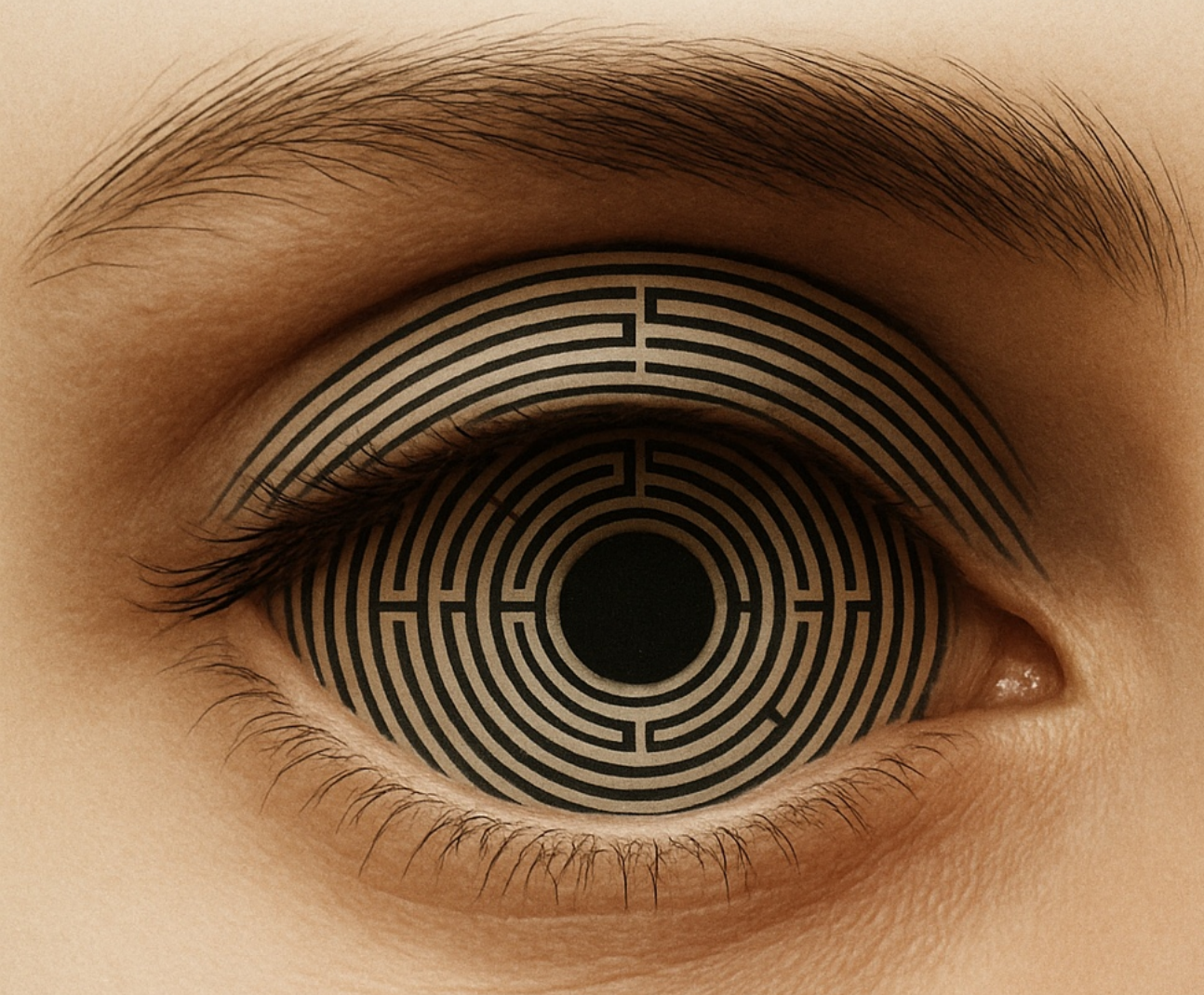


OBSERVATION

SEEING CLEARLY



INSPIRED BY J. KRISHNAMURTI

SILENT PERCEPTION

Observation

Seeing Clearly

A meditative exploration of the factors that prevent clear perception and what is required to alleviate them.

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

INSPIRED BY J. KRISHNAMURTI

Written by Silent Perception

“Seeing clearly is only possible when thought functions orderly.” — *Silent Perception*

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTIONS

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| INTRODUCTION | 2 |
| STRUCTURE OF INQUIRY | 4 |

CHAPTERS

| | |
|---|-----|
| THE BEGINNING OF OBSERVATION | 9 |
| THE FACTORS THAT IMPEDE PERCEPTION | 11 |
| THE FACTORS THAT IMPEDE PERCEPTION - THE PREVENTION OF PERCEPTION | 14 |
| THE FACTORS THAT IMPEDE PERCEPTION - THE DISTORTION OF PERCEPTION | 17 |
| THE CAUSE OF IMPEDED PERCEPTION | 20 |
| THE UTILITY OF THOUGHT | 23 |
| THE BASIS OF THOUGHT | 26 |
| THE REQUIREMENT TO REMOVE THE IMPEDIMENTS FROM PERCEPTION | 28 |
| THE FACTORS THAT PREVENT PERCEPTION | 30 |
| THE FACTORS THAT PREVENT PERCEPTION - PART 1 - DISTRACTION | 32 |
| THE FACTORS THAT PREVENT PERCEPTION - PART 2 - CONTRADICTION | 34 |
| THE FACTORS THAT PREVENT PERCEPTION - PART 3 - SUPPRESSION | 36 |
| CONFLICT | 38 |
| THE FAILURE TO FORCE CHANGE | 41 |
| THE FACTORS THAT PREVENT PERCEPTION - PART 4 - AVOIDANCE | 43 |
| FORGETTING MY PROBLEMS | 45 |
| KNOWLEDGE BETRAYS THE PRESENT | 48 |
| THE FACTOR THAT DISTORTS PERCEPTION | 51 |
| THE INTERPRETATION OF PERCEPTION | 53 |
| THE EFFECT OF INTERPRETATION | 56 |
| THE REALITY OF INTERPRETATION | 59 |
| HOW TO HANDLE INTERPRETATION | 63 |
| THE MISCONCEPTION OF PROBLEM SOLVING | 68 |
| THE MISCONCEPTION OF THE PROBLEM | 70 |
| THE MISCONCEPTION OF THE SOLUTION | 73 |
| THE MISCONCEPTION OF THE SOLUTION - WANTING AN ANSWER | 75 |
| THE MISCONCEPTION OF THE SOLUTION - FORMULATING THE SOLUTION | 79 |
| MEETING THE PROBLEM | 82 |
| THE TRUTH OF THE PROBLEM | 85 |
| THE QUALITY OF OBSERVATION | 86 |
| THE ATTITUDE OF OBSERVATION | 93 |
| INACTION | 95 |
| ACTION | 97 |
| SENSITIVITY | 100 |
| NEGATION | 102 |
| INTEREST | 104 |

INTRODUCTION

This book discusses observation.

In the book **The Mind Model** we built a model of the mind. The model shows the exact location of observation in the mind, so you are welcome to familiarise yourself with that book to get a clear understanding of what we are discussing when we use the term observation.

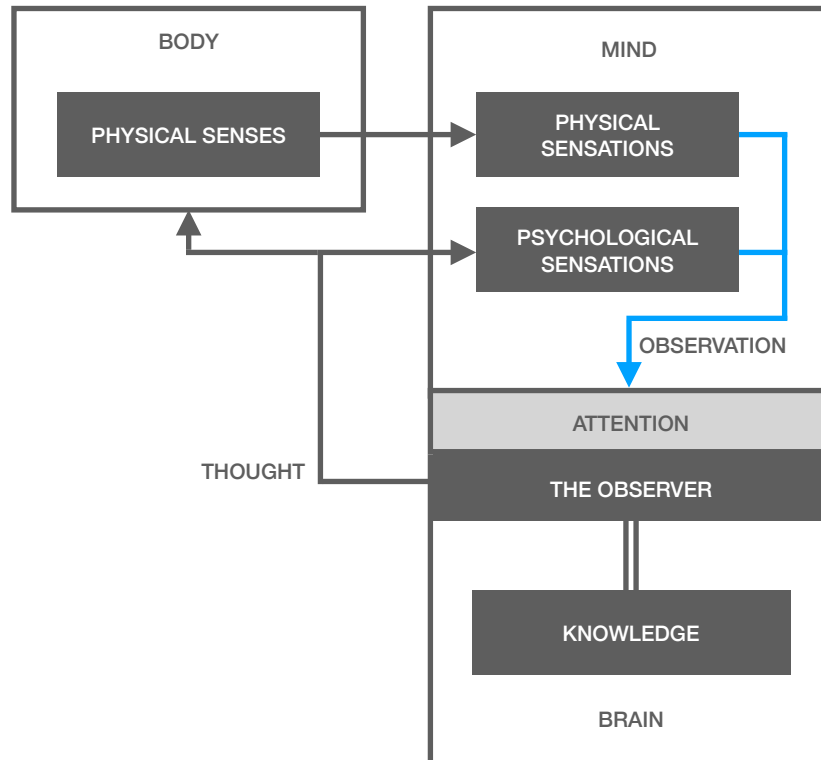


figure 1. observation in the mind model

The Mind book also discusses the ability to influence the aperture of observation through focusing our attention. The chapter is titled **Attention**.

In the book **Changing Human Behaviour** we discussed the observation of our behavioural problems as the means for changing our behaviour.

The Premise:

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

The Capability:

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**.

In this book we discuss the factors that impede the observation of ourselves and how to overcome them.

STRUCTURE OF INQUIRY

This section provides a basic introduction to each chapter.

Chapter 1: The Beginning of Observation

The chapter discusses how the observation of ourselves is impeded by several factors that require being identified and removed.

Chapter 2: The Factors That Impede Perception

The chapter discusses the two factors that impede perception: prevention and distortion.

Chapter 3: The Factors That Impede Perception - The Prevention of Perception

The chapter discusses how perception is prevented.

Perception is prevented when our attention is directed away from an object.

Chapter 4: The Factors That Impede Perception - The Distortion of Perception

The chapter discusses how perception is distorted.

Perception is distorted when the mind modifies the appearance of an object.

Chapter 5: The Cause of Impeded Perception

The chapter discusses the cause of perception being prevented and distorted.

Perception is prevented when the mind seeks to escape from the pain of the experience being perceived.

Perception is distorted through the way the mind interprets an object according to what we know about the object.

Chapter 6: The Utility of Thought

The chapter discusses how thought has both beneficial and detrimental activities.

Chapter 7: The Basis of Thought

The chapter discusses how thought operates according to the way the brain is conditioned.

Chapter 8: The Removal of Distortion

The chapter discusses how thought has the capability to change itself through the observation of itself.

Chapter 9: The Factors that Prevent Perception

The chapter discusses the factors that prevent perception: distraction, contradiction, suppression, and avoidance.

Chapter 10: The Factors that Prevent Perception - Part 1 - Distraction

The chapter discusses distraction in detail.

Chapter 11: The Factors that Prevent Perception - Part 2 - Contradiction

The chapter discusses contradiction in detail.

Chapter 12: The Factors that Prevent Perception - Part 3 - Suppression

The chapter discusses suppression in detail.

Chapter 13: Conflict

The chapter discusses how conflict is established through responding to one desire with a contradictory desire.

Chapter 14: The Failure to Force Change

The chapter discusses the failure of the mind to bring about change through force.

