

CHANGING HUMAN BEHAVIOUR

SELF-AWARENESS



INSPIRED BY J. KRISHNAMURTI

SILENT PERCEPTION

Changing Human Behaviour

Self-Awareness

A meditative exploration of what has failed to change human behaviour, why it has failed, and what works.

Inspired by the teachings of **J. Krishnamurti** and the philosophical clarity of **David Bohm**.

INSPIRED BY J. KRISHNAMURTI

Written by Silent Perception

“To comprehend oneself is to liberate oneself.” — *Silent Perception*

Copyright © 2024 Silent Perception

All rights reserved.

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means—electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise—without the prior written permission of the publisher, except in the case of brief quotations used in critical articles, reviews, or educational commentary.

This book is an original work inspired by the life and teachings of J. Krishnamurti. It is not affiliated with, endorsed by, or associated with the Krishnamurti Foundation Trust, the Krishnamurti Foundation of America, the Krishnamurti Foundation India, or any related organisation.

All reflections, interpretations, and philosophical expressions within are those of the author. No part of this work reproduces copyrighted content from J. Krishnamurti's official publications. Any references to his teachings are paraphrased and presented in original language, with the intent to support inquiry and personal understanding.

This digital edition is intended for educational and contemplative use only.

For updates and related works, visit: www.silentperception.co.uk

To contact the author, email: hello@silentperception.co.uk

First Digital Edition, December 2024

Images designed by Freepik: www.freepik.com

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTIONS

INTRODUCTION	2
STRUCTURE OF INQUIRY	3

CHAPTERS

BEHAVIOUR	5
CHANGING BEHAVIOUR	7
THE CURRENT APPROACH TO CHANGE BEHAVIOUR	9
THE FACTOR OF FAILURE	13
ESCAPE	15
THE PREMISE OF ESCAPE	18
THE NEW APPROACH TO CHANGE BEHAVIOUR	21
HOW THE NEW APPROACH WORKS	24
ACTION WITHOUT ABSTRACTION	28
THE OBSERVATION OF THOUGHT	31

INTRODUCTION

This series focuses on human behaviour, specifically how to change human behaviour. The series discusses observation as a tool to facilitate behavioural change.

The Premise:

The **observation of our behaviour** is a **learning about our behaviour** that **transforms our behaviour**.

Our behaviour is a reaction.

Example:

Anger is a behaviour. It takes place in response to an experience.

Anxiety is a behaviour. It takes place in response to an experience.

By observing the **cause, experience** and **consequence** of our **various reactions**, we are able to formulate a **general understanding of human behaviour** and, at the same time, develop a **unique understanding of our specific idiosyncrasy** as a human.

The observation of ourselves results in a **general understanding that comprehends the commonality of mankind**, and a **specialised understanding that comprehends our unique variants of common problems**.

Explanation: 'our unique variant of common problems'

Anxiety is a common problem, and it effects people in much the same way, however, each person has a unique condition that produces that anxiety. The condition, being unique, can only be resolved by a solution that is similarly unique. This means, the solution can only come through the unique experience offered by the observation of my own anxiety.

Example:

NOTE: the example uses speculative percentages

While 95% of **Person-A's** anxiety is common, the other 5% makes it unique. It is not possible to clear up the 95% of the anxiety with a common method and leave the other 5% intact. The solution to anxiety requires a total solution and, thus, a unique solution, otherwise the anxiety persists.

A generic approach to changing anxiety is like pruning a bush. The pruning modifies the bush but, over time, the branches grow back, just in a modified form.

Only the observation of my unique experience of anxiety can transform the anxiety I experience.

In this series we discuss our current approach to changing human behaviour and why it has failed. We propose a new approach to changing human behaviour that utilises the immediate perception of the problem.

STRUCTURE OF INQUIRY

This section provides a basic introduction to each chapter.

Chapter 1: Behaviour

The chapter discusses behaviour as the response of our conditioning to an experience.

