"I was aforetime Manu, I was Sūrya; I am the sage Kakṣhīvān, holy singer.
Kutsa the son of Arjuni I master. I am the sapient Uṣanā; behold me."

- Griffith
D. 'I' (Aham); the Individual Soul

The concept of individual being is base of all enquiry about creation or the ultimate reality. The existing enquirer is no less mysterious than this world or the God. A mystic is also eager to unveil the mystery concealed in his own being. The egotic sense of consciousness is the centre of human being. This is enwrapped by the coverings like physical body, manas, prāna and others. The functioning of body, power of senses, dreams, sleep, mind, intellect and soul are such elements of his existing self-conscent being which perturb him very much. He, at the same time, becomes enthusiast to unfold the mystery of life and secret of death.

In the Rgveda we also witness such ideas and concepts dealt with mystic colour and approach. Here we will try to analyse the being into the accepted elements like physical body and sense organs, vital energies, manas and its functions, intellect, hṛdaya and finally ātman.

1a. The Physical Body and Senses

The Rgvedic mystic calls this body as ātman.\(^1\)

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1. RV. 1.34.7; VII.87.2; 10.16.3 etc.
tanu, vapus, sarira, etc. He knows well that this body is subject to old age, disease and death but at the same time he is also aware of the fact that this is like a chariot, ship and a fortress of soul. Sense-organs and limbs namely ear, nose, eye, tongue, feet, hand, speech etc. have been mentioned and they are useful in journey of day to day life. The Rigvedic mystic is not ignorant about the power of the senses and their association with the worldly objects. Many prayers regarding the sins committed with the body and senses or speech are found in the Rigveda. The constituents of physical body i.e. ether, air, fire, water and earth are not mentioned directly but these elements in form of gods have been called as creator of the world including physical bodies. In a Rigvedic verse the sense organs and the limbs of the body are drawn from their sources and on the other side these constituent organs have also been described as willing to go back to

1. RV. 10.183.2; 1.50.10, 2.9.2, 1.89.8; 4.2.14; 7.57.3; etc.
2. RV. 1.102.2; 4.23.6; 7.66.14; 8.19.11; 4.7.9; etc.
3. RV. 1.32.10; 1.163.11; 10.16.1; 10.136.3 etc.
4. RV. 7.71.5; 1.140.8; 1.89.9 etc.
5. RV. 1.50.11-13; 10.163
6. RV. 10.18-1-4 etc.
7. These concepts already dealt with their symbolic character in the Chapter VI.
8. RV. 4 9 6
9. Vedic see Wallis, Cosmology of the Rigveda.
The limbs of the Puruṣa are the source of creation of the material world. The R̄gvedic mystic is also cognisent with human birth. Vāmadeva hymn is a fine example of mystery of birth and similarly death is now known to him. The R̄gvedic mystic has tried to unveil the secret of death in hymns of Yama and Pitṛi. There is a good picture of journey after death.

The body and self are described as two bodies mortal and immortal.

About the physical body and sense-organs the R̄gvedic mystic is not apathetic but he tries to keep them sound. He prays for their health and proper functioning, and he considers them as gift of the God. These senses are called Indriya i.e. pertaining to Indra or Supreme Being. Kha is also the name for the sense-holes in the body which is widely used in the Upanisads. As the gods are illuminating and beneficent similarly the senses are the gates of knowledge and enlightens the divinity and splendour of the natural beauty and bliss.

1. RV. 10.16.3- बुधचित्तवात्मात्मा।
2. RV. 10.90.3
4. RV. 1.164.38 and 4.
5. Kathopanisad 2.1.1 - पराम्रम जातिन क्षयमान स्वरूपः।
6. Ṛgopanisad 4 - यद देवा प्राप्तेऽदृश्ये दृश्यंसर्वं।
   (देव = हिंदूस्थानी)
It is also a fact that these senses run after the worldly lust, greed and passions. The extrovert nature of the person is the main problem in his spiritual advancement. Even for material progress one has to centralise all the energies on the persistent efforts dedicated to the goal. For this act one will have to withdraw his senses from the external and remote multicorners of the daily life. This concentration on the senses is there prayed for, in the Rigveda.