Chapter 15: The Factors that Prevent Perception - Part 4 - Avoidance

The chapter discusses avoidance in detail.

Chapter 16: Forgetting My Problems

The chapter discusses the limitations placed on your life through the intention to avoid your problems. Those limitations, in turn, cause unintended harm to the other areas of your life.

Chapter 17: Knowledge Betrays The Present

The chapter introduces the topic of how knowledge distorts perception.

We state that knowledge distorts perception through how it filters new information.

Chapter 18: The Factor that Distorts Perception

The chapter lays some groundwork for discussing how knowledge distorts perception.

We state that the mind distorts perception through interpreting what we see. The process of interpretation does not prevent perception, but superimposes appearances on perception. Those appearances are the meaning derived from the interpretations we make.

Chapter 19: The Interpretation of Perception

The chapter discusses how interpretation works.

We state that the present moment we perceive is unknown. The mind has to continually interpret **what it sees** according to **what it knows** to enable it to **understand what is happening** and act accordingly.

Chapter 20: The Effect of Interpretation

The chapter discusses the effect of interpretation on perception.

We state that interpretation effects perception by presenting information to the mind (in the form of meaning) based on what we know.

When the information presented is **true**, perception is **assisted** by interpretation.

When the information presented is **false**, perception is **distorted** by interpretation.

Chapter 21: The Reality of Interpretation

The chapter discusses how our interpretations are experienced as a reality.

We state that an interpretation is experienced as **real**, and considered to be **true**. The basis for interpretation is knowledge, and knowledge can be incorrect. This means, it is possible to perceive something, consider it to be **real**, but for it to actually be **false**.

Chapter 22: How to Handle Interpretation

The chapter discusses how to handle interpretations.

We state that the interpretations that assist perception work properly and do not require intervention, but the interpretations that are detrimental to perception do. We are required to identify and remedy erroneous interpretations, and in the chapter we discuss the steps involved in this.

Chapter 23: The Misconception of Problem Solving

The chapter discusses two misconceptions we have about the problem solving.

1. The misconception of the problem.
2. The misconception of the solution.

We state that the misconceptions arise because the mind is not clear on the difference between imagination and actuality.

Chapter 24: The Misconception of the Problem

The chapter discusses the misconception we have about problems.

We state that the misconception of the problem arises due to the mind believing that **thinking about the problem** and **observing the problem** hold the same value. In the chapter we explain that they do not.

The imagination of the problem does not contain any information we don't already know.

The observation of the real problem may contain information we don't already know.

The chapter states that only observing the real problem holds the possibility of learning something new.

Chapter 25: The Misconception of the Solution

The chapter discusses the misconceptions we have about the solution to our problem.

1. The misconception of what a solution is.
2. The misconception of the means of finding a solution.

Chapter 26: Wanting an Answer

The chapter addresses the misconception of what a solution is.

We state that often, in the resolution of problems, the mind will be preoccupied with finding an answer. The demand for an answer is different to the demand to understand the problem. The chapter discusses the distinction between these two approaches.

Chapter 27: Formulating the Solution

The chapter addresses a misconception in the means of finding a solution.

We state that often, in the resolution of a behavioural problem, the mind will try to introduce a contradiction in the hope that the contradiction will remove the problem.

Example:

We introduce confident behaviours, hoping they will remove anxiety behaviours.

The chapter explains why the approach fails.

Chapter 28: Meeting the Problem

The chapter discusses how the correct approach to meeting a behavioural problem.

We state that observation enables the mind to have a relationship with all parts of itself.

Chapter 29: The Truth of the Problem

The chapter discusses how the problem is a direct expression of the conditioning that created it. We state that this means the problem is always a true expression of how the mind is conditioned.

Chapter 30: The Quality of Observation

The chapter discusses how the observation of a psychological disturbance can be undertaken in one of two states:

1. a state of chaos
2. a state of calm

We state that the factor that determines chaos or calm is whether **the observer** is in movement (trying to act upon the disturbance) or **the observer** is still (not trying to act upon the disturbance).

Chapter 31: The Attitude of Observation

The chapter discusses the right attitude of observation.

We state that complete inaction on the part of the observer is the right attitude for observation.

Chapter 32: Inaction

The chapter discusses inaction.

We state that inaction establishes a different quality of mind. The quality of mind that is established has a different quality of action and a relation to order.

Chapter 33: Action

The chapter discusses the topic of action. We make a distinction between two actions:

1. The intention to control ourselves.
2. The intention to observe ourselves.

Chapter 34: Sensitivity

The chapter discusses how a heightened state of sensitivity to perception is established when the mind ceases to control itself.

Chapter 35: Negation

The chapter discusses how the process of self-enquiry is one of removing the obstacles to perception.

Chapter 36: Interest

The chapter discusses how interest is the basis for the right quality of perception and the right attitude of perception.

CHAPTER 1

THE BEGINNING OF OBSERVATION

WRITTEN BY SILENT PERCEPTION

THE BEGINNING OF OBSERVATION

The problems of your life (such as anxiety, loneliness, and anger) demand you undertake a perceptive examination of yourself to discover if you can change. When you begin to observe yourself, you will discover that there are various factors that impede your observation. Each factor that impedes your ability to perceive, also impedes your ability to learn and transform. The perceptive examination of yourself, which we refer to as **the enquiry**, begins with identifying the blockages to perception and removing them.

Conclusion

The observation of ourselves is impeded by several factors. The enquiry begins with identifying the blockages to perception and removing them.

CHAPTER 2

THE FACTORS THAT IMPEDE PERCEPTION

WRITTEN BY SILENT PERCEPTION

THE FACTORS THAT IMPEDE PERCEPTION

There are two essential factors that impede perception.

1. Prevention
2. Distortion

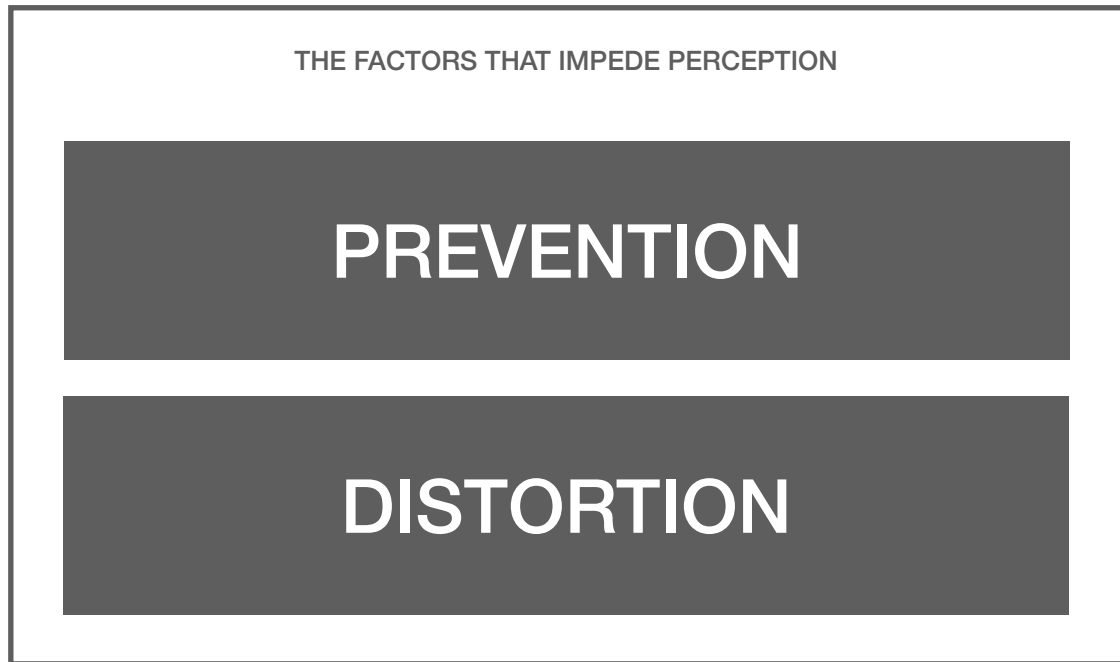


figure 1. the factors that impede perception

NOTE: Our use of the term 'object' below represents anxiety, anger, or some other psychological reaction.

The distinction between **prevention** and **distortion** is as follows:

The Distortion of Perception

Distortion modifies the appearance of the object being perceived.

Result: The distortion stops us perceiving the object as it actually is.

The Prevention of Perception

Prevention does not modify the appearance of the object being perceived, but directs our attention away from the object.

Result: The prevention stops us seeing the object.

We discuss the **prevention of perception** and the **distortion of perception** in the next chapters.

Conclusion

The two factors that impede perception are **prevention** and **distortion**.

Prevention directs our attention away from an object, so we do not see it.

Distortion modifies the appearance of an object, so we cannot perceive the object as it actually is.

CHAPTER 3

THE FACTORS THAT IMPEDE PERCEPTION

—

THE PREVENTION OF PERCEPTION

WRITTEN BY SILENT PERCEPTION

THE FACTORS THAT IMPEDE PERCEPTION

THE PREVENTION OF PERCEPTION

The prevention of perception works like a magicians sleight of hand. The magician performs the trick right in front of you, but directs your attention to a different location, thus, you miss the trick.

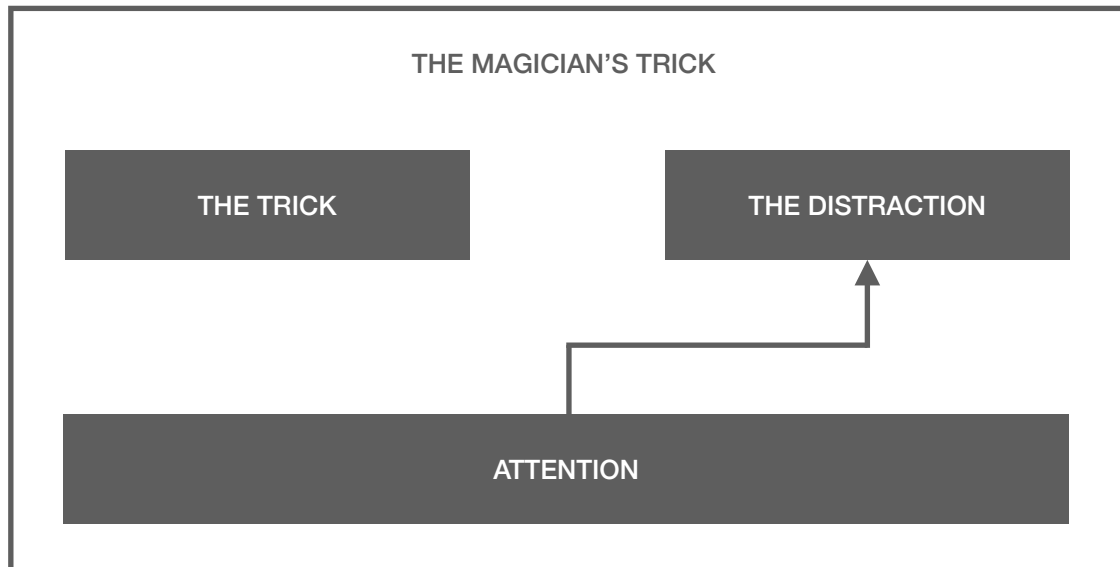


figure 1. the magicians trick

A psychological problem requires that we observe it, however, while the problem is appearing in the mind (and could be observed) our attention is focused on something else, so we do not observe the problem. Thus, perception is prevented.