Chapter 2: Changing Behaviour

The chapter discusses the challenge of changing behaviour.

Chapter 3: The Current Approach To Change Behaviour

The chapter discusses our current approach to solving psychological problems.

Our current approach is to formulate a solution, and impose the solution on the problem in an attempt to force change.

Chapter 4: The Factor of Failure

The chapter discusses the various ways we try to solve psychological problems, and exposes the common factor of their failure.

The factor of failure in our current approach is the attempt to escape from the problem.

Chapter 5: Escape

The chapter discusses why we continue to adopt approaches that fail to solve the problem.

We continue to attempt to escape from our thoughts and feelings because of the successes we have in escaping from people and places.

Chapter 6: The Premise of Escape

The chapter discusses what is required for escape to work, and what causes escape to fail.

For escape to work, separation between myself and the thing I am escaping from, must be possible.

Example:

I can escape from a lion because there is a separation between me and the lion.

I cannot escape from anxiety because there is no separation between me and the anxiety.

Chapter 7: The New Approach To Change Behaviour

The chapter discusses a new approach to changing behaviour.

The approach is absent of the desire to escape from the problem. In the absence of escape, one maintains a perceptive relationship with the problem.

Chapter 8: How The New Approach Works

The chapter discusses how the new approach works.

The new approach is to observe the problem. The observation of the problem produces an understanding of the problem. The understanding of the problem has an immediate effect on the expression of the problem.

A change in the expression of the problem is made possible due to the understanding causing a change in knowledge. The problem is an expression of knowledge in the first place. So, when knowledge changes, there is inevitably an immediate change in the expression of knowledge (the problem).

The **observation** is the **education**, and the **education** is the **transformation**.

Chapter 9: Action Without Abstraction

The chapter discusses how the new approach negates the necessity of a concept or theory.

The transformation of human behaviour comes from a direct perception of human behaviour.

Chapter 10: The Observation of Thought

The chapter visually models the new approach to changing behaviour.

CHAPTER 1

BEHAVIOUR

WRITTEN BY SILENT PERCEPTION

BEHAVIOUR

Every behaviour is a response to what we experience based on our conditioning.

Example:

Every thought we think is a response determined by our conditioning.

Every emotion we feel is a response determined by our conditioning.

Every gesture we make is a response determined by our conditioning.

Every word we say is a response determined by our conditioning.

Our conditioning is the totality of knowledge we possess: our total understanding of life. That forms the idiosyncrasy that is our behaviour.

Everything we do right, is a reaction based on what we know.

Everything we do wrong, is a reaction based on what we know.

The Distinction between a Mistake and a Problem

When we act wrongly once, we refer to it as a mistake. When we repeat the mistake again and again, we refer to the habitual mistake as a problem.

Examples of a Problem:

We often get angry far too easily.

We often let people walk all over us.

Our Specific Problems

Each person has an idiosyncrasy that harbours numerous strengths and weaknesses. Within this idiosyncrasy there is contained numerous problems. Those problems have arisen as a result of unique experiences that have conditioned the mind.

Example:

100 people who suffer with social anxiety will have derived that condition from a 100 different experiences.

NOTE: conceptually, you can draw similarities in those experiences but, actually, those experiences were unique: they took place at different times, in different places, with different people, and impacted a specific individual. Any generalisation of that experience is a dilution of the fact

Conclusion

Behaviour is the response of our conditioning to an experience.

CHAPTER 2

CHANGING BEHAVIOUR

WRITTEN BY SILENT PERCEPTION

CHANGING BEHAVIOUR

The challenge we have is not only how to solve a unique problem in an individual, but how to solve multiple unique problems in multiple individuals.

Example:

Person-A may have a unique anxiety problem, and a unique anger problem.

Person-B may have a unique self-esteem problem, and a unique loneliness problem.

