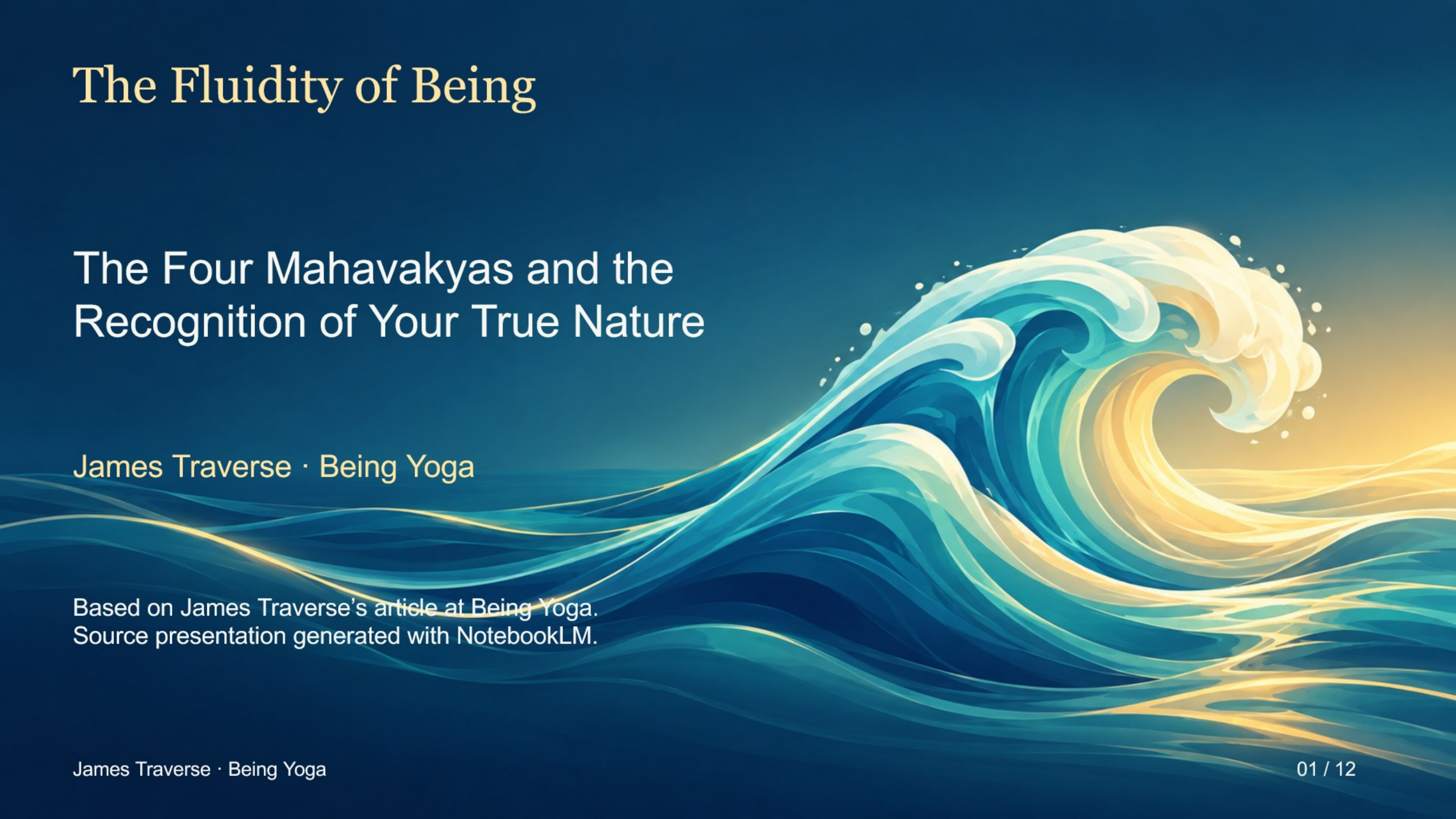


The Fluidity of Being

The Four Mahavakyas and the Recognition of Your True Nature

James Traverse · Being Yoga

Based on James Traverse's article at Being Yoga.
Source presentation generated with NotebookLM.



Unmasking Limited Identity

Physical conditions and emotions

Body, health, and passing moods arise and fall within experience. They are directly observed, but do not constitute the observer.

Practical roles

Roles such as parent, professional, or caregiver serve practical purposes in daily interaction. They describe function, not essence.