In the sacrifice this body is divinised through initiation and he attains god's status in order to perform the sacrifice. And whenever he acts in the rituals he remembers that this physical body is not of the mundane person but the arms are of Āśvins, hands of Pūṣan, and strides those of Mañjulu.

Both the ideas about this physical body are witnessed in the Rigveda that this body is not fit for a holy act like sacrifice and at the same time this body is the seat of divine. The heart, the chamber of the lord and the senses, the gates opened for His entrance.

The appetite and thirst are not liked by the seers as they divert his attention from the higher target. He then searches food. Anna has been one of the things begged from the Divine. Similarly the youth and active life is real and healthy aspect of physical living of man. Physical energy and virility are the things which are asked for.
In the Rigveda diseases and bad dreams are not liked by the seers and constantly physical body and senses are tried to be kept in Good Health.¹

2. Prāṇa/Life Principle

In the Rigveda there are many references of prāṇa.² There is a clear distinction between vital energies and mind or intellect. Prāṇa is equated with vāyu in the Rigveda. Generally the mystics call the vital energies as hotar. They perform sacrifice. Prāṇa is derived from the root/an meaning 'to breath'. The other name for life principle is asu which is derived from the root/vās meaning to throw. Because asu throws the person in the activity of the world hence life is called asu.

There are many hints about prāṇa which were developed in other Samhitās and Brāhmaṇas. In Atharvaveda we find a complete hymn dedicated to prāṇa.³ There prāṇa-principle is described with spiritual epithets as controller of all the lives. Each and everything is called as under the discipline of prāṇa. In the Rigveda the mystic regards prāṇa a symbol of life that sustains all in himself. The all-pervading principle is Prāṇa equated with Brāhmaṇ in the Upanisads. Prāṇa-symbology may be seen in Brāhmaṇas.

¹. RV. 7 16 16
². RV. 1.61.1; 5.90.13; 10.59.6 etc.
³. Atharvaveda
Prāṇa as asu, in the Brāhmaṇas, has been identified with soma, prāṇi, etc. Prāṇa has got very large number of symbolic meanings in the Brāhmaṇas. Generally it is called as vāyu which has got the Rigvedic reference in Puruṣa-hymn.

In the Brāhmaṇas prāṇa symbology is the root of prāṇa-vidyā developed in Upaniṣads. Prāṇas have been identified with amṛta, aksaya, śrīh, rju, the truth of vak, Indra, seven rśis, coupled with vak, sāman, the sap of speech, annāda, rajju, mahān, Savitā, sruva, the age of the

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1. तैः 4.4.9.1 - अम्मरात्तलः क्रोमः
2. काठ 2.1.21 - अनुवांध पृविन्नर्यमः
3. माण 4.1.3 - प्राण उऽ वा वायुः
4. दृ 10.90/3 प्राणलाफुरजायत
5. काश 3.1.11.6 - अम्मरात्तलः क्रोमः
6. तैः
7. माण 6.1.1.4 - अम्मरात्तलः क्रोमः
8. तैः 2.5.1.7 - क्रोमः
9. जेङ्ला 2.425 - एतद्वव वाचः सत्य्य यद्य प्राणः
10. जेङ्ला 2.77 - एतद्वव वाचः सत्य्य यद्य प्राणः
11. जेङ्ला 2.27 - ते ज्ञमः प्राणसप्तशः प्राणसप्तशः प्राणसप्तशः प्राणसप्तशः
12. जेङ्ला 1.306 - तद्वव रत्नान्यन यद्वव बात्वच प्राणः
13. जेङ्ला 3.1.1.18 - तस्मां चारण एव सामः
14. जेङ्ला 1.1.1.7 - तस्मां चारण एव सामः
15. माण 11.2.4.5-6 - प्राण एव बात्वच
16. काश 3.1.4.2 - प्राण एव रजः प्राणसप्तशः प्राणसप्तशः प्राणसप्तशः प्राणसप्तशः
17. माण 10.3.5.4 - प्राण एव महानः
18. माण 1.1.13 - प्राण एव सामः
19. माण 1.3.2.3 - प्राण एव सामः
beings, 1 priests, 2 rasmi, 3 samidh, 4 visvedevas, 5 expansion of yajna, 6 jyestha and srestha, 7 kurma, 8 ten hota, 9 madhu, 10 samvatsara, 11 havis, 12 barhis, 13 varuna, 14 vak, 15 vacaspati, 16 son of vak, 17 satya, 18 vira, 19 bhuh, 20