Due to its uniqueness, each problem can only be handled by the person that is conditioned to that problem. It cannot be handled by an expert. An expert can only offer a generalised approach that neglects the uniqueness of the problem. Behavioural change is possible with a generalised approach but, since the approach is partial (general and, thus, limited) it can only produce partial change. In the face of a debilitating psychological problem, a serious person does not want to knock off a few bricks, they want the whole structure to crumble.

Conclusion

Each person has a unique problem that requires a unique solution.

CHAPTER 3

THE CURRENT APPROACH TO CHANGE BEHAVIOUR

WRITTEN BY SILENT PERCEPTION

THE CURRENT APPROACH TO CHANGE BEHAVIOUR

Analysis has a place in many aspects of life from deciding what shirt to wear to the development of rocket propulsion systems. The understanding of the world is greatly aided by analysis, and it is possible to understand oneself through analysis and reap many benefits, you see this in the field of psychology.

The process of analysis is to first observe. From that observation we develop an understanding. We then think about what we have understood and develop a concept. We then act according to that concept.

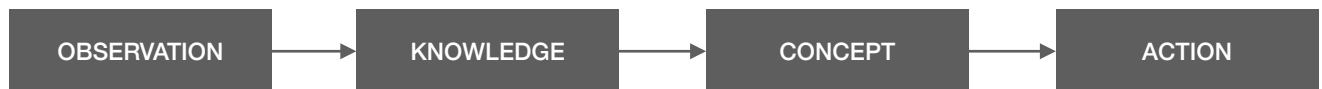


figure 1. the process of analysis

When you act according to the concept, you observe how your actions effect the thing you are analysing. Based on the effect you adjust your concept and refine your future actions. This is what we call trial and error.

Example: A Physical Problem

My car is broken. To fix the car I must:

1. Observe the car to understand the problem.



figure 2. observe and understand

2. Formulate a solution



figure 3. concept

3. Implement the solution



figure 4. action

I then observe if the action has solved the problem.

If the action has solved the problem, the analytical process ends.

If the action has not solved the problem, then I must repeat the analytical process.

We apply the same analytical process in our attempt to solve psychological problems.

Example: A Psychological Problem

I have social anxiety. In an attempt to fix the problem I:

1. Observe the anxiety to understand the problem.



figure 5. observe and understand

2. Formulate a solution



figure 6. concept

3. Implement the solution



figure 7. action

The analysis of a psychological problem, such as anxiety, results in the formulation of an action that we hope will have an effect on the problem. That action takes one of the following forms:

- Distraction
- Contradiction
- Suppression

The action presupposes a separation between oneself and the problem, and over that separation we utilise an action of will that tries to force change.

Example: Distraction

When I am in a situation that causes anxiety, I go on my phone to distract myself.

Example: Contraction

When I am in a situation that causes anxiety, I reassure myself that I am going to be okay.

Example: Suppression

When I am in a situation that causes anxiety, I use a breathing exercise to reduce its intensity.

Throughout our lives we try to force change. We educate ourselves to one method then, when it fails, we discard it, and pick up another method. The continual failure of this methodical approach inevitably results in the belief that psychological change is impossible, so we accept living with our problems. This acceptance results in the development of avoidant behaviours.

Example: Avoidance

When I cannot find a solution to anxiety, I avoid the situations that cause anxiety.

Conclusion

Our current approach to solving psychological problems is to create a solution (a concept; a method) that we act out in an attempt to force change.

CHAPTER 4

THE FACTOR OF FAILURE

WRITTEN BY SILENT PERCEPTION

THE FACTOR OF FAILURE

We attempt to force change through an act of distraction, contradiction or suppression. Each of these share a common factor: escape.

Distraction

When I am in situation that causes anxiety, I go on my phone to distract myself.

That is an escape.

Contradiction

When I am in situation that causes anxiety, I reassure myself that I am going to be okay.

That is an escape.

Suppression

When I am in situation that causes anxiety, I use a breathing exercise to reduce its intensity.

That is an escape.