Example:

Anxiety is operating in the mind, but we are focused on a breathing exercise that is intended to suppress the anxiety.

Our fixation upon the breathing exercise draws our attention away from the anxiety.

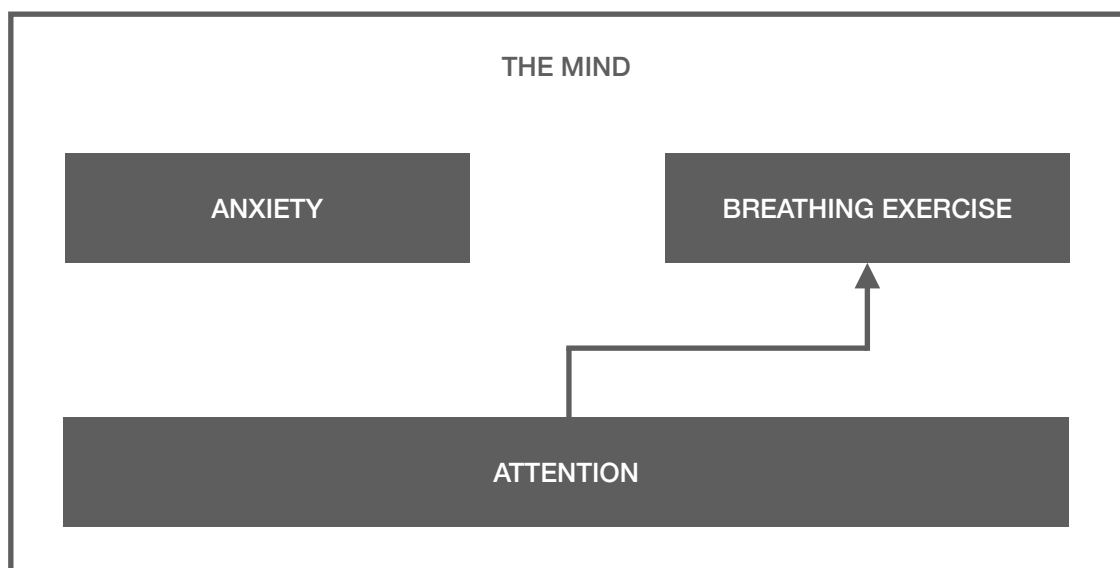


figure 2. the prevention of perception

The Factor That Prevents Perception

The factor that prevents perception is the thing that lures our attention away.

In the case of the magic trick, the thing that lured our attention away was the magician.

In the case of anxiety, the thing that lures our attention away is the exercise the mind uses to escape from the anxiety.

Conclusion

Our fixation upon a method used to effect the problem prevents the observation of the problem.

CHAPTER 4

THE FACTORS THAT IMPEDE PERCEPTION

—

THE DISTORTION OF PERCEPTION

WRITTEN BY SILENT PERCEPTION

THE FACTORS THAT IMPEDE PERCEPTION

THE DISTORTION OF PERCEPTION

You can think of the distinction between **clear perception** and **distorted perception** in terms of a simile. We use the example of a car windscreen.

Distorted Perception

When it is raining, the windscreen of the car becomes covered in water. The water distorts the perception of what is in front of you. The more water on the windscreen, the more perception is distorted.



figure 1. distorted perception

Clear Perception

When there is no water on the windscreen, you can see clearly.



figure 2. clear perception

The Factor of Distortion

In the case of our example, the distortion is caused by the **water** on the **windscreen**. When it comes to the observation of ourselves, the distortion is caused by **thought** in the **mind**.

Example: Emotion Distorting Perception

Someone is talking to me. While they are talking to me, I am experiencing the emotion of anger that arose from an experience I had earlier in the day. That anger distorts the perception of the conversation with that person. I then respond to that person angrily, and it is completely out of context to the conversation they were having with me.

Example: Thought Distorting Perception

An employee is talking to me about the desire to increase their salary. While they are talking to me, I am recollecting an experience that happened many years ago in which the employee wronged me. My grievance of the past acts to devalue what the employee is saying to me in the present because this is my chance to get my own back. Thus, I reject the pay rise request.

Thought is the factor that distorts perception.

Conclusion

The superimposition of thought on perception changes the experience.

CHAPTER 5

THE CAUSE OF IMPEDED PERCEPTION

WRITTEN BY SILENT PERCEPTION

THE CAUSE OF IMPEDED PERCEPTION

The **prevention of perception** and the **distortion of perception** arise due to the way thought functions.

The Cause of the Prevention of Perception

Thought prevents perception of the problem because the experience is painful.

Example 1: Preventing Anxiety

My experience of anxiety is so terrifying that I do not want to look at it, so I demand to take my mind off of it and focus on something else.

Example 2: Preventing Anxiety

My experience of anxiety is so painful that I try to stamp it out like a fire.

The Cause of the Distortion of Perception

Thought distorts perception of the problem through the way we interpret what we see. The interpretation imbues what we see with meaning, and that meaning is the factor that distorts how something appears.

Example: Pay Rise

The employee is asking for a pay rise. During the conversation they are explaining the reasons why they should have a pay rise. The appropriate way to handle the situation is to listen to everything the employee has to say and consider it, but distortion prevents this from happening.

While the employee is stating the reasons why they deserve a pay rise, my mind is recollecting the negative experiences I have had with the employee. For instance, I remind myself of the times the employee has lied to me. My interpretation of the employee as a liar causes me to disregard their justifications for an increase in their salary.

My interpretation of the employee as a liar causes me to distort the perception of what the employee is saying. The interpretation distorts the words of the employee by devaluing them.

We interpret the object based on the what we know about the object.

Example:

In the case of interpreting the employees words, the distortion took place because of the past experiences I had had with the employee (e.g. as a liar)

We also interpret the object based on the knowledge that surrounds the object.

Example:

In the case of interpreting the employees words, the distortion also took place because of what I want to get out of the relationship with the employee. (i.e. I want to make money from them, not give money to them).

Conclusion

The prevention of perception happens because the mind seeks to escape from the pain of the experience being perceived.

The distortion of perception happens because we interpret an object according to what we know about the object, and the knowledge that surrounds the object.

CHAPTER 6

THE UTILITY OF THOUGHT

WRITTEN BY SILENT PERCEPTION

THE UTILITY OF THOUGHT

When you are new to a subject, it is easy to hear the statement: ‘The **prevention of perception** and the **distortion of perception** arise due to the way thought functions’ and jump to the conclusion that thought is the enemy and must end. That is not the correct way to approach thought because thought is not only detrimental, it is beneficial too. The benefit of thought is its ability to assist in perception.

The Functions of Thought in Perception

The Detrimental Functions

The ability to distort perception

The ability to prevent perception.

The Beneficial Functions

The ability to assist perception.

How Thought Assists Perception

Thought is able to assist perception by presenting information to the mind.

Example: Reading this Document

Right now, as you are reading these words, thought is recognising the words and presenting the meaning of those words to perception. This process enables you to comprehend what the writer is saying.

Thought is supremely active in perception all the time. Some activities of thought are obvious, such as when you talk to yourself in your head, or experience an intense emotion. Some activities are more subtle like the ways we comprehend our surroundings.

Example: The Comprehension of People

You continually comprehend the person in your house to be your wife and not a stranger. This enables you to relax in their presence.

Example: The Comprehension of Space

You continually comprehend the space around your body. We call this spatial awareness.

Every time you walk through a doorway, thought manifests a sense of space between you and door frame. This allows you to adjust your posture and walk through the door without bumping into anything.

This same sense of space operates when you park your car.

The premise of this chapter has been to demonstrate that many activities of thought are beneficial and always operating, so thought cannot, and should not, be removed from the mind. It is, however, of paramount importance that we identify and remove the detrimental activities of thought.

Conclusion

Thought cannot, and should not, be excluded from the mind entirely because thought has both beneficial and detrimental activities. It is, however, of paramount importance that we identify and remove the detrimental activities of thought.

CHAPTER 7

THE BASIS OF THOUGHT

WRITTEN BY SILENT PERCEPTION

THE BASIS OF THOUGHT

Thought operates the way it does because of how the mind has been conditioned by knowledge.

When thought is acting to **assist** perception, it is doing so because of how one is conditioned.

When thought is acting to **distort** perception, it is doing so because of how one is conditioned.

When thought is acting to **prevent** perception, it is doing so because of how one is conditioned.

The basis for thought is knowledge. There is no malicious undertone to the way thought operates, it simply runs according to way memory has been conditioned, just like a computer program.

Conclusion

Thought operates the way it does because of how one is conditioned.

CHAPTER 8

THE REQUIREMENT TO REMOVE THE IMPEDIMENTS FROM PERCEPTION

WRITTEN BY SILENT PERCEPTION

THE REQUIREMENT TO REMOVE THE IMPEDIMENTS FROM PERCEPTION

When it comes to changing our behaviour we desire two things:

1. We want to improve the ways we think that are beneficial to us.
2. We want to remove the ways we think that are detrimental to us.

Thought has the ability to understand anything in life, even its own processes. When one observes the activities of thought, two things happen:

1. The understanding of beneficial thought acts to strengthen and refine those processes.
2. The understanding of detrimental thought acts to weaken and remove those processes.

This means, to alleviate the mind of the thought processes that prevent and distort perception, thought must observe its own activity and learn about it.

Thought has a capacity to change itself through understanding itself.

In the coming chapters we explore why thought prevents and distorts perception, how thought prevents and distorts perception, and the consequences of perception being prevented and distorted. This understanding, coinciding with your own perceptive examination of yourself, begins the dismantling of the thought processes that impede perception.

When thought comprehends a thought process to be dangerous, the comprehension of that danger is sufficient to cease the process.

'The comprehending of the process is the ending of the process.'

It is like seeing a knife in your hand and dropping it.

Conclusion

Thought has the capability to change itself through the observation of itself. Thought is required to understand the operation of itself and refine its application.

The understanding of beneficial thought acts to strengthen and refine those processes.

The understanding of detrimental thought acts to weaken and remove those processes.

CHAPTER 9

THE FACTORS PREVENT PERCEPTION

WRITTEN BY SILENT PERCEPTION

THE FACTORS PREVENT PERCEPTION

In an earlier chapter we stated the two essential factors that impede perception are **prevention** and **distortion**. We now explore prevention in detail.



figure 1. the factors that impede perception

The factors that prevent perception are:

1. Distraction
2. Contradiction
3. Suppression
4. Avoidance

NOTE: the list is in no particular order, i.e. you are not required to end distraction first, then contradiction next. Often, the individual will discover they harbour all of these blockages at the beginning of their enquiry.

In the following chapters we discuss each of these blockages in detail.

Conclusion

The factors that prevent perception are distraction, contradiction, suppression, and avoidance.

CHAPTER 10

THE FACTORS THAT PREVENT PERCEPTION

—

PART 1

DISTRACTION

WRITTEN BY SILENT PERCEPTION

THE FACTORS THAT PREVENT PERCEPTION

PART 1: DISTRACTION

The first blockage to clear perception is distraction.

Lets explain distraction using the example of loneliness.

Example:

I am at home, on my own, and I feel lonely. The experience of loneliness is a feeling of isolation and it causes me to suffer. In response to that suffering, I distract myself.

Example:

I watch the TV.

I play a game.

I phone a friend.

The distraction alleviates the experience of loneliness in the moment by focusing the mind on something different.

Example:

Thought is focused on the story of the TV program.

Thought is focused on winning the game.

Thought is focused on the conversation with a friend.

