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Emergence Questions of the Week

01/ 23/ 06

These Questions, On How the Mind Works,
Were Asked After Reading the Article:

["The Conscious, Subconscious, and Unconscious, a New Look at an Old Metaphor."](#)



This Week's Ten Questions

[Question 1] How can a topographical model, that is, a "visual" object, integrate with the Layers of Aloneness (our personality theory)? Does "consciousness" mean that I am in the highest layer of the onion and that "unconsciousness" corresponds to when I am in shock?

[Answer] Start with the idea that both these theories (both our topographical model of consciousness, and our theory of personality) are "visual theories." More over, both theories share the same "visual" scale of measurement. What I mean is, we base both theories on the idea that the measure of human consciousness relates directly to the visual intensity of what people see on the screen of their mind.

How does this play out in these two theories?

Start by imaging you are standing at the edge of a very deep lagoon. Now imagine you are looking out and trying to see what is in this beautiful lagoon. In our "topographical model of consciousness," what we see above the water (what is in the highest topographical area) equates to what we can see very clearly on the screen of our mind. What we see here is what is in the conscious part of our minds.

What is just below the water (what is in the middle topographical area) equates to what we can also see but with distortions and so, it equates to the images we can see only partially and less clearly. This is what is in the subconscious part of our minds.

Finally, what is in the deeper parts of the water (what is in the lowest topographical area) equates to what we can barely see, or to what we may sense but cannot see at all. This is what is in the unconscious portion of our minds.

Now imagine that we erect a very long pole right in the center of this lagoon, a pole which we will use to measure our ability to see. At its highest, this pole stands thirty feet above the water. At its lowest, we have sunk it thirty feet into the mud. Finally, in order to use this pole as a measure, we have divides this

pole into ten sections, and have numbered these sections from ten at the top end to one at the bottom end.

What would these sections represent?

Layer ten, the part of the pole which is totally above the water and visually highest overall, would represent what we are extremely conscious of, the things in our mind we might refer to as the "amazing view!" things.

Layer one then, most of which would be buried in the mud, would represent what is in our unconscious mind, meaning, what we cannot see nor even sense most times.

This is the range of our measuring pole, from fully conscious at the top in section ten, to fully unconscious at the bottom in section one. More over, these ten sections represent our theory of personality, the Layers of Aloneness. So how does this theory connect to our theory of the mind?

In order to see, we need to divide these ten sections on our pole into three separate groups. Here, the first group would be the upper most layers on the pole, Layers 10, 9, 8 and 7. This group of layers would represent the part of our minds wherein we are conscious, in other words, the part of our minds in which things are visually clear. The second group of layers would be Layers 6 and 5, the layers of the subconscious. Here, we can see things but only partially. Finally, the third group of layers, Layers 4, 3, 2 and 1 are the layers in which we are unconscious, meaning, the layers in which we experience degrees of being in shock. These layers equate to what we may occasionally sense but cannot see.

What does this mean about human personality overall? It means that all of human experience, how we think and feel and what we say and do, is directly related to how clearly we can visualize things on the screen of our minds. Thus, representing our theories topographically allow us to picture these theories consciously.

Question 2] Does Freud's "Id" correspond to consciousness and to the first year of a baby's life? If so, does the "ego" equate to the sub-conscious and the "superego" equate to being unconscious?

[Answer] To be honest Jen, answering this question would require a whole book. The short answer? Despite some similarities, these ideas are in fact all quite different, both within Freud's systems and within ours. How? To get a grasp of how, consider how Freud originally worded these three terms.

In the original German, Freud referred to the id as the "it," the ego as the "I," and the superego as the "above-me." Here, the "it" meant something like the impulsive self, the impersonal, uncontrolled forces parts of a person. Thus the "id" part of a person might say something like, "It just came over me."

Freud's "above-me" part of a person then, was something like a moralistic self, the part of a person which stands in judgment above the person. In this case, the "above-me" part of a person might say something like, "I'm better than that. What was wrong with me? I never should have done that!"