Failing to change, we concede to our problems, and adopt another type of action: avoidance.

Avoidance

Knowing that I get anxious around lots of people, I refuse to go to places where lots of people gather.

That is an escape.

Avoidance is the most extreme form of escape: the refusal to enter the experience.

Distraction, contradiction, suppression and avoidance all fail to solve the problem and they all share one common factor: escape.

I distract myself to escape from anxiety.

I reassure myself to escape from anxiety.

I use my breathing exercise to escape from anxiety.

I avoid any situation that may trigger anxiety to escape from anxiety.

The common factor of our current approaches is escape.

Conclusion

The factor of failure in our current approach to psychological problems is the attempt to escape from the problem.

CHAPTER 5

ESCAPE

WRITTEN BY SILENT PERCEPTION

ESCAPE

In order to adopt behaviours that attempt to escape from the problem, I must first believe that escaping from the problem is possible.

To escape from a psychological problem is not possible.

It is not possible to escape from a thought.

It is not possible to escape from a feeling.

That is so obvious, yet we are accustomed to do it any time a painful thought or emotion arises. In fact, we are so accustomed to it that we spend decades battling with our problems to no avail. It is important for us to understand why, in the face of constant failure, we continue with this approach?

There are three reasons why we continue to use a failed approach.

1. We want to dissipate the discomfort as soon as possible.
2. We do not accept its failure.
3. We do not know another approach.

We want to dissipate the discomfort as soon as possible

The suffering we experience produces the demand to move away from the pain as quickly as possible. We instinctively adopt what we believe to be the quickest route to safety.

We do not accept its failure

We refuse to accept the approach to be a failure and continue to hope it will succeed in the future.

We do not know another approach

We would rather maintain an approach that does not work and hope that one day we can make it work, than give up with the approach and be left with nothing.

Accepting the Failure

When we accept the failure of the approach we will:

1. No longer use it as a means to dissipate discomfort.
2. Accept its failure.
3. Search for a different approach.

Why We Continue With The Failed Approach

We maintain an escapist attitude in the psychological field because we see that escape works in the physical field.

Clarification:

We maintain an escapist attitude in relation to **thoughts** and **emotions** because we see that escape works in relation to **people** and **places**.

We do not realise there is a physical world with one set of rules, and a psychological world with a different set of rules. In the absence of that distinction, the successes we experience in the physical world (through escape) condition us to believe that we can have similar successes in the psychological world (through escape).

Lets give some examples to clearly distinguish between the physical world and psychological world.

Escape In The Physical World: Crossing the Road

I am crossing the road. Suddenly, I see a car rushing towards me, so I jump out of the way.

That is a successful escape from danger.

Escape In The Physical World: An Abusive Relationship

I am in an abusive relationship, my husband is hitting me. One day, when he goes to work, I leave the house and never return.

That is a successful escape from danger.

Escape In The Physical World: A Tiger Nearby

I am walking through the jungle, and I see a tiger. Immediately I run, and barricade myself in a nearby house.

That is a successful escape from danger.

These all demonstrate successful escapes from problems, and they condition the mind to validate escape as an approach. The successes in physical field cause us to overlook the failures in the psychological field because we have not distinguished these as two different fields.

Conclusion

We continue to attempt to escape from our thoughts and feelings because of the successes we have in escaping from people and places.

CHAPTER 6

THE PREMISE OF ESCAPE

WRITTEN BY SILENT PERCEPTION

THE PREMISE OF ESCAPE

In the previous chapter we gave examples of physical escapes:

- Crossing the Road
- An Abusive Relationship
- A Tiger Nearby

Escape here was successful because there is an actual separation between me and the thing I am escaping from.

Crossing the Road

There is a separation between me and the car rushing towards me.

This enables me to put space between me and the car, and solve the problem.

An Abusive Relationship

There is a separation between me and the abusive partner.

This enables me to put space between me and the abusive partner, and solve the problem.

A Tiger Nearby

There is a separation between me and the tiger.

