Over the past few years, the discoveries and theories of neuroscience have occupied a prominent place in the popular media, and we frequently hear that mankind is finally coming to understand the nature of human consciousness. Various religious traditions, for their part, have always had a great deal to say about human subjectivity and its significance in the cosmic scheme of things. Within Islam, two broad fields of learning—Sufism and philosophy—have always placed consciousness near the center of their concerns. In both of these fields, however, consciousness is less a given than something to be achieved. A review of the basic Sufi understanding may throw some light on the strengths and weaknesses of contemporary approaches.