Evaluative judgments

Judgments like “success” or “failure” describe how we evaluate experience. They are conceptual overlays, not fundamental reality.

Roles serve practical purposes. Judgments describe how we evaluate experience. Neither exhausts who we are.

Spiritual awakening reveals your true nature and loosens mistaken identification.

Self-Inquiry: Questioning the Observer

Noticing experience (mindfulness)

Observes whatever arises in present awareness: passing thoughts, sounds, bodily sensations, and emotions.

Directs attention to WHAT is occurring in the present moment without judgment.

Loosens immediate reactivity and creates spaciousness.

Inquiring into identity (self-inquiry)

Asks: “Who is aware of this?” or “Is this passing condition the whole of who I am?”

Turns attention around to examine the nature of the observer.

Reveals the knowing presence through which experience is known.

Self-inquiry moves beyond noticing content to question identity, distinguishing passing conditions from the knowing presence through which experience is known.

Atman: The Intimacy of Being

Atman names your true nature. Atman is Brahman.

Atman refers to your essential Self: the intimate, ever-present awareness through which all experience is known.

It is not an isolated individual soul trying to reach a distant God or external Source.

Atman provides the inward perspective of immediate being, starting right here with the intimate presence of existence.

Brahman: One Undivided Reality

**Brahman names Source, by whatever name,
prior to space and time.**

Brahman describes reality without limitation: the infinite Source prior to conceptual boundaries.

Brahman and how it appears are not two things.

Atman and Brahman provide two complementary entry points for speech, but establish One Undivided Reality.

The Four Mahavakyas

“Consciousness is Brahman”

Prajnanam Brahma
Reveals knowing awareness as limitless reality.

“You are That”

Tat Tvam Asi
Eliminates the imagined distance between seeker and Source.

Their greatness lies in the depth of what they reveal: your essential being is already whole, inseparable from Source.

“I am Brahman”

Aham Brahmasmi
Dismantles identification with a separate, limited self.

“This Self is Brahman”

Ayam Atma Brahma
Declares immediate presence right now as limitless reality.

Focus of Inquiry and Upanishadic Sources

Mahavakya	Focus of inquiry	A question for reflection	Passage reference
Consciousness is Brahman (Prajnanam Brahma)	Knowing awareness itself	Is the awareness behind all thoughts limited?	Aitareya 3.1.3
I am Brahman (Aham Brahmasmi)	The sense of “I” and identity	Is your true identity confined to a personal story?	Brihadaranyaka 1.4.10
You are That (Tat Tvam Asi)	The seeker and destination	Is Source something separate to be reached in the future?	Chandogya 6.8.7
This Self is Brahman (Ayam Atma Brahma)	Immediacy of present existence	Is the Self present right now different from limitless reality?	Mandukya 2

Waking, Dreaming, Deep Sleep and Turiya

The Mandukya Upanishad explores the Self through waking, dreaming and deep sleep, and through Turiya, the fourth.

In classical Advaita, Turiya indicates the nondual Self.

In James Traverse's correspondence, Turiya is spoken of as the most subtle appearance of Atman, akin to a point with location yet no dimensions.

Atman is Brahman. Turiya is Brahman. The naming allows appearances to be spoken about without giving them independent existence.

Mithya: Neither Real Nor Unreal

Understanding appearances

A summary of James Traverse's teaching

Worldly appearances, including body, mind, and personal roles, are directly experienced and functionally significant, yet possess no independent existence apart from Source.

Mithya describes this status: appearances are neither absolutely real (like unchanging Brahman) nor wholly unreal (like a square circle).

Recognizing mithya allows one to engage fully with daily circumstances without requiring passing forms to define fundamental identity.