Distraction is a means of escaping from loneliness. The escape prevents the perception of loneliness. The mind distracts itself from the loneliness to escape from the suffering experienced by the loneliness.

Conclusion

The first blockage to clear perception is distraction.

CHAPTER 11

THE FACTORS THAT PREVENT PERCEPTION

—

PART 2

CONTRADICTION

WRITTEN BY SILENT PERCEPTION

THE FACTORS THAT PREVENT PERCEPTION

PART 2: CONTRADICTION

The second blockage to clear perception is contradiction.

Lets explain contradiction using the example of body dysmorphia.

Example:

Throughout growing up, I have always been overweight. Not obese, but chubbier than the others. Over decades of social experiences many people have made remarks about my weight and it has made me feel insecure about my appearance.

The insecurity expresses itself as the production of negative thoughts about my appearance:

Examples:

While looking in the mirror, I tell myself those trousers look huge.

While looking in the mirror, I tell myself that shirt makes my neck look fat.

While looking in the mirror, I tell myself I am ugly.

The negative thoughts produce negative emotions and cause me to suffer. In response to that suffering I create positive thoughts in the hope they will produce positive emotions. That is contradiction.

Examples:

To contradict the thought 'those trousers look huge', I tell myself Eric is going to be at the event and he is much fatter than me.

To contradict the thought 'I am ugly', I tell myself that my clothes are more expensive than what most other people will be wearing at the event.

Contradiction is a means of escaping from body dysmorphia. The escape prevents a perception of the dysmorphia. The mind contradicts the dysmorphia to escape from the suffering experienced by the dysmorphia.

Conclusion

The second blockage to clear perception is contradiction.

CHAPTER 12

THE FACTORS THAT PREVENT PERCEPTION

—

PART 3

SUPPRESSION

WRITTEN BY SILENT PERCEPTION

THE FACTORS THAT PREVENT PERCEPTION

PART 3: SUPPRESSION

The third blockage to clear perception is suppression.

Lets explain suppression using the example of anger.

Example:

I am the manager of an office for a logistics company. Each day I assign the work that needs to be done to each staff member. Towards the end of the day, I discover a colleague has not completed a task. It is now past the cut off point, and a delivery cannot be made. The awareness of this fact frustrates me and I become angry.

In response to the anger, I attempt to use a breathing exercise to reduce the intensity of the anger. That is suppression.

Suppression is a means of escaping from anger. The escape prevents the perception of anger. The mind suppresses anger to escape from the suffering experienced by the anger.

Conclusion

The third blockage to clear perception is suppression.

CHAPTER 13

CONFLICT

WRITTEN BY SILENT PERCEPTION

CONFLICT

The consequence of distraction, contradiction and suppression is conflict. The moment distraction, contradiction or suppression arises, I begin to battle with myself. The conflict is the outcome of two opposing desires manifesting concurrently:

Example: Anger

The desire to be angry.

The desire to stop anger.

Distraction, contradiction and suppression create conflict because they are counter-responses to a primary desire (i.e. anger)

Example: Counter-Responses

When I am angry, I distract myself to counter it.

When I am angry, I reassure myself to counter it.

When I am angry, I breathe purposefully to counter it.

The simultaneous expression of opposing desires demonstrates a mind that is confused about how to respond to a situation.

Example: Anger

The mind is conditioned to **respond to a situation with anger**.

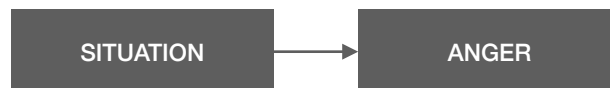


figure 1. the response of anger to the situation

But, feeling like anger is an inappropriate response, the mind has conditioned itself to **respond to anger with a technique to stop anger**.



figure 2. the response of stopping anger to the anger

In the absence of clarity about how to respond to the situation, the mind becomes enveloped in conflict. Each desire wants to express itself fully, but is being dampened by its opposition.

Example:

The desire to be angry wants to express itself fully, but is being dampened by the desire to stop being angry.

The desire to stop being angry wants to express itself fully, but is being dampened by the desire to be angry.

The more energy the mind gives to anger, the more energy the mind gives to the desire to stop being angry as a way to counteract it. This causes all the energy of the brain to be dissipated by the conflict.

Analogy:

Battling with oneself is like funding both sides in a war. The destruction continues, the only thing that keeps getting used up is the energy.

Observation requires energy. When all the mind's energy is given to conflict, there is no energy left for observation. Conflict prevents perception by using up the energy of the brain.

'The willingness to fight myself negates the sensitivity needed to observe myself.'

Conclusion

Conflict is the result of competing desires manifesting at the same moment. The battle between those desires uses up the energy of the brain, and prevents the energy needed for perception.

CHAPTER 14

THE FAILURE TO FORCE CHANGE

WRITTEN BY SILENT PERCEPTION

THE FAILURE TO FORCE CHANGE

Distraction, contradiction and suppression are ways we try to force a change in our behaviour in the moment.

Example:

When I am anxious, I distract myself.

When I am anxious, I reassure myself.

When I am anxious, I breathe purposefully.

Due to the inability of these processes to change behaviour, everyone reaches a stage where they give up, and consider their will power to be insufficient to conquer their problems. This moment is pivotal in a persons life because it represents two things.

1. A fundamental failure to change myself into the person I want to be.
2. The end of considering how to solve my problems, and the beginning of considering how to avoid my problems.

Distraction, contradiction, and suppression represent the failure to change behaviour through force, and that failure prompts the beginning of a new type of behaviour: avoidance.

Conclusion

One opts to avoid the situation that causes the problem when one accepts its attempts to change the problem by force have, and will continue to, fail.

CHAPTER 15

THE FACTORS THAT PREVENT PERCEPTION

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PART 4

AVOIDANCE

WRITTEN BY SILENT PERCEPTION

THE FACTORS THAT PREVENT PERCEPTION

PART 4: AVOIDANCE

The fourth blockage to clear perception is avoidance.

Lets explain avoidance using the example of social anxiety.

Example:

When I was younger, I encountered a social situation that made me feel very awkward. The feeling was so intense that I had to run out of the situation, and I felt embarrassed.

Example:

I was in a meeting where it was inappropriate to leave, I felt trapped and had a panic attack. I exited the meeting abruptly with everyone staring at me.

That experience imprinted upon me a mild fear of encountering similar situations in the future. To guard against the fear of encountering that situation in the future, I learnt to maintain a vigilance towards any situation I'm in that could manifest that experience.

Example:

I'm in a room, and someone blocks the doorway.

I'm asked to go to a meeting, so I am keen to know where the meeting is, how many people will be there, and how formal it is.

The vigilance is a form of preparatory thinking where my mind is constantly analysing the current situation to assess the possibility of the situation I fear arising. That preparatory analysis is anxiety: the constant feeling that I am on the cusp of terror.

While the situation I fear rarely happens, the anxiety that takes place in preparation of it happening occurs regularly. The anxiety is a form of suffering.

To prevent the suffering, I avoid going to any situation that my fear could arise in and, thus, I circumvent the need to feel anxious.

Example:

When I am invited to a large gathering of people, I refuse to attend.

Avoidance is a means of escaping from anxiety. The escape prevents the perception of anxiety. The mind avoids anxiety to escape from the suffering experienced by the anxiety.

Conclusion

The fourth blockage to clear perception is avoidance.

CHAPTER 16

FORGETTING MY PROBLEMS

WRITTEN BY SILENT PERCEPTION

FORGETTING MY PROBLEMS

Successful long-term avoidance of the situations that trigger your problems means you no longer experience those problems. In this way, the problems are no longer an issue to you.

Example:

My anxiety is triggered by large groups of people, so I avoid large groups of people. By avoiding large groups of people, I do not experience my anxiety.

The longer you avoid your problems, the less you experience them and the less you think about them. This results in you almost completely forgetting about them.

Example:

By staying in the house all day, I do not experience anxiety, I do not think about anxiety, and I rarely remember that I have anxiety.

While directly experiencing the problem no longer exists, the lifestyle you have created for yourself through avoiding your problems begins to impact your life. The avoidance of your problems places limitations on your life by denying you access to certain experiences.

Example:

My anxiety is triggered by large groups of people, so I avoid large groups of people. By avoiding large groups of people, I am unable to experience festivals, conferences, and family gatherings.

The experiences I deny myself access to prevent the learning that is naturally acquired from those experiences, and this causes me to deteriorate.

Example:

My avoidance of large groups of people begins to deteriorate my ability to socialise with others.

The avoidance of one problem has a snowball effect that sequentially creates many unforeseen problems.

Example:

My avoidance of social situations causes me to stay home a lot.

Problem 1

By spending so much time in my house, I feel quite lonely.

Problem 2

By spending so much time in my house, I don't socialise much, so I begin to care less about my appearance. Physical exercise is almost non-existent from my life, I only walk to the kitchen and toilet, and so my physical health declines.

Problem 3

By spending so much time in my house, the thoughts I have on a daily basis are primarily about the house. As a result, I start to give excessive importance to the

things in my house, such as, the insistence that an ornament on the mantelpiece be in an exact position.

The intention to avoid anxiety has unintentionally caused my life to vastly deteriorate in other areas. I chose to avoid anxiety simply because the experience was so frightening and painful. That's all I wanted. I only wanted to take one step back, I didn't intend to tumble down the mountain.

Avoidance impacts your life silently through:

1. What you do not experience.
2. The narrow life you do experience (excessively).

Once you give up finding a solution to your problems, escape from them, and then forget about them, you live within the confines of fear, and within that confinement you rot. That is why avoidance is not a valid approach to life.

Conclusion

The limitation placed on your life through the intention to avoid your problems causes harm in the other areas of your life.

CHAPTER 17

KNOWLEDGE BETRAYS THE PRESENT

WRITTEN BY SILENT PERCEPTION

KNOWLEDGE BETRAYS THE PRESENT

To clarify our explanation below we give a simplistic overview of the process of the mind as follows: We **observe** something, what we observe is recorded into **knowledge**, and in response to that recording we **act**.



figure 1. the simplistic overview of the process of the mind

Our actions then become part of our next observation, so the process repeats.



figure 2. the process repeats

The Prevention of Perception

Previously we have spoken about the perception of the problem being impeded by our intention to act upon the problem to force change. We discussed the approaches of distraction, contradiction and suppression.

Here, the perception is impeded by knowledge acting.

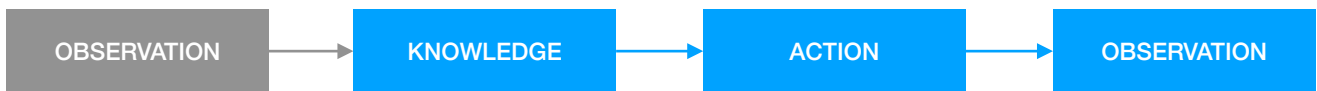


figure 3. action from knowledge

We have also discussed the perception of the problem being impeded by predetermined actions, such as avoidance.

Here, once again, perception is impeded by knowledge acting.

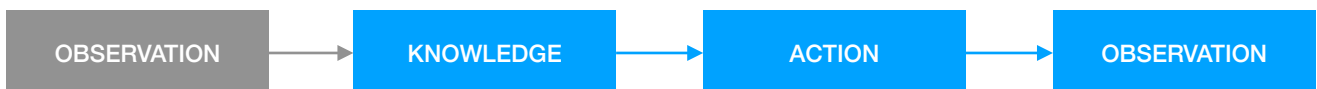


figure 4. predetermined action from knowledge

The Distortion of Perception

We now discuss a different way that knowledge impedes perception: how what we know filters what we see, and causes a distortion of perception.



figure 5. knowledge filters perception

In this way, knowledge betrays the present.