This enables me to put space between me and the tiger, and solve the problem.

The premise of a escape is separation.

When separation is a fact, escape is a possible solution.

The reason escape fails in a psychological regard is because there is no separation between me and a thought, or me and an emotion.

The thought is not separate to me, it is an expression of me.

The thought is not separate to knowledge, it is an expression of knowledge.



figure 1. the origin of any thought is knowledge.

Anxiety is not separate to knowledge, it is an expression of knowledge.



figure 2. the origin of anxiety is knowledge

The actions of distraction, contradiction and suppression presuppose a separation that does not exist, and that is why those approaches fail. Avoidance works because it is possible to separate myself from the situation that triggers my problem (i.e. the large groups of people that trigger my anxiety). Avoidance works to escape from the problem, but avoidance is not a solution to the problem. Avoidance circumvents the experience, but it has no effect on the problem.

Conclusion

The premise for escape is a separation between myself and the thing I am escaping from.

When separation is a fact, escape is possible.

When separation is not a fact, escape is impossible.

CHAPTER 7

THE NEW APPROACH TO CHANGE BEHAVIOUR

WRITTEN BY SILENT PERCEPTION

THE NEW APPROACH TO CHANGE BEHAVIOUR

Our current approach to psychological problems fails because it attempts to escape from the problem, which is impossible. The correct approach must, therefore, be absent of any action or intention to escape from the problem.

Our current approach to psychological problems fails because it presupposes a separation between ourselves, and the problem, that does not exist. The correct approach must, therefore, be absent of any sense of separation between ourselves and the problem.

Our current approach to psychological problems fails because it attempts to force change through a method. The correct approach must, therefore, be absent of any desire to act upon the problem.

Acting upon the problem presupposes a separation between me and the problem.

1. The part of me that is causing the problem.
2. The part of me that is going to solve the problem.

That separation is an illusion. There is only one mind that is conditioned to produce the problem. That is all. I am totally the problem. That is the fact we are working with.

The Failed Approach

The failed approach involves the perception of the problem, and the abstraction of that perception into a concept. The concept includes the formulation of a solution: the proposal of an action we can do to change our behaviour. We then act according to that proposed solution. The action takes the form of distraction, contradiction, suppression or avoidance.



figure 1. the failed approach

The Correct Approach

When the problem arises, I do not react to it.

I do not act to distract myself from it.

I do not act to contradict it.

I do not act to suppress it.

I refuse to escape from the problem. In the absence of escaping from the problem, I am left to simply observe the problem as it is expressing itself in the mind.



figure 2. observe and understand

The observation of the problem produces an understanding of the problem. The understanding of the problem has an immediate effect on the expression of the problem.

Example:

The **observation of anxiety** produces an **understanding of anxiety** that **transforms anxiety**.



figure 3. the action of understanding

In the next chapter we explain why the observation of anxiety has the ability to transform anxiety.

Conclusion

The failed approach centred around escaping from our psychological problems. Escape prevented observation of the problem. In the absence of escaping from the problem, the correct approach is innately present in the mind, it does not require training or a method. The correct approach to psychological problems is to simply observe them.

The **observation** is the **education**, and the **education** is the **transformation**.

CHAPTER 8

HOW THE NEW APPROACH WORKS

WRITTEN BY SILENT PERCEPTION

HOW THE NEW APPROACH WORKS

Life challenges us with different problems that require different solutions.

The Lion

When a lion is charging towards us, we do not spend excessive time observing the lion. We immediately see the lion, comprehend the danger, and run.

The Solution

Escape from the danger.

The Car

When our car is broken, we must observe the problem to understand the problem. We must then conceptualise a solution, and act according to that solution. We then test if the solution worked.

The Solution

Observe, learn, conceptualise a solution, and act according to that concept.

The Anxiety

When anxiety arises, we must observe the anxiety. The observation produces an understanding that has immediate effect on the anxiety.

