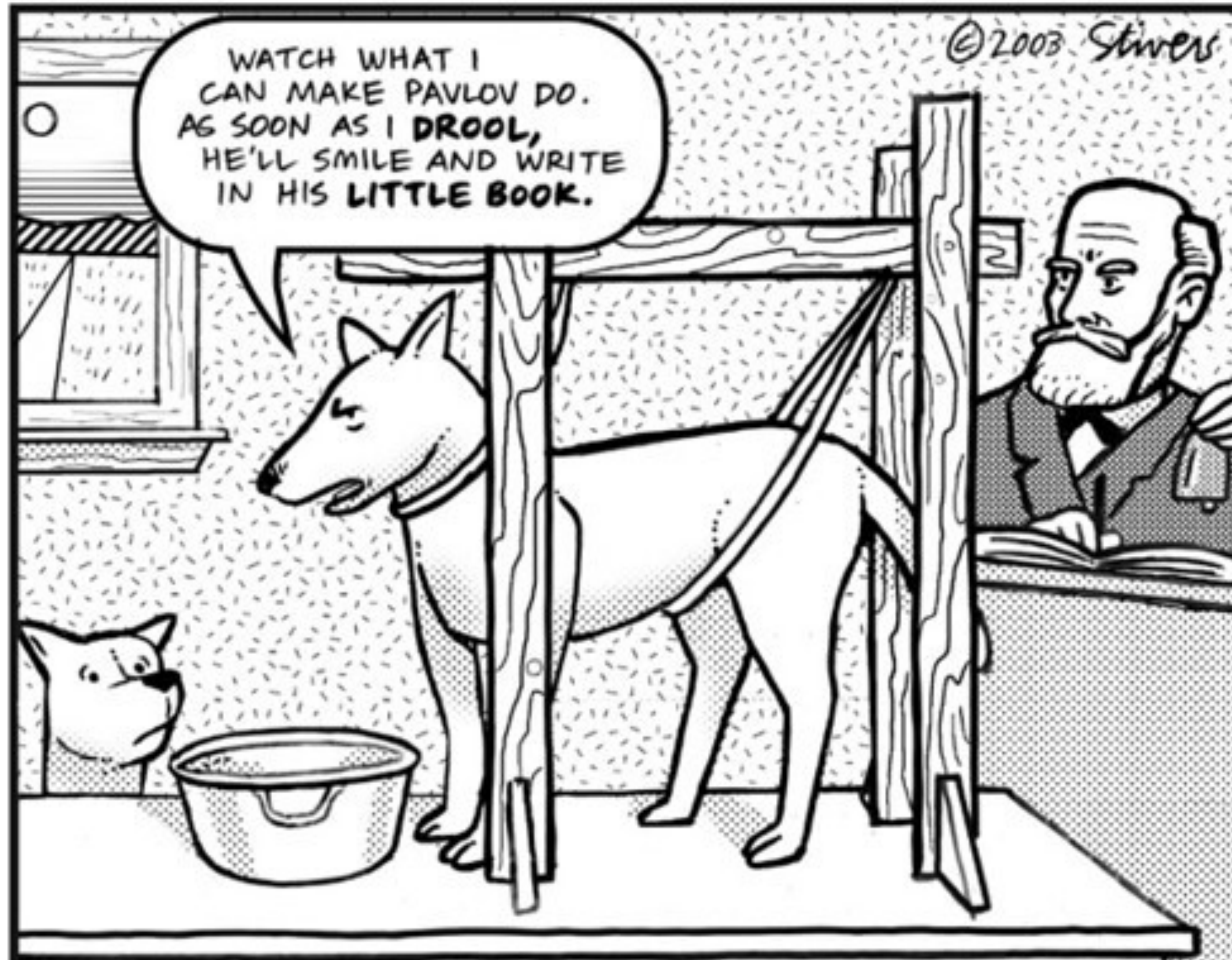


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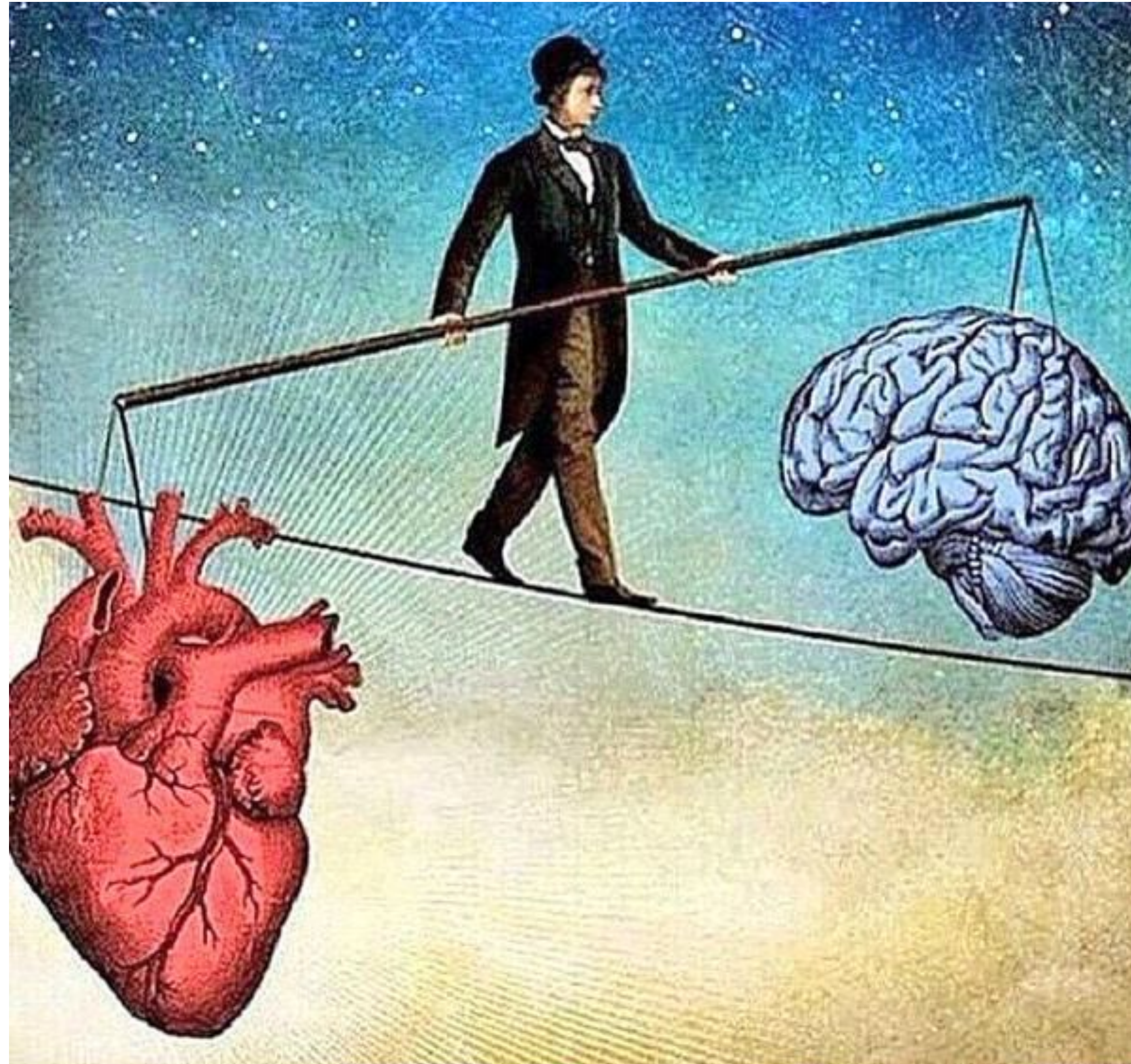
Level 1: The Dream State



Level 2: The Waking State



Level 3: The State of Self-Remembering



Level 4: Objective Consciousness