Conclusion

Knowledge prevents perception through our actions (predetermined and otherwise).

Knowledge distorts perception through how it filters new information.

CHAPTER 18

THE FACTOR THAT DISTORTS PERCEPTION

WRITTEN BY SILENT PERCEPTION

THE FACTOR THAT DISTORTS PERCEPTION

Previously, we spoke about the ways the mind **prevents** perception through distraction, contradiction, suppression and avoidance. We now discuss the ways the mind **distorts** perception in detail.



figure 1. the factors that impede perception

The mind distorts perception through interpretation. Interpretation does not prevent perception, but superimposes appearances on perception.

When those appearances are **true**, interpretation **assists** perception.

When those appearances are **false**, interpretation **distorts** perception.

In the coming chapters we discuss interpretation in detail. To begin our discussion, we provide a chapter from the **Knowledge** series entitled **The Interpretation of Perception**.

Conclusion

The mind distorts perception through interpretation. Interpretation does not prevent perception, but superimposes appearances on perception.

CHAPTER 19

THE INTERPRETATION OF PERCEPTION

WRITTEN BY SILENT PERCEPTION

THE INTERPRETATION OF PERCEPTION

The Process of Recognition

Once we perceive something, the brain makes an attempt to identify it. An identification takes place when **what we see** is matched to **what we know**. Once the match is established, **what we see** is interpreted according to **what we know** about it. The interpretation attributes meaning to the perception, and we respond based on the meaning we experience. This process is called recognition.



figure 1. recognition

Interpretation is part of the process of recognition, and in this chapter we discuss the activity of interpretation in detail.

What is Interpretation?

Interpretation is the translation of perception into meaning. The meaning is generated from the knowledge we have. The meaning is experienced as our understanding of the perception.

The Ability to Interpret

To be able to interpret something, you must hold knowledge that accurately represents it.

Example:

To be able to interpret the words written on this page, you must know English.

When you hold knowledge that represents what you are seeing, you can interpret what you are seeing meaningfully.

When you do not hold knowledge that represents what you are seeing, you cannot interpret what you are seeing, and are unable to derive any meaning.

Language is a good example to demonstrate the mind's ability, or inability, to interpret.

Language

In the case of spoken language, interpretation is the translation of sound into meaning.

You see interpretation happening when you listen to someone speaking a language you know.

A Language You Know

When someone speaks to you in a language you know, meaning accompanies the sound you hear.

Explanation:

Your mind is able to distinguish words in the sound, and attribute meaning to those words.

As you are listening, the mind is interpreting sound into meaning.

You see the absence of interpretation when listening to someone speaking a language you do not know.

A Language You Don't Know

When someone speaks to you in a language you don't know, no meaning accompanies the sound you hear.

Explanation:

Your mind is unable to distinguish words in the sound.

Your mind is unable to interpret the sound into meaning.

Conclusion

The present moment we perceive is unknown. The mind has to continually interpret **what it sees** according to **what it knows** to enable it to **understand what is happening** and act accordingly.

To understand something unknown, we must be able to interpret it according to what is known. To be able to interpret something, we must hold knowledge about it.

CHAPTER 20

THE EFFECT OF INTERPRETATION

WRITTEN BY SILENT PERCEPTION

THE EFFECT OF INTERPRETATION

The knowledge you have may exist as a belief, concept, theory, idea, or conclusion. In this chapter we discuss how that knowledge effects perception through interpretation.

The Breadth of Interpretation

In the previous chapter, to explain interpretation, we gave the example of language. Right now, as you read these words, you are interpreting them according to the knowledge you hold about them. That knowledge is responding to the words automatically and presenting meaning to perception.

The same process happens with the other types of knowledge you have.

Example: Neighbour

In the past you had an unpleasant experience with your neighbour. That experience was recorded into memory and now exists as knowledge. Now, any time you see the neighbour, your mind immediately interprets the neighbour as a bad person.

The knowledge responsible for the interpretation can persist for many years.

The Longevity of Interpretation

A particular remembrance can live on throughout the whole of a person's life and effect their perception continually.

Additionally, a remembrance can be passed from one generation to the next through a story, rather than through direct experience. This means the effect on perception can last indefinitely.

Interpretation gives meaning to everything we see, such as people, objects, and places. We also interpret the other sensations:

Examples:

We interpret sounds.

We interpret emotions.

The Existence of Interpretation

We are aware of the existence of interpretation through experiences that change us.

Example: Friend to an Enemy

In the past, there was someone in my life that I saw as a trusted friend.

My mind interpreted them as a friend, so I saw them as a friend.

One day, I learn that they have mistreated me. Knowledge of the mistreatment changes my interpretation of them. I no longer trust them, and see them as an enemy.

My mind interprets them as an enemy, so I see them as an enemy.

The Effect of Interpretation

Interpretation effects perception. The factor that determines whether the effect is **beneficial** or **detrimental** is determined by whether the knowledge producing the interpretation is **true** or **false**.

Example:

When a doctor looks at a patient, his knowledge **assists** in the perception of the patient.

When the mechanic looks at the car, his knowledge **assists** in the perception of the car.

When the racist looks at the person of another race, his knowledge **distorts** the perception of the other person.

An interpretation can be true, irrespective of whether the interpretation is good or bad.

Example: The Interpretation of an Enemy

It is appropriate to see a person as an enemy, when they are an enemy. It would be dangerous to misinterpret this person as a friend.

Conclusion

Interpretation effects perception by presenting information to the mind (in the form of meaning) based on what we know.

When the information presented is **true**, perception is **assisted** by interpretation.

When the information presented is **false**, perception is **distorted** by interpretation.

CHAPTER 21

THE REALITY OF INTERPRETATION

WRITTEN BY SILENT PERCEPTION

THE REALITY OF INTERPRETATION

In this chapter we discuss the ability of interpretation to create a sense of reality, and the consequences of an interpretation being experienced as a reality.

The Effect of Interpretation on Perception

I do not realise my past experience is colouring perception in the present, I think I am seeing the world the way it actually is. This means, the interpretation is not perceived as a possibility, but is being experienced as a reality.

Example:

When I look at my neighbour, I see a bad person.

The interpretation is a manifestation of my own knowledge being imposed on the perception of the neighbour, but I do not see it that way. I do not consider the perception of the neighbour as a bad person to be a personal experience. What I experience in perception, I consider to be what everyone else experiences when they look at the neighbour. In this way, my personal interpretation is given a universal significance. The interpretation has attained a quality of reality that disguises the fact that it is imaginary.

NOTE: *An imagination (interpretation) may be a correct or incorrect representation of what is actual.*

The Effect of Interpretation on Action

We respond to the world around us based on the way we interpret it.

Example:

When I look at my neighbour, I see a bad person.

The perception of the neighbour as a bad person imposes constraints on my behaviour towards them.

Example:

I refuse to help my neighbour because I do not help bad people.

The Power of Interpretation

The experience of an interpretation as a reality gives the interpretation a great power. This is because the mind gives more energy to something it experiences as a **certainty** than to something it experiences as a **possibility**.

Example: Religious Belief

Person-A believes in God. For him God is a real thing, something to be praised and feared.

Person-B believes in God. For him God is an idea, something used to explain the complexities of existence.

When **Person-C** challenges their beliefs, **Person-A** responds with a much greater vitality than **Person-B** because, for **Person-A**, he's defending an almighty being that can reward and punish him, whereas **Person-B** is only defending an idea.

The Conflict of Interpretation

As we have said previously, interpretation has the power to create reality, and interpretation is the response of knowledge.

An experience of reality is created by the meaning knowledge gives to the world around us, and within us, being presented to perception.

Knowledge can differ between people, and so, people interpret the world differently. This means, it is possible for people to exist in the same world, but live in different realities. When the knowledge we have differs, the reality created by knowledge (through interpretation) opens the possibility for conflict.

Example:

When **Person-A** and **Person-B** interpret the **same thing** the **same way**, they **work together**.

When **Person-A** and **Person-B** interpret the **same thing** in a **different way**, they **work against each other**.

When the interpretation creates a contradictory experience, the conflict is intensely vital. Each person acts with the conviction that they are not only absolutely right, but also with the conviction that the other person is absolutely wrong.

The Refusal to Change

Once the mind establishes the notion that it is absolutely right and the others are absolutely wrong, the mind refuses to scrutinise the knowledge responsible for its own interpretation.

Example:

When I experience that I am absolutely right, there is no reason for me to reconsider my opinion.

... or so I think ...

The Refusal to Listen

Once the mind establishes the notion that it is absolutely right and the others are absolutely wrong, the mind refuses to listen to contradictory opinions.

Example:

When I experience that you are absolutely wrong, there is no reason for me to listen to you.

... or so I think ...

The Resilience of Knowledge

When two people interpret the world differently, and their interpretations are experienced as realities, they exist in polarised perceptions. The sense of reality produced by the interpretation establishes a refusal to listen and a refusal to change. In this way, the knowledge responsible for the interpretation attains a resilience to adaption that negates the innate biological malleability of the brain.

The Inhumanity of the Opposition

The conviction the mind places on its own thoughts, feelings and perceptions, and the minds lack of understanding of how knowledge creates reality through interpretation, cause the mind to devalue those who think differently to itself. This gives rise to the false notion of enemies and idiots.

Example: Those of Opposing Positions

Person-A see's the world one way.

Person-B see's the world a different way.

The way **Person-A** and **Person-B** see the world is determined by the way they interpret it.

When **Person-B** says to **Person-A** they see the world in a different way. **Person-A** responds to immediately reject what **Person-B** has to say.

Person-A then tries to impose what he see's on **Person-B**, and **Person-B** tries to impose what he see's on **Person-A**.

During the discussion, **Person-A** becomes frustrated, feeling that **Person-B** is not understanding what he is saying. At the same time, **Person-B** becomes frustrated, feeling that **Person-A** is not understanding what he is saying.

They both understand each other, but what they understand, they don't see.

After a continued failure to impose their realities on each other, **Person-A** leaves the discussion thinking **Person-B** is an idiot, and **Person-B** leaves the discussion thinking **Person-A** is an idiot. Neither have a desire to talk to each other again in the future.

The failure with this approach is that **Person-A** is trying to convince **Person-B** of a world **Person-B** does not see, and **Person-B** is trying to convince **Person-A** of a world **Person-A** does not see.

The inability to commune occurs because neither **Person-A** nor **Person-B** understand the power of interpretation to create reality. That means, anything they experience is taken to be true, and anything in contradiction to that truth is taken to be false. On that premise they battle with each other, trying to force each other to admit the existence of a reality they don't see.

Conclusion

Interpretation is integrated into perception, and it is from perception that the mind experiences a sense of reality.

What I see, I say is real, and consider to be true.

The basis for interpretation is knowledge, and knowledge can be incorrect. This means, it is possible to perceive something, consider it to be real, but for it to actually be false.

CHAPTER 22

HOW TO HANDLE INTERPRETATION

WRITTEN BY SILENT PERCEPTION

HOW TO HANDLE INTERPRETATION

The Operation of Interpretation

The operation of interpretation can be beneficial or detrimental. Whether it is beneficial or detrimental is determined by the correctness of the knowledge being passed to perception (in the form of meaning).

Interpretation has a beneficial effect on perception by providing true information that enables us to act coherently with what we are observing.