1. तैऽा: 8·3·1 - प्राणी हि भूतानामाः: 
2. प्र्यऽा: 6·14 - प्राण: सर्व जीवज्ञ: 
3. तैऽा: 3·2·5·2 - प्राणा रघवः: 
4. प्र्यऽा: 2·4 - प्राणा वे सभितः: 
5. तैऽा: 5·2·2·1 - प्राणा वे विवेदेवः: 
6. मैऽा: 4·6·2 - प्राणेन यज्ञ: सन्ततिः: 
7. शा:ऽा: 9·2 - प्राणी ज्ञेयस्य ज्ञेयः: 
8. माशऽा: 7·5·1·7 - प्राणों के कूमः: प्राणों ही मा सवर्गः प्रजा: करोऽिः 
9. मैऽा: 1·9·5 - प्राणों दै वाणिषतः 
10. माशऽा: 14·1·3·30 - प्राणों के मधुः 
11. जैऽऽा: 1·102 - प्राणों के सविन्दरः 
12. मैऽा: 1·9·1 - प्राणों हीवः 
13. ताँ: 7·6·14 - बोहीह्य प्राणः 
14. गोऽा: 2·4·11 - व: प्राण: स वर्णः 
15. मैऽा: 4·6·4 - वाः प्राणः 
16. माशऽा: 6·3·1·19 - वाः वा इद कर्मः प्राणों वाचस्पतिः 
17. ऐऽऽा: 3·1·6 - वास्या माता प्राण पुत्रः 
18. जैऽऽा: 3·3·30 - यत्स्यामित्य प्राणः सः 
19. मैऽा: 1·9·3 - वीरः वै प्राणः 
20. तैऽा: 7·5·3 - सङ्गीत वै प्राणः
anna, ṛṣi, ārava, āditya, purūravas, ṛk, ṛṣi,
candras, jyotis, dakṣa, heavens, dikṣā, devas,
nāman, pataṅga, pavamāna, pitā, puruṣa, prajāpati,
Regarding the number of the prānas the Brāhmaṇas vary in their statements. As there are counting of prānas in number one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, twelve, thirteen etc. Regarding the place of prāṇa in the body we are told that they exist in upper part above the navel of the body. Sātāpatha Brāhmaṇa opines that the head is the base of prāṇas. In the vast concept of prāṇas it is equated with brhman. Taittiriya Brāhmaṇa says that prāṇas are abiding in the heart. Regarding the relation of prāṇa with manas prāṇa is called māṇojāta and manoyujā. In many places we are told that prāṇas are immortal while the physical body perishes.

Śāṅkya Aranyaka declares that prāṇa and speech are fire and oblation in each other. When a person is speaking he then offers oblation of prāṇa into vak and when one is silent that means he is offering oblation of speech into the fire of prāṇa. It is simultaneously important that prāṇas are called son of speech and in other

1. तेष्या० ७५८५ - एकः प्राणः सवार्ण्यमानवैत ।
2. दैः १०९ - तौ मित्रावलोणो प्राणपानो ।
3. तेष्या० ६३१५ - उवर्यः कतु वे नाभेप्राणः ।
4. मार्शा० ७५१२२ - गिरो वै प्राणानां योगेन ।
5. मार्शा० १४६०२ - प्राणे द्वियेव हित: ।
6. तेष्या० ३०८५ - प्राणो द्वियेव हित: ।
7. मार्शा० ३२२१३ - इमे वै प्राणा मनोजाला मनोयुजो दशुः ।
8. देशा० २१८ - मत्यानीमात्र शरीरायं कम्भेत देवत प्राणः ।
9. शा० आ० ४५ - यदै पुल्ल: प्राणोत न तावताभिर्भुपुल्ला शक्तिति वािर्तत प्राणे जुहोति । या क्रूपे पुल्लो भाषते....,प्राण....जुहोति।
places vāk is called as wife of prāṇa.1

In this way the Ṛgvedic concept of prāṇa is developed in Brāhmaṇas in various directions. Individual prāṇa and cosmic prāṇa are identified with self and vāyu. Similarly the creator and controller of the Universe is symbolised by prāṇa as it controls the life and its activities. Therefore prāṇas are called prajāpati, puruṣa, kūrma etc. There it denotes the ultimate reality and creator of all this. In the Brāhmaṇic symbology of prāṇa the creation is denoted by vāk because vāk is the field of nāman and rūpa while prāṇas are the higher principle as first cause. There are various shades of meaning of prāṇa available in the Ṛgveda. Generally it is life principle. Upaniṣads developed prāṇameya kosa as the sheath of the self.