The Solution

Observe.

In this chapter we focus on the approach to solving psychological problems (observation), and we explain why the approach works.

How The Approach Works

A psychological problem arises as a reaction to an experience. The reaction is the expression of knowledge.

Clarification:

The lion rushing towards you is not an expression of knowledge, it is not a thought.

The broken down car is not an expression of knowledge, it is not a thought.

The anxiety is the expression of knowledge, it is a thought.



figure 1. the origin of anxiety is knowledge

Anything we observe is recorded into memory as knowledge. It is through the act of observation that we learn. As the mind observes the problem, it learns about the problem.

Example:

The observation of anxiety produces an understanding of anxiety.



figure 2. observation creates knowledge

The learning produces a change in knowledge.

Example:

As I learn about anxiety, my knowledge of anxiety changes.

Since the problem is an expression of knowledge, a change in knowledge causes an immediate change in the expression of the problem.

Example:

As the knowledge of anxiety changes, there is an immediate change in the expression of anxiety.

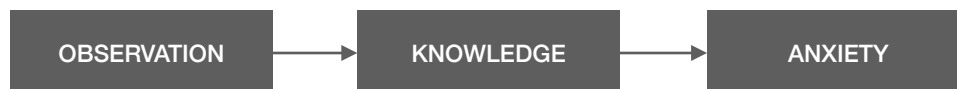


figure 3. a change in knowledge produces a change in expression

The observation of a problem has an immediate effect on the problem.

Example:

The observation of anxiety has an immediate effect on anxiety.

The requirement on the part of you is that you do not escape from the experience. In the absence of escape, perception is made possible, learning is made possible, and transformation is made possible.

The Action of Observation

With respect to thought, the observation of the problem is the solution to the problem. You do not have to bring a preconceived solution to the problem. Observation produces an understanding, and the understanding of the problem has an immediate effect on the problem. **The observation is the action.**



figure 4. perception action

The solution to psychological problems is to simply observe them. This enables us to make the statement.

The seeing is the healing.

Conclusion

The new approach is to observe psychological problems without the compulsion to escape from them. In the absence of escape, perception is made possible, learning is made possible, and transformation is made possible. The seeing is the healing.

CHAPTER 9

ACTION WITHOUT ABSTRACTION

WRITTEN BY SILENT PERCEPTION

ACTION WITHOUT ABSTRACTION

In the last chapter we made reference to two types of problems that had two types of solutions.

The Car

When our car is broken, we must observe the problem to understand the problem. We must conceptualise a solution and act out that solution. We must then test if the solution worked.

The Solution

Observe, learn, conceptualise a solution, and act according to that concept.



figure 1. action from a concept

The Anxiety

When anxiety arises, we must observe the anxiety. The observation produces an understanding that has immediate effect on the anxiety.

The Solution

Observe.



figure 2. action without a concept

Distinguishing Physical and Psychological Problems

Physical problems require a concept that we act according to.

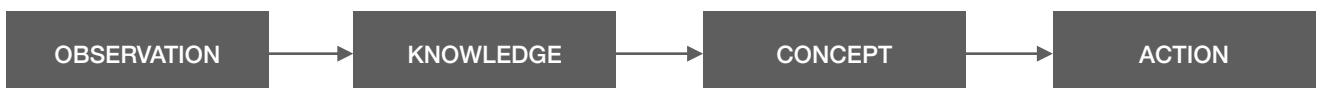


figure 3. action from a concept

Psychological problems do not require a concept. The knowledge responsible for the problem is modified directly through perception.

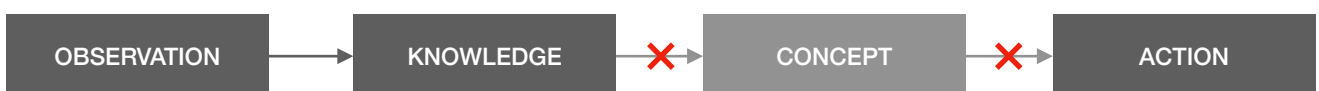


figure 4. action without a concept (showing excluded concept)



figure 5. action without a concept

The use of a concept in response to psychological problems is the basis for escape.