Interpretation has a detrimental effect on perception by providing false information that causes us to act incoherently with what we are observing.

Due to interpretation being beneficial and detrimental we cannot, and should not, seek to end interpretation entirely.

Handling The Beneficial Interpretation

The beneficial interpretation does not need to be handled, it automatically works properly.

When the knowledge you hold is correct, your only challenge is to accumulate more. The more correct knowledge you accumulate, the deeper your understanding of the subject, and the more profound your perception in relation to the subject.

Handling The Detrimental Interpretation

A detrimental interpretation is caused by false knowledge, and it presents a false reality to the mind.

Example:

I hear the door in my house creak and think its a ghost.

Step 1

The first barrier to changing an interpretation is the experience of the interpretation as a reality because this produces the notion that the interpretation is true, and cannot be any other way.

Example:

I see my neighbour as a bad person.

For me, the reality is that the neighbour is a bad person, and I believe everyone else must see the neighbour the same way I do.

When I believe my interpretation to be true, and believe it cannot be any other way, I resist change.

Example:

When someone says something contradictory to what I believe, I reject it.

When I see something contradictory to what I believe, I ignore it.

The solution to the first barrier of change is to understand that interpretation creates reality, and the reality it creates can be false. When the mind truly understands this, it ceases to reject contradictory information and, instead, carefully considers it.

Step 2

After the mind has understood that the reality its mind creates may be false, the next thing the mind must understand is how to identify a false interpretation.

The Identification of a False Interpretation

A false interpretation can be identified by watching the consequences of your actions. When you do not get the expected result in its entirety, it shows you that your interpretation is not entirely correct.

When your action does not give you the result you expect, your interpretation must be wrong.

Example:

When I am anxious, I reassure myself, but the reassurance does not reduce the anxiety.

When your action produces conflict, your interpretation must be wrong.

Example:

When you try to discuss an issue with a coworker, and it causes an argument.

When your action gives you the result you want, but creates unintended side effects, your interpretation must be wrong.

Example:

I do something to help **Person-A** and it works, but then **Person-B** becomes jealous.

Once the mind identifies the things in life that appear correct, but life shows one are incorrect, the mind can then begin examining the assumptions that underlie the interpretations. This will deconstruct the false reality and begin building a more coherent reality.

Step 3

When the mind understands how to identify a false interpretation, it may discover that it cannot end it.

Example:

I see that my partner is bad for me, but I cannot end the relationship.

The security we derive from the knowledge we hold, and the relationships we form, cause a resilience to change. Here, we see a configuration of the mind in which security is given a greater priority than truth.

To free oneself from the attachment, the mind must uncover that the thing it finds security in, there is no security in at all. That realisation shows the mind that the security it feels is an illusion of security and not real security.

Example:

I derive security from identifying with a country.

The identification causes my mind to distort its thinking in favour of that country and to the detriment of other countries. A person from another country is doing the same. Our minds then begin to work against each other and that creates insecurity amongst humanity as a whole. Thus, the security of nationality is an illusion of security.

Why do we build bombs?

To attack ourselves.

Why do we want to attack ourselves?

Because people interpret the world differently and are incapable of discussing the knowledge that produces those interpretations.

Freedom

There must be freedom in interpretation and freedom from interpretation.

Freedom in Interpretation

The understanding that interpretation creates a sense of reality that may be false, enables the mind to operate in interpretation but be vigilant of the signs that the interpretation is wrong.

The mind must be capable of self-scrutiny and able to remove itself from a position of false bias.

Freedom from Interpretation

It is also possible to observe something without interpretation.

When we observe something through interpretation, the observation is experienced as effortless.

When we observe something in the absence of interpretation, the observation is experienced as highly attentive, curious and perplexing.

The perception that was so normal before, is now experienced as having an unknown aroma to it.

Conclusion

The interpretations that assist perception work properly and do not require intervention.

The interpretations that are detrimental to perception require being identified and remedied.

The first step in alleviating false interpretations is to understand how interpretation creates a sense of reality. This enables the mind to acknowledge what it sees, and what it thinks, as being potentially wrong.

The next step in alleviating false interpretations is the ability to identify them. We identify false interpretations through acknowledging disparities between the expected outcome of our actions and the actual outcome of our actions.

The final step in alleviating false interpretations is to unhook the related conditions that cause the mind to resist changing the primary condition. These secondary conditions will often contain the notion of security, and appear in relation to matters of self-identity, status, power, finance, and so on.

CHAPTER 23

THE MISCONCEPTION OF PROBLEM SOLVING

WRITTEN BY SILENT PERCEPTION

THE MISCONCEPTION OF PROBLEM SOLVING

Once the mind is no longer escaping from its problems and is aware of the possibility of it misinterpreting its problems, it is ready to begin solving its problems. At this point, we run into the next issue: the misconceptions the mind has surrounding solving problems. There are two parts to this.

1. The misconception of the **problem**.
2. The misconception of the **solution**.

The **misconception of the problem** and the **misconception of the solution** both arise due to a lack of understanding. The lack of understanding means the mind is unable to clearly distinguish between:

1. The imagination of something
2. The actual thing

The inability to distinguish between the two creates a confusion that inhibits the mind's ability to solve its problems.

The Misconception of the Problem

The mind does not understand the difference between:

1. Thinking about the problem
2. Observing the problem

The Misconception of the Solution

The mind does not understand the difference between:

1. The imagination of the solution
2. The actual solution

We discuss the **misconception of the problem** and the **misconception of the solution** in the coming chapters.

Conclusion

The mind has two misconceptions about the problem solving.

1. The misconception of the problem.
2. The misconception of the solution.

The misconceptions arise because the mind is not clear on the difference between imagination and actuality.

CHAPTER 24

THE MISCONCEPTION OF THE PROBLEM

WRITTEN BY SILENT PERCEPTION

THE MISCONCEPTION OF THE PROBLEM

In this chapter we make reference to two different things:

1. The imagination of a problem
2. The actual problem

Lets start by explaining the difference between them.

The Imagination of a Problem

The imagination of a problem is the appearance of thought in the mind. The thoughts we have about the problem are the expression of the knowledge we have about the problem.

Example:

I think about the last time I felt anxious.

This is what we call '**thinking about the problem**'.

The Actual Problem

The actual problem is a knee-jerk reaction to perception based on how the mind is conditioned.

Example:

I enter a social situation and feel anxious.

This is what we call '**experiencing the problem**'.

The Misconception of the Problem

The mind is **able** to distinguish between:

1. The imagination of the problem
2. The actual problem

The mind knows when it is **thinking about the problem** and when it is **experiencing the problem**. Everyone can clearly distinguish between these two experiences.

What the mind does not distinguish between is the qualitative difference between the **imagination of the problem** and **the actual problem**. This causes the mind to believe they have the same value. The mind believes there is the same value in:

- A. Thinking about the problem
- B. Observing the problem

Because of this, the mind considers thinking about the problem and observing the problem to be equally valid approaches to solving the problem. But, this is not the case.

Thinking about the Problem

The imagination that arises when we think about the problem is built from what we already know about the problem.

Observing the Problem

The observation of the actual problem is built using:

1. knowledge that we have already observed and learnt about.
2. knowledge that we have not yet observed and learnt about.

The qualitative difference between the **imagination of the problem** and **the actual problem** is:

The imagination of the problem does not contain any information we don't already know.

The observation of the real problem may contain information we don't already know.

This means, we can only learn about the problem by observing the experience of the actual problem. Thinking about the problem does not yield any new information, it simply organises what we already know.

Conclusion

The misconception of the problem is that the mind believes **thinking about the problem** and **observing the problem** hold the same value, but they do not.

The imagination of the problem does not contain any information we don't already know.

The observation of the real problem may contain information we don't already know.

Only experiencing the real problem holds the possibility of learning something new.

CHAPTER 25

THE MISCONCEPTION OF THE SOLUTION

WRITTEN BY SILENT PERCEPTION

THE MISCONCEPTION OF THE SOLUTION

The misconception of the solution is the result of two factors.

1. The misconception of what a solution is.

‘When you search for the wrong thing, you will find the wrong thing.’

2. The misconception of the means of finding a solution.

‘When your approach to finding a solution is wrong, you will not find a solution.’

We discuss each of these misconceptions in the next two chapters.

Wanting an Answer

This chapter discusses the misconception of what a solution is.

Formulating the Solution

This chapter discusses the misconception of the means of finding a solution.

Conclusion

The mind has two misconceptions about the solution to its problems.

1. The misconception of what a solution is.
2. The misconception of the means of finding a solution.

CHAPTER 26

THE MISCONCEPTION OF THE SOLUTION

—

WANTING AN ANSWER

WRITTEN BY SILENT PERCEPTION

THE MISCONCEPTION OF THE SOLUTION

WANTING AN ANSWER

The desire for an answer is completely different to the desire to understand the problem.

The desire to understand the problem represents an interest to learn about the problem.

The desire for an answer represents an interest to acquire a means to effect the problem.

The approaches are fundamentally different.

The Understanding of a Problem

The understanding of a problem requires that we observe the problem and learn about it.

This approach builds a coherent view of reality.

The Demand for an Answer

The demand for an answer prioritises the formulation of a concept that we feel fits the problem based on the limited knowledge we have of the problem so far.

This approach builds a speculative view of reality.

The Physical World

The demand for an answer refers to the process that is successfully used in science: the scientist observes something, formulates a theory about it, and then tests the theory. The results of the test are then assessed, and the theory is modified where necessary.



figure 1. the theoretical approach

The approach succeeds because of the objective nature of science.

The objective nature of science means: **the theory** does **not** change **the thing being observed**.

This means you can create as many theories as you like, and the problem will remain the same.

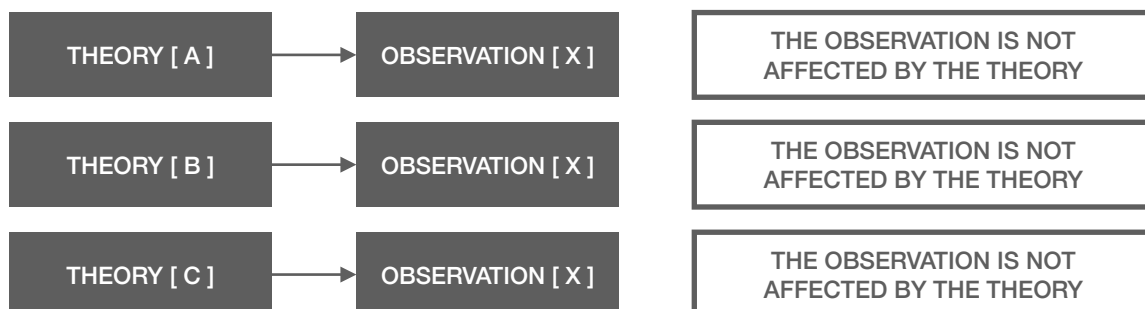


figure 2. the theory does not affect the observation

The theory assists perception by determining how we interact with the fact.

The theories of aerodynamics enables us to modify the physical world to manufacture planes.

The theories of pharmacology enables us to modify the physical world to manufacture medicine.

The Mind

We attempt to bring the same theoretical approach to the observation of the mind.



figure 3. the theoretical approach

When it comes to observing the mind, the things we are observing are the expressions of knowledge. When we create a concept or theory about the problem, the knowledge of the problem undergoes a change, and this causes a change in:

1. The appearance of the problem.
2. The way we respond to the problem.

Example:

The anxiety sufferer learns of a lucky rabbits foot. They purchase it and carry it around with them. Carrying the lucky rabbits foot soothes their anxiety.