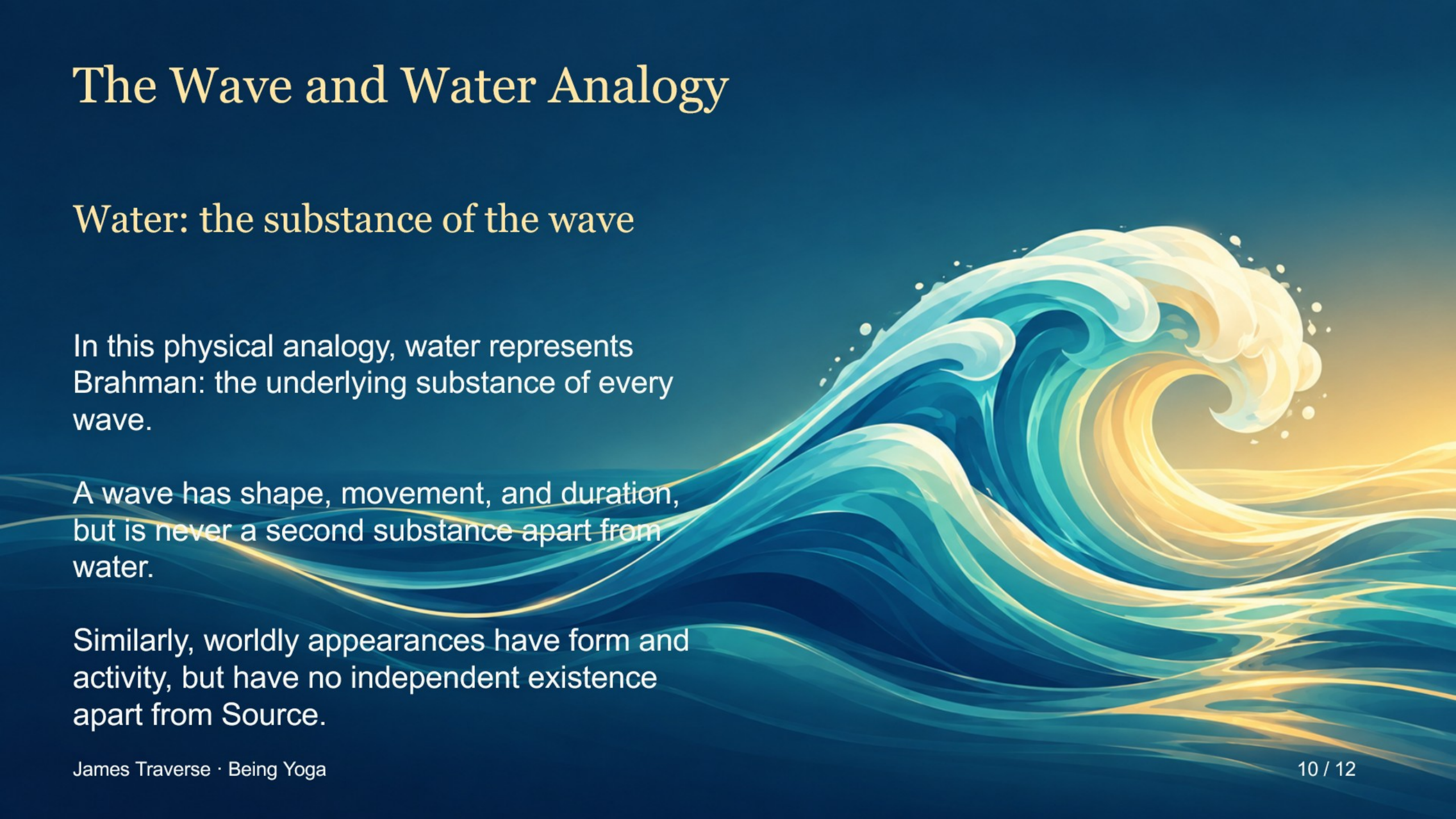
The Wave and Water Analogy

Water: the substance of the wave

In this physical analogy, water represents Brahman: the underlying substance of every wave.

A wave has shape, movement, and duration, but is never a second substance apart from water.

Similarly, worldly appearances have form and activity, but have no independent existence apart from Source.



Understanding Becomes Natural in Living

Listening (Shravana)

Hearing or reading the teaching and grasping what the words point to, rather than collecting new concepts.

Reflection (Manana)

Carefully examining personal doubts, putting meaning into your own words, and bringing hidden assumptions into question.

Contemplative assimilation (Nididhyasana)

Allowing understanding to become natural in ordinary situations, distinguishing passing conditions while fulfilling responsibilities.

Assimilation is the process where non-dual understanding thoroughly permeates your everyday experience.

Living the Recognition

Life continues.
Understanding changes.

Care, honest speech and practical
responsibility give recognition
expression.

Read the full article

[beingyoga.com/
four-mahavakyas-spiritual-awakening/](https://beingyoga.com/four-mahavakyas-spiritual-awakening/)