The basis for distraction is a concept.

The basis for contradiction is a concept.

The basis for suppression is a concept.

The basis for avoidance is a concept.

The use of a concept in response to psychological problems prevents observation and, thus, prevents transformation of the problem through learning. The way we have been accustomed to solve physical problems impedes our ability to solve psychological problems. That is why humanity has failed to solve psychological problems.

Conclusion

The use of a concept in response to psychological problems prevents observation of the problem and, thus, prevents learning and transformation. The perceptive solution to changing human behaviour operates in the absence of a concept. That means, immediate perception action. The seeing is the healing.

CHAPTER 10

THE OBSERVATION OF THOUGHT

WRITTEN BY SILENT PERCEPTION

THE OBSERVATION OF THOUGHT

The totality of the knowledge we possess is our conditioning. That conditioning produces the way we think, and according to what we think we act (our behaviour).



figure 1. the creation of knowledge

Why Observe Thought

The observation of our thinking enables us to see how we are conditioned, and this gives us an insight into why we behave the way we do.

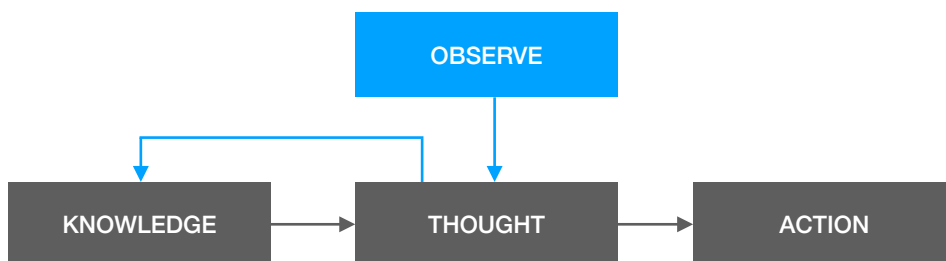


figure 2. the observation of thought gives insight into knowledge

The Purpose of Observing Thought

The purpose of observing how we think is to discover if we can learn something new that changes how we behave.

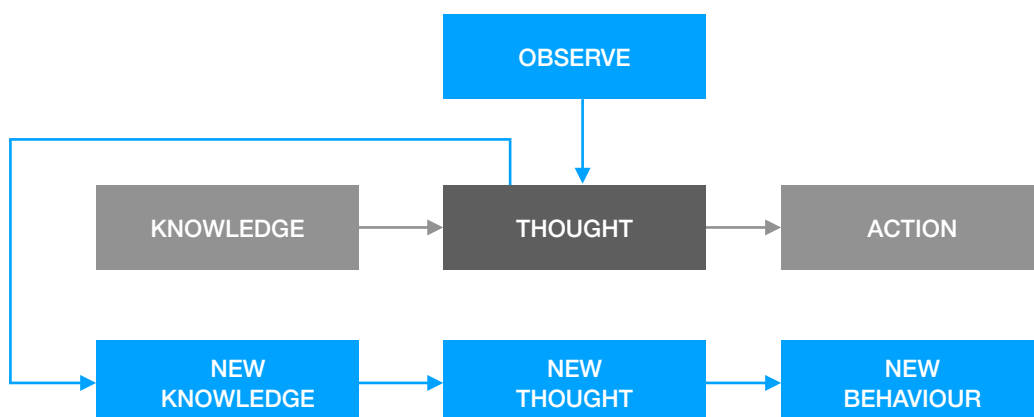


figure 3. the purpose of observing thought

Conclusion

When we observe thought, we see the mind that has been built: a mind that suffers. The observation of thought is the challenge to discover whether it is possible to live without suffering. Observation is the will to understand, and the challenge to change.