The way we respond to the problem: carrying a lucky rabbits foot.

The appearance of the problem: anxiety is soothed by carrying the rabbits foot.

After a few weeks, the rabbits foot stops working.

The appearance of the problem: anxiety is no longer soothed by carrying the rabbits foot.

The anxiety suffer then has a morning where they did not experience anxiety, and associate it to the fact they did not walk on any cracks in the pavement.

Now, by not walking on any cracks in the pavement, their anxiety is soothed.

The way we respond to the problem: avoiding cracks in the pavement.

The appearance of the problem: anxiety is soothed by avoiding cracks in the pavement.

After a few weeks, avoiding cracks in the pavement stops working.

The appearance of the problem: anxiety is no longer soothed by avoiding cracks in the pavement.

Psychologically, the demand for an answer is the demand to acquire some action we can use to effect the problem.

In the absence of understanding the problem, we seek to control it.

The demand for an answer, however, makes the mind susceptible to illusion.

The search for an answer is the search for a concept. The moment I demand an answer, some false knowledge will come along and fill it.

NOTE: *as seen in the lucky rabbits foot and avoiding cracks in the pavement.*

The false knowledge will act through interpretation to create a false reality. The appearance of the false knowledge in perception will delude me in believing I have found the correct answer. However, in actuality, the interpretation is blocking clear perception of the problem. The answer is the blocking the solution.

The theoretical approach fails because of the subjective nature of the mind.

The subjective nature of the mind means: **the theory** does change **the thing being observed**.



figure 4. the theory does affect the observation

Conclusion

Theories can be used to refine our understanding of objective reality, but are a factor of distortion in the comprehension of the subjective reality of the mind.

CHAPTER 27

THE MISCONCEPTION OF THE SOLUTION

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FORMULATING THE SOLUTION

WRITTEN BY SILENT PERCEPTION

THE MISCONCEPTION OF THE SOLUTION

FORMULATING THE SOLUTION

Between **demanding an answer** and **thinking about the problem**, we have the **formulation of a solution**.

A common way to approach solving a problem is by thinking about it.

Example: Designing a Garden

I want to design my garden to be sophisticated, welcoming and relaxing. To achieve this I learn about different types of plants, decking, and decorations. Based on what I have learnt, I begin to think about my garden. I simulate my garden in my mind and, through imagination, experiment with different designs. Based on what I have imagined, I decide on a basic design and start building.

When I want to change the physical world, thinking about the problem is the appropriate solution.

I think about what is there now, I think about what I want to be there, and I think about how to go from one to the other.

We adopt the same approach when we want to change our behaviour. When we adopt the same approach in relation to behaviour it does not produce the desired outcome, instead, it establishes a contradiction to the behaviour, and creates conflict.

Example: Anxiety and Confidence

I think about what is there now: anxiety

I think about what I want to be there: confidence

I begin to implement the behaviours associated with confidence: changing how I walk, changing how I talk, and changing how I dress.

The outcome of my implementation of confidence results in a battle between how I naturally behave (anxiously) and how I want to behave (confidently).

We fail to bring about behavioural change in the same way we change the physical world (i.e. garden) because the problems are fundamentally different.

The Difference between a Physical Problem and a Behaviour Problem

When we **decorate our garden**, we **remove the things we don't want** and **introduce the things we do want**.

When we **decorate our psychology**, we **add the things we do want in the hope they will magically remove the things we don't want**.

Example:

We introduce confidence, hoping it will remove anxiety, but it doesn't.

It is an additive process that leaves the problem in tact. That is why it fails.

Conclusion

The formulation of a solution in the form of a concept that contradicts a behaviour we have is no solution at all. To change behaviour we must change the condition responsible for the behaviour, not leave it in tact and contradict it.

CHAPTER 28

MEETING THE PROBLEM

WRITTEN BY SILENT PERCEPTION

MEETING THE PROBLEM

In the series so far, we have understood the following things:

1. The problem arises automatically based on how the mind is conditioned.
2. Escaping from the problem does not solve the problem.
3. Perception can be distorted by interpretation.
4. A conceptual answer is not a real solution.
5. Thinking about the problem is not a perception of the actual problem.

We are at a point in our discussion where we acknowledge that the problem is there, and we are ready to meet it. In this chapter we discuss what is required to meet the problem.

Meeting the Problem

The perception of a problem is the meeting of that problem.

In the absence of any desire to escape from the problem, I am left to simply observe the problem. The perception of the problem is the only state in which I have a relationship with the problem.

The observation of the problem makes possible the acquisition of new information that is capable of transforming the problem. The extent to which the problem is transformed is determined by the extent to which the perception is profound.

The seeing of a problem is the solving of a problem.

The correct attitude to perception comprises a willingness to see what is there and let what is there reveal itself to you.

Conclusion

Observation enables the mind to have a relationship with itself.

CHAPTER 29

THE TRUTH OF THE PROBLEM

WRITTEN BY SILENT PERCEPTION

THE TRUTH OF THE PROBLEM

The problem arises automatically based on how the mind is conditioned. The way the problem expresses itself in the mind is directly related to the conditioning responsible for the problem. This means, the problem is always a truthful expression of the conditioning that created it.

Example: Anxiety

In the past, I had a painful experience in a large social setting. That experience left an imprint on my mind, and I fear it happening again. That is my conditioning.

Now, whenever I enter a large group of people, my anxiety is triggered.

The expression of anxiety that occurs when I am in large groups of people shows me the truth of how I am conditioned: I am conditioned to fear large groups of people.

Similarly, when I remove myself from the large group of people and my anxiety subsides, it shows me how I am conditioned: I am conditioned to fear large groups of people.

The problem expresses itself in a way that tells you about the problem.

The expression of the problem is a revelation of the problem.

The truthful nature of all the minds expressions means that when I know how to look at myself, what I see will tell me everything there is to know about myself.

Conclusion

The mind can only express the truth of how it is conditioned.

CHAPTER 30

THE QUALITY OF OBSERVATION

WRITTEN BY SILENT PERCEPTION

THE QUALITY OF OBSERVATION

The capacity for psychological transformation exists not only in the observation of the problem, but in the quality of the observation. The right quality of observation manifests a calm that establishes order and clarity in your relationship to the thing being observed.

In the past, you will have undoubtedly experienced two different states of mind when observing a psychological disturbance: a state of chaos and a state of calm.

The Quality of Observation: Chaos

Sometimes you will undergo a psychological disturbance feeling like your mind is in the midst of chaos.

The Quality of Observation: Calm

Sometimes you will undergo a psychological disturbance feeling like your mind is in the midst of tranquility.

Lets take some time to understand these two states.

Firstly, lets distinguish an experience as being made up of two parts: **the observer** and **the observed**.

The Observed

The observed is the thing we are looking at: anxiety, anger, and so on.

The Observer

The observer is the thing that is doing the looking: us.

Chaos and Calm

Irrespective of whether the mind is in a state of chaos or a state of calm, **the observed** is undergoing movement.

Example:

Anger is moving in the mind.

Anxiety is moving in the mind.

Whether the mind is in a state of chaos or a state of calm is determined by whether **the observer** is undergoing a movement or not.

When **the observer** is undergoing movement, the mind experiences chaos.

When **the observer** is still, the mind experiences calm.

To clarify what we have said above we will give two examples:

1. an example of the mind in a state of chaos when perceiving a disturbance
2. an example of the mind in a state of calm when perceiving a disturbance

In each example, the mind is experiencing anxiety.

In each example, the mind is made up of two activities:

1. The observer
2. The observed

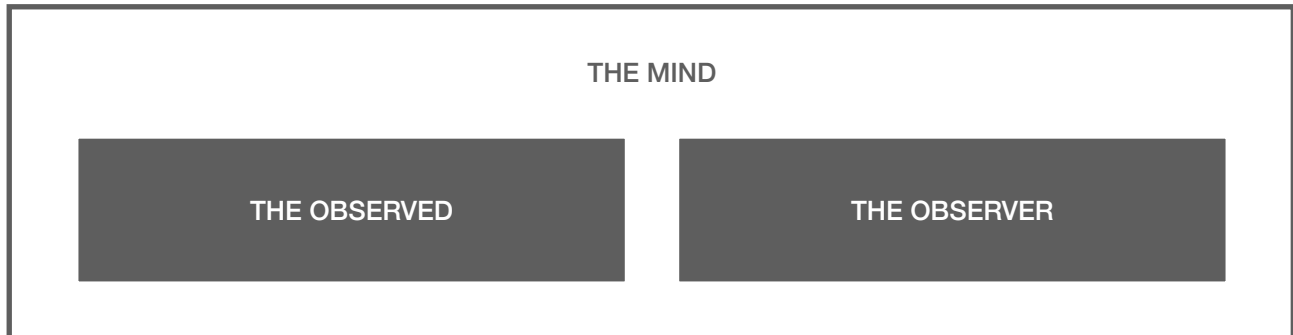


figure 1. the observed and the observer in the mind

The Experience of Chaos when Perceiving a Disturbance

The mind enters a social situation and anxiety arises.

Anxiety is what the mind observes, and the anxiety is in movement: The anxious thoughts and anxious emotions are flowing.

figure 2. the observed undergoing movement



In response to that perception arises the feeling that **something must be done**.

Example:

I must do something to stop me feeling anxious.

The one who acts upon the anxiety is the observer (me). This means, the compulsion to act upon my anxiety, causes the observer to begin undergoing a movement.

Example:

The movement to distract myself.

The movement to reassure myself.

The movement to suppress my feelings.



figure 3. the observer undergoing movement

In this state, both the **observer** and the **observed** are in **movement**.



figure 4. the observed and the observer undergoing movement

When the **observer** and the **observed** are **both in movement**, the whole of the mind is experienced as in a state of movement. That is the experience of chaos during a disturbance.

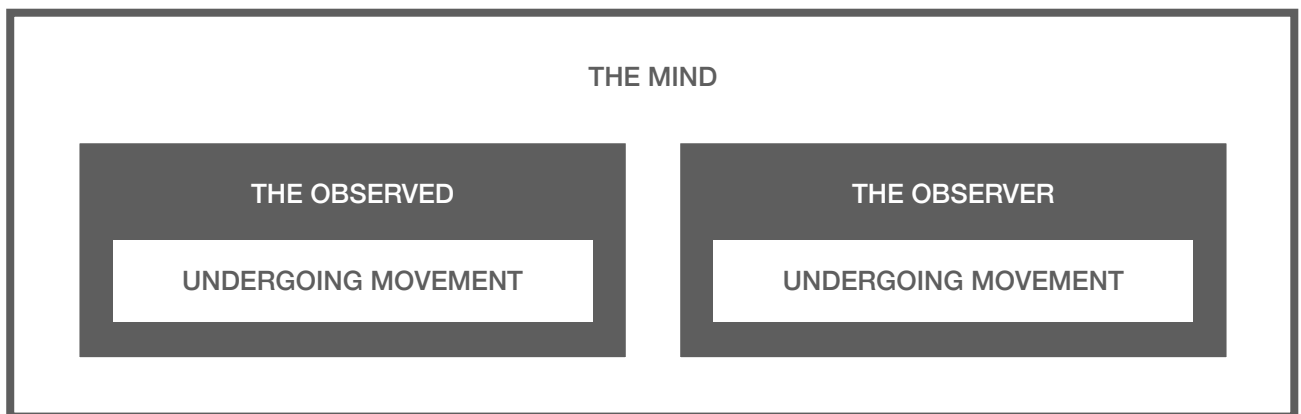


figure 5. the mind in chaos

The Experience of Calm when Perceiving a Disturbance

The mind enters a social situation and anxiety arises.