3. Manas 🌟 Mind and intellect

In the Ṛgveda 'manas' has got a number of references independently and in composition. We have already described the range of its symbols in the chapter 'Ṛgvedic Symbols'. The mystic finds the manas as a pivotal element in his mystical journey to the goal. The contemplative and reasoning faculty of the mind are the two apparatuses at his disposal. The perception and intuition are the two ways of knowledge. The seer is not ignorant about mental

1. ऐ.वि. ३०१६; - तु वाचे त्राणवल्वे स्वाहा!
perception of the reality. He conceives the truth and perceives the nature with quite contemplative mood and thus he visualises the presence of the supreme Divine, the all pervading self. Mind is consciousness applied to the daily life and its functions through the sense-organs. The emotions like love, anger, fear, etc. are depicted in the Vedic verses directly and indirectly. We have already dealt with the concepts in the psychological symbols in the chapter dedicated to the *Agyedic Symbols.* The functions of mind i.e. manIṣa, manman, mati, manyu etc. have been appeared in the *Agyeda* at large and they are enumerated in Nighaṭṭu and duly etymologised and discerned their meanings in Nirukta.1 *ManIṣa* the movement of mind,2 medhā,3 (wealth) and dhi (action and wisdom)4 have been enumerated in Nighaṭṭu. The Nirukta fixes the meanings of manman (thoughtful hymn)5 and manmāni (prayers)6.

The intellect and its functions have been duly presented in the *Agyeda* as derived from the root śwā. The forms like dhiyāḥ (devotions)7 dhiyam (thought),8 dhītiḥ (contemplation),9

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1. निष्कक्त - 4.40 इत्यादि -
2. निष्कक्त, 2.25
3. नियन्त्रण, 2.10
4. नियन्त्रण, 3.9
5. नियन्त्रण, 6.22
6. नियन्त्रण, 8.6
7. नियन्त्रण, 11.27
8. नियन्त्रण, 12.34
9. निष्कक्त 10.47
dhībhīṣ( with prayers and with actions) dhītibhih (with hymns and with actions). The term dhīmahi means 'we meditate' in the Nirukta. Thus we see that the functions of mind and intellect in form of emotions and thoughts have been largely mentioned in the Rgveda in various senses. They tell us about the concept of mind in the Rgveda.

It is the mind or thoughts that make the man. The Rgvedic sage is blessed with this faculty and that too of very high grade. The Rgvedic seer likes the enlightened mind and his heart leaps to realise the Supreme. A common mind is full of weaknesses which retard his progress to perfection. In other words, the Rgvedic seer is of the opinion that one should overcome the animal nature of one's personality. This is meant and denoted by the sacrifice of an animal to the higher level of consciousness. The gods are also called manasvān. The attributes of mind can be categorised on the basis of symbology of manas and the functions of mind. Yajurveda devotes a complete hymn to the concept of manas derived from the Rgvedic hints as we can well analyse the hymn.

1. Nirukta, 8.6; 12.30
2. Ibid, 2.24; 11.16
3. Ibid, 11.11
4. Yajurveda: Śivasāṅkalpa hymn. 34.6
The attributes of mind:

(i) The mind awakes while all sleep i.e. the body and the senses. It roams very far and wide.¹

(ii) With help of mind all the sacrifices are performed. Indeed the mind is the Yakṣa i.e. adored by all.²

(iii) Prajñāna, dhṛti, citta, eternal stream of consciousness etc. are the modes of mind. Nothing can be done without mind.³

(iv) The three divisions of Time,—past, present and future,—are encompassed by the mind itself. The seven priests i.e. seven vital breaths are the inspired by the mind into their actions.⁴

(v) All the knowledge, in form of the Ṛks, Sāman, Yajus, originates from the mind. It is pervading in all beings in form of consciousness.⁵

(vi) The mind is the swiftest among the good charioters that yokes the horses, senses organs and it leads the human being to his daily life.⁶

These attributes are based on the Rgvedic concept of mind which is clearly presented through the symbols in the Brāhmaṇas.