Finally, the "I" part of Freud's person was something like the rational part of the self, the "I did that because ... " part of a person.

Can you see how much more consciously we can understand Freud's original words? This is because they give us a visual sense of what he must have been thinking. More over, despite the fact that most Freudians

would equate the id with the unconscious, there is no way to directly translate the other two terms into topographical terms, neither into Freud's sense of these terms nor into ours, which differ somewhat from his.

As for how the terms id, ego, and superego relate to what we posit about personality, we see personality as much more than just "what we do"; more than just our functions. Thus, while we do see a "functional" part of personality (the part of us which tries to measure everything "logically"), we see this part of ourselves as existing in Layers 1 through 4 only, in our outer four layers. We then see a "medical" us (the part of us which tries to measure about ourselves "literally") as the part of personality which exists in Layers 6 and 5, the middle layers. Finally, we see a "visual" us (what we can literally visualize; our conscious self) as the part of personality which exists in the inner group of layers, in Layers 10 through 7.

In our theoretical system then, [1] the "functional self" represents everything we can measure logically, from how we explain ourselves and punish others, to how we can be totally unaware of ourselves and our lives. [2] The "medical self" then represents all we can measure literally, from our symptomatic self to our asymptomatic conditions. Finally, [3] the "visual self" represents our most basic sense of connection to, and detachment from, ourselves and from everything else in our lives.

[Question 3] Is it human nature to use why logic? If it is so useless and apparently detrimental to our consciousness, why is it there? Or is that a why logic question? Duh, Jen!

[Answer] No, Jen, this is not a why logic question. In fact, explaining what makes it not be "why logic" would be the best way for me to answer your question.

First, yes, you are right. It is natural for us to use why logic and not that we are simply responding to injury. In fact, we all feel urges to use why logic, and these urges are neither useless nor detrimental to our consciousness. Rather, why logic serves a very important function in us. It allows us to distance ourselves from our experiences, and in doing so, allows us to both examine our lives in measured quantities and protects us from further injury whilst doing this.

[Question 4] It doesn't make sense to me to use why logic if it is useless and increases suffering. Is it there only to facilitate healing through a process like Emergence? You know, like what NOT to do versus what to do?

[Answer] See the previous answer, especially where I speak about the positive functions of why logic. Ultimately, then, although you are right again; that why logic increases suffering, we still need it at times. Why? Because in a way, it is the most civilized way we have of taking a break from the work of emerging from our wounds. It also gets us to be self examining, which is always a good thing overall. It also keeps us striving for a better life, even when what this method is based on; the idea that logical predictions can prevent future suffering; is untrue. We cannot prevent our suffering with why logic, only with emergence. But we cannot spend our entire lives or even the majority of our lives healing. It is just too painful and would only put so in shock we would lose our ability to heal.

[Question 5] Is avoidance of painful situations like what happens in the proverb "What you resist, persists"? I think that it is, but do you mean that until we emerge from it, the universe keeps serving it up?

[Answer] Yes. And yes. Even so, no life is worth living as only work, no vacations. Thus, why logic could be seen as "civilized" vacations for the work of healing our BLocks.

[Question 6] Why isn't the knowledge of cause and effect useful for removing blocks? Is it even of any use in the science world or does it just limit us to what we already know?

[Answer] Start with this. Logic is incredibly beautiful, especially when applied to static concepts like geometry. Thus, the logic of a square is absolutely amazing in that a "square" is an idea which is infinitely variable yet never changes. This means logic can work as intended with squares because squares will respond in predictable ways.

We, on the other hand, are finitely variable and often stuck in ruts, largely as a result of having what we call, BLocks. Thus, to attempt to force-fit what is finite and often stuck (us) into some category of what is infinitely variable and yet unchanging (our ideals) is simply an absurdity by design. And a waste of effort.

In other words, to pretend we human beings can be cast into molds like squares is to ignore the essence of our humanity; that we are all "home-made cakes" with occasional moments wherein we rise to our ideals.