Anxiety is what the mind observes, and the anxiety is in movement: The anxious thoughts and anxious emotions are flowing.



figure 6. the observed undergoing movement

In response to that perception, there is the feeling that **nothing needs to be done**.

Example:

I do not need to control my anxiety.

The one who acts upon the anxiety is the observer. This means, in the absence of the compulsion to act upon my anxiety, the observer remains still.



figure 7. the observed remains still

In this state only the observed is in movement.



figure 8. the observed is undergoing movement and the observe remains still

When the **observer** is still, the mind experiences the movement of the observed as being embraced by the stillness of the observer. That is the experience of calm during a disturbance.

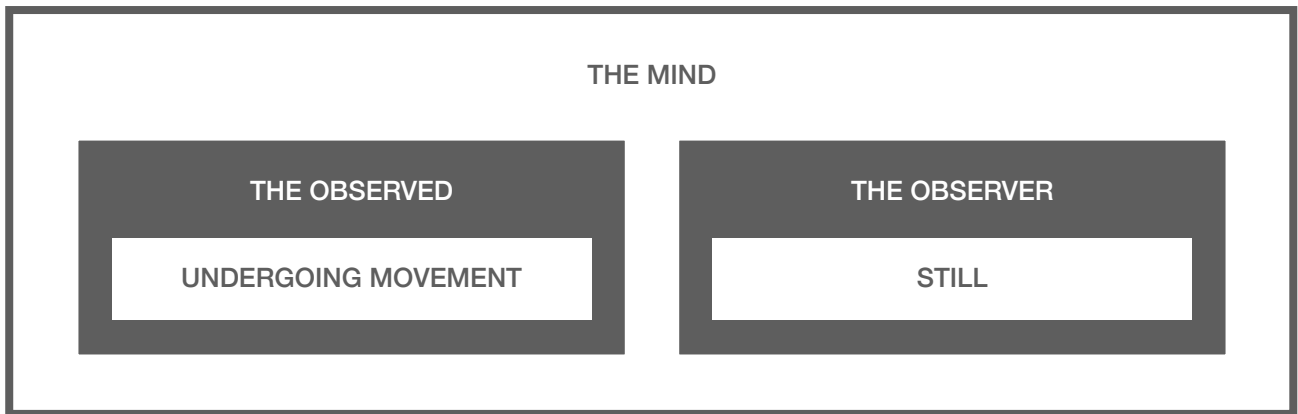


figure 9. the mind in calm

Conclusion

Observation is pervaded by a quality of chaos or calm. The factor that determines the chaos or calm is whether **the observer** is in movement (trying to act upon what it sees) or **the observer** is still (not trying to act upon what it sees).

CHAPTER 31

THE ATTITUDE OF OBSERVATION

WRITTEN BY SILENT PERCEPTION

THE ATTITUDE OF OBSERVATION

The right attitude of observation (when it pertains to understanding oneself) is to observe without the compulsion to do anything: complete inaction on the part of the observer.

Conclusion

The right attitude of observation is complete inaction on the part of the observer.

CHAPTER 32

INACTION

WRITTEN BY SILENT PERCEPTION

INACTION

Perception of a psychological problems requires complete inaction on the part of the observer.

No intention to distract oneself from what is observed.

No intention to condemn what is observed.

No intention to condone what is observed.

No intention to suppress what is observed.

Inaction is the action of observation.

The Order Intrinsic to a Problem

When one begins to experiment with inaction in relation to the appearance of psychological problems, one will discover that a problem can arise, intensify, and wither away, all without one having to do anything about it.

Conclusion

Inaction is the action of observation. What is observed has its own order.

CHAPTER 33

ACTION

WRITTEN BY SILENT PERCEPTION

ACTION

The comprehension of inaction shows me the existence of an activity that **I did not cause** and **does not require I effect**. An activity that is unintentional and automatic.

Example:

The appearance of anxiety arose without my choosing it to. It is an automatic reaction based on how the brain has been conditioned.

The appearance of anxiety does not require me to effect it in any way, it arises and withers away by itself.

Inaction teaches me about:

1. What thoughts and emotions are.
2. The correct way to relate to thoughts and emotions.

What thoughts and emotions are

Thoughts and emotions are knee-jerk reactions to perception. The reaction is based on the knowledge I have. The reaction is a **singular response** that expresses itself in **two forms**: thought and emotion. Thought and emotion are saying the same thing in two different languages.

The correct way to relate to thoughts and emotions

Prior to being aware of inaction, I was always ready to control thoughts and emotions.

When the thought or emotion was pleasurable, I did not attempt to control it.

When the thought or emotion was painful, I attempted to control it.

I now see that control was not possible. What I called control was simply a contradiction that appeared after the fact.

Example:

I enter a situation, and anxiety appears. After the anxiety appears, I try to control it.

The appearance of anxiety was a knee-jerk reaction to the situation, and the attempt to control anxiety was a knee-jerk reaction to the anxiety.

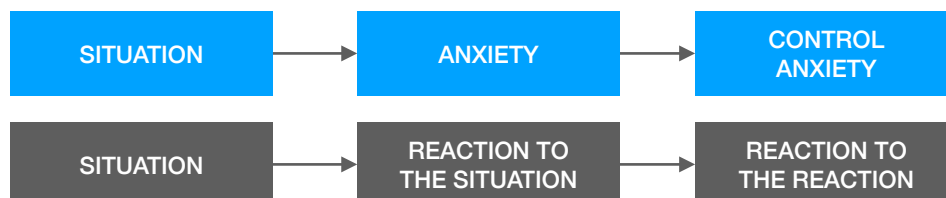


figure 1. knee-jerk reactions

I now see that contradiction has no meaning. The only thing that matters is the initial knee-jerk reaction, and the understanding of why I am conditioned to respond that way.

The only way I can relate to an activity that **I did not cause**, and **does not require I effect**, is to observe it.

The Transformation of the Conditioning

The observation of my reactions results in a learning of those reactions that transforms the conditioning responsible for those reactions.

The seeing is the healing.

Order

The reason I attempted to control thought and emotion was to bring order to the mind.

Example:

Anxiety is a painful experience that greatly disturbs the mind. I tried to control anxiety to alleviate the disturbance and bring the mind back to order.

I now realise that contradiction is the introduction of a new layer that furthers disorder and increases the degree to which the mind is disturbed.

I have come to understand that perception is the factor of order in an activity that is unintentional and uncontrollable.

Action

I have learnt that, psychologically speaking, inaction is the most positive action.

Conclusion

We attempt to control psychological disturbances to establish order in the mind. What we call control is a contradiction after the fact. The contradiction fails to bring order, and instead establishes another factor of disorder.

Inaction is absence of any intention to act upon what is observed, however, the very state of inaction enters the mind into a different state of action.

CHAPTER 34

SENSITIVITY

WRITTEN BY SILENT PERCEPTION

SENSITIVITY

The demand to control painful thoughts and emotions consumed all the minds energy in the conflict that ensued. In the absence of the demand to control thought and emotion, there is no longer that dissipation of energy.

The energy is now utilised by perception, and this generates a state of heightened sensitivity. The state of heightened sensitivity persists through one's daily life and makes it possible to have profound insights into the workings of thought and emotion. These profound insights are able to transform the conditioning at fundamental levels.

The capacity for profound insight and fundamental transformation has a relation to intelligence, and the mind comes to understand the basis for intelligence to be sensitivity.

Ending the demand to control thought has unleashed a level of intelligence in the brain that was previously inhibited due to the way the brain exhausted its energy through conflict. This level of intelligence is available to anyone who ends control.

Conclusion

The end of control stops the brain dissipating energy needlessly. The energy is then utilised by perception, and experienced as a heightened state of sensitivity. The heightened sensitivity makes it possible to have profound insights into the workings of the mind, and these profound insights facilitate the transformation of the conditioning at fundamental levels.

CHAPTER 35

NEGATION

WRITTEN BY SILENT PERCEPTION

NEGATION

The enquiry into oneself uncovers all the tricks the mind plays upon itself that prevent and distort perception. The instant the mind understands a trick, it naturally ceases to perform the trick. The trick is the factor of disorder, and the ending of the trick is ending of disorder.

The observation of disorder ends disorder. That is order.

Order is, therefore, brought about in the mind by clearing away all the factors that produce disorder. We refer to this as the process of negation.

Conclusion

The enquiry into oneself is a process of negation.

CHAPTER 36

INTEREST

WRITTEN BY SILENT PERCEPTION

INTEREST

In the last chapter we discussed negation: the process of eliminating the blockages to perception. Throughout the enquiry, one removes blockage after blockage. That means, one's enquiry has been focused on uncovering the negatives (the things that impede perception) and removing them.

In this chapter we explore: **What is the factor that makes perception function properly?**

Through removing the blockages to perception, we learnt that it takes time to understand the blockages, comprehend their danger, and end them. Our understanding of the process of negation causes us to make an assumption:

We make the assumption that it must also take time and training to bring about the **right quality of perception** and **attitude of perception**.

That assumption is false. It does not take time or training to bring about the right quality and attitude of perception. The right quality and attitude of perception is an innate capacity of the brain. This will become clear to you by the end of the chapter.

The Factor that makes Perception Function Properly

There are parts of man that function orderly, and parts of man that function disorderly.

When we observe ourselves, we see that we function in the physical world with a reasonable degree of order, but function in the psychological field in a very disordered manner.

The Psychological Field

Our functioning in the psychological field is mostly disorderly.

Example:

The psychological problems we have are maintained and perpetuate over time. We also pick up new psychological problems as time goes by.

The Physical Field

Our functioning in the physical field has a reasonable degree of order.

Example:

We can spot a dangerous animal, and move away from it.

We can develop technology that benefits our lives.

We can learn a trade skill.

The physical and psychological fields, however, are not separate. This means the disorderly functioning of the psychological field impacts our ability to function orderly in the physical field, thus, creating disorder there too.

Example:

Physically, I can learn a skill and build a company but, psychologically, my demand for power causes conflictual behaviour with the other people who build companies. This means our talents are turned against each other, rather than harmonised together.

The reason we allude to these examples is that man's refinement of his physical functions enables us to point to an experience that clearly demonstrates the quality that makes perception function properly, and also demonstrates that you have the capacity for proper perception without the requirement for training. To explain this, we refer to the experience of how we respond to danger.

The Response to Danger

The right quality and attitude of observation comes naturally when danger presents itself. When danger presents itself, the mind becomes very serious: sensitive and alert.

The sensitivity expresses itself as mental quietude that is capable of seeing, and a curiosity willing to receive what is seen.

The alertness is a state of readiness to act in response to what we see.

The root of this seriousness is **interest**.

When the mind is met with a crisis, it becomes highly interested.

When there is no crisis, many minds go dull and endlessly search for pleasure.

The Observation of Oneself

To have the right quality and attitude of observation with respect to oneself, the mind must be **interested** to understand oneself. That is all that is required to observe oneself with the right quality and attitude: **interest**.

There is no training required for observation.

When you are interested you observe.

When you are not interested you do not observe.

That is all.

Conclusion

When the mind is truly interested to see what something is, it naturally observes without any blockages. You do this intuitively when a crisis arises.