¹ यज्ञार्ती दूरमदैत्य देवं तदु युभत्य तासेवत ।
दूर गम्य ज्योतिषां ज्योतिरैव तन्मेव मनः प्रियुक्तमथं ।

² यद् पूर्वं यक्षमन् प्रजानाम् दिसुऽत् ॥

³ यः जग्मं मनुः सांक्षेपे जयस्यिति रत्नमुख ।

⁴ यद् कृत्यं भूवं भविष्यद् पौरोहित्यमृत्तेन सत्वं ।

⁵ योऽस्मां क्रान्त्यं सम यज्ञक्षेत्र या स्मात् प्रातिहातः सर्वथा भरिष्ठिरः ।

⁶ बुद्धार्थस्वर्वा न्यून यन्नमुख्य नेनीयते स्वाधिशंभ बाजिज्ञ ॥
In Purusã hymn the manas is the source of candramas and in the Brâhmaṇas candramas created individual manas and it controls the minds of the people. This equation is seen in the later developments. Basically the tenderness and aesthetic feelings are denoted by candarmas and the mind. This thing paved the way of identity between macrocosm and microcosm in Brâhmaṇas and later Indian Philosophy.

Hṛdaya and its functions like hṛdā have been mentioned in the Rgveda. Hṛdaya and its symbols have been already dealt with in the Rgvedic Symbols (Chapter 7). The secret and mysterious things are denoted by hṛdaya. In the Brâhmaṇas and Yajurveda we have seen that hṛdaya is the seat of mind. But in modern psychology the mind is the only principle which manifests itself into various functions which are denoted by intellect and mind. In the Indian philosophy intellect is higher than mind and soul is still higher to the intellect. ¹ Intellect is denoted as Vijñāna in the Upaniṣads. Now we will discuss the concept of soul as the root of all human existence and base of individuality or ego.

4. Ṛtman: Individual Soul

In the mysticism Ṛtman or soul is a significant concept.

1. Bhagavādgitā: हीन्द्रयानिष परायणाइश्चिन्ताय: परः मनः ।
   3.42 मनस्तकः परा बृह्याः बुद्धःपरतस्मः ॥
It unfolds the multifacetal character. On one side it is connected with the individual and on the other it is identified with Supreme Being, the First Principle inherent in the Universe. Here the Individual self is conceived as ātman. The Rgveda has several references of ātman in sense of self. The commentators of the Rgveda like Śāṇāyaṇa varies its meanings according to the context as vital breath (prāṇa), aham (self), body, vāyu, and consciousness.

Yāska etymologised this term from root 'at to move and 'āp to pervade or get. Śaṅkara in the commentary on Kaṭhopanisad quotes a sloka which gives etymologies of ātman. The Rgveda also gives the tman term for ātman. Maxmuller takes it for vital breath.

The Rgvedic mystic supplies three more synomyms for ātman as suparna, ajonhāga and jīva. The term hamsa too serves as a symbol for ātman or aditya.
The Rgveda itself uses the terms like hamsa to denote the individual soul.\(^1\) Sāṅkarācārya takes hamsa to mean 'jiva'. Aitareya Brāhmaṇa too refers hamsa in the spiritual sense.\(^2\) Suparna is also a symbol which is used in the Rgveda. In mythology suparna brought soma from heaven but in mystical sense suparna is denoting individual self as well as supreme self in Āsyavāniya hymn.\(^3\) Ajobhāga appears in Rgveda 10.16.4 where the dead body is offered to the funeral fire. Similarly 'jiva' denotes life and soul in the Rgveda 1.64.30. The term ṣatāsu' in the Rgveda 10.18.8 is taken as the person whose self has departed.

In the Rgveda the soul was recognised as a very subtle entity in form of life-principle. The Rgvedic mystic also uses the terms like ātmavan, satātmā, etc. 'Hiranyagarbha' has been lauded as 'ātmāda'.\(^4\) Sūrya has been called as ātmā of moving and unmoving objects.\(^5\)

Such a hidden and secret essence of one's being is mystery for a mystic. The individual self with company of prāna, manas and physical body enjoys the good or evil fruits of his deeds and also transmigrates from this birth.