Said in other words, logic works with logical things, and human beings, despite their best efforts, are so far from being logical that our best why logic fails even when we use it in the broadest scope of personality.

[Question 7] Is there a person or diagnosis where the natural programming is not altered by life?

[Answer] Wow! Good question, Jen. Let me think.

No. We are all affected by BLocks. Thus, we all have areas wherein our natural programming has been altered by life, both by submergences (getting BLocks) and emergences (healing our BLocks). However, if we zoom in on the smaller facets of a person, we might find a facet wherein these alterations have had little to no effect.

Even so, they await the time wherein we experience the right, or should I say "wrong" situation. Invariably, they will then appear as something between symptoms and the lack of experience (as something between Layer 5 and Layer 1).

[Question 8] When I am in a painful situation (or more likely, when I am imagining a painful situation, or reliving a past painful situation), what is the best way to see my other choices?

[Answer] The *best* way happens to be the *only* way; to emerge from whatever prevents you from seeing those other choices naturally. In other words, emergence is the only way we can see the other choices. Other than this then, we remain literally blind to the other choices, even when we can mentally and logically remain aware these other choices exist, and even when we are otherwise in the best of mental, physical, and spiritual conditions.

[Question 9] I can't picture what the container is for the mind. Is the container the flesh and blood of our brains, and our thoughts and feelings the result of chemical reactions and neuropeptides?

[Answer] Let me start by addressing your second question; Is the container the flesh and blood of our brains, and our thoughts and feelings the result of chemical reactions and neuropeptides? The answer?

This idea, which is essentially that our physiology is analogous to our personality, is in truth, quite flawed as a theory, even though our physical bodies and our personalities are quite interdependent. What I'm saying is, try to let go of the idea that the container of the mind exists as a physical structure. In reality then, even though scientists may eventually find that there are distinctly different qualities to the neurons

which we could say are the ones which carry conscious and unconscious information, our theory functions best simply because it is a metaphor and not bound by any literal, physical reality.

What do we gain from using this metaphor though?

We gain the ability to picture what does not literally exist, at least in the physical sense of this word. This means we get to be able to picture personality on the screen of our minds. In doing so, we become conscious of something we humans normally cannot grasp. Remember, picturing is being conscious.

In a way then, our metaphors for consciousness and for personality function more like an electron microscope, wherein we interpret what is there by noting how what we do see is being affected by what we do not see. This is how we become able to imagine we see things beyond our literal ability to see, things like quarks and charms. Thus, because our personalities are beyond our literal ability to picture, these metaphors allow us to indirectly picture "what we ordinarily cannot picture." And if you now think about it, isn't this the whole nature of what we do in Emergence.

[Question 10] Do animals have memories and injuries like us? Or do they experience life differently from how we have emotional experiences / re-experiences? Do they have a soul for instance?

[Answer] These are deep questions, Jen, and ones for which I doubt I have any definitive answers. I can tell you what I believe to be true, mostly ideas for which I've seen a few threads of similarity.

I believe that animals' states of consciousness are very similar to those of human babies before age seven. In addition, I believe they live mostly in the state in which babies develop between about age two and age seven, but without being driven by human-style caregivers' demands for verbal language. Thus, I imagine adult animals live similarly to how feral children live; very consciously but with no sense historical time. Translation. I believe animals develop personalities which include Layers 10 through 5 and perhaps 1, but never develop Layers 4, 3, and 2.

What does this mean?

They learn by association only. This means they learn through creating threads of visual similarity. Thus, they must not feel compelled to use why logic to prevent their suffering, nor compelled to blame anyone for what happens in life. They may even be unable to take credit for what they do well.

As for souls, I'll leave that question to the more religious Layer 2 type folks. I, myself, am not sure the soul exists as anything but a metaphor. Then again, it is one of the most beautiful ideas we humans have ever come up with.



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Emergence Questions of the Week: On Why Logic

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