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1. \(Śū.4\text{.}40\text{.}5-\) हस: श्रीचिंद्र वधुर-परिशुद्दिहोता वैदिक वेदिधुरोपणिकै।
2. \(ए.\text{रा}•\text{.}4•20-\) हस: श्रीचिंद्र हृत्युष्य वे हस: श्रीचिंद्र।
3. \(च.1\text{.}64\text{.}हु.\text{द्व} सुपर्णा समुजा सहाया।
4. \(च.10\text{.}12\text{.}8-\) या आत्मवा कंदा यस्य विश्रव उपास्ते प्रीरश्रीय स्यस्य देवः।
5. \(च.1\text{.}115\text{.}1-\) पूजयो श्री त्वा जगन्तस्युखच।
Atman has attained the symbolic meaning as all-pervading principle. Therefore everything is identified with atman. The Gods, the sacrifice and its parts, the body and its constituents, the metres, the elements of physical nature etc. denote the symbolic meaning of atman.

In the Brāhmaṇas atman is identified with tristupa, devata, devayajana, pāsu, yajamāna, juhū, hotar of the sacrifice, ukhā, vedi, āhavanīya, and vṛṣākapi, hrdaya, prajāpati, brāhmaṇa etc.

1. मािश्‌ 6-4-2-6 - अत्मा वै त्रिस्तुपः
2. तेष्ठेष्ठ 2-5-11-7 - अत्मा देवता
3. मैं 3-8-4 - अत्मा देवयज्ञनम्
4. तेष्ठेष्ठ 6-3-7-5 - अत्मा पासः
5. कौः भ्रा् 17-7 - अत्मा यज्ञानाः
6. जङ्गलः मैं 4-1-12 - अत्मा वै जङ्गलः
7. कौः भ्रा् 9-6 - अत्मा वै यज्ञयो होता
8. मािश्‌ 6-5-3-4 - अत्मा देवयज्ञ
9. जान्देस्मािश्‌ 12-9-11 - जात्मेव वेदिः
10. काठि 21-4 - अत्मा वा आयुश्वनीयः
11. पाईः 6-29 - अत्मा वै द्रष्टाकोपिः
12. मैं 3-10-2 - अत्मा वै हृदयः
13. मािश्‌ 4-2-5-3 - अत्मांभ्रजापीतः
14. शादाः 11-1 - अत्मांभ्रजापीतालोकवेशयः

तुः अत्मा वै ब्रह्मः
Taittiriya Samhita declared that ātman is purusa.¹ This concept of purusa is carrying the sense of purusa as described by Sāṁkhya philosophy and also the purusa of the Rgveda 10.90. Śāṁkhya Āranyaka suggests that ātman is all whatever is created in this universe.²

Thus we see that in the Rgveda the concept of ātman is in the sense of individual soul but its symbols used in the Rgveda himself are evident to identify it with the supreme soul which is creator of all. The Brāhmaṇas present a vast symbolism of ātman paving a way to ātmavidvā in the Upaniṣads. The secret principle as ātman is the root of ego in human being. The Rgvedic mystic have analysed 'I - consciousness' at full length. Indra, Vāmadeva and Vāk present mysticism of soul with full glory.³

5. The concept of Individual Being

As a whole we have witnessed that the mystic concept of 'I' has been analysed by the Rgvedic seers and developed into Brāhmaṇic Literature. Mādhyandina Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa analyses the Soul as constituted with vāk, māṇḍ and prāna.⁴

¹ सां क्ष्या 2.3.2.9 - आत्मा वै पुरुषः।
² सां ज्ञा 13.1 - हेद सव 'यद्यमात्मा।
³ वृ 14.26; 10.125 ए
⁴ मास 14.4.3.10 - एतन्मयो वा आत्म सव वाङ्मयो मनोमयः प्राणमयः।
The Rgvedic mystic is not frustrated if his senses and the body are subject to extroversion and old age or death and often commit sin and violate the discipline in life. He is ever optimist and brave soul who fights against the oddities in life and marches forward to the mystical goal. He is quite hopeful that his persistent efforts and strong will will win the ultimate goal as prize. He uses his physical and mental apparatus best as he can.