

Conscious spirituality in search of truth...



KENDRA CHERRY: CONSCIOUSNESS IS THE PSYCHOLOGY OF AWARENESS

Consciousness is 'The Psychology of Awareness' states author and educational consultant Kendra Cherry. A conscious awareness associated article as identified on her website suggests an interconnectedness can be made between normal awareness behaviours and 'consciousness.'

These behaviours occurring between the brain and 'mind' are seen by Cherry as an integrative and evolving process linking our consciousness with the brain. As changes in behaviour occur between people in everyday life, even at a very subtle level, our consciousness will still register this. On her informative "Well Mind" website Cherry outlines what this 'conscious awareness' behaviour might mean, an extract follows.

—Philip Crouch, Tasmania, 2020

KENDRA CHERRY: CONSCIOUSNESS IS THE PSYCHOLOGY OF AWARENESS

'While people often talk about consciousness, it can be somewhat difficult to define. Consciousness refers to your individual awareness of your unique thoughts, memories, feelings, sensations, and environment. Your consciousness is your awareness of yourself and the world around you. This awareness is subjective and unique to you.'

Your conscious experiences are constantly shifting and changing.

For example, in one moment you may be focused on reading this article. Your consciousness may then shift to the memory of a conversation you had earlier with a co-worker. Next, you might notice how uncomfortable your chair is, or maybe you are mentally planning dinner.

This ever-shifting stream of thoughts can change dramatically from one moment to the next, but your experience of it seems smooth and effortless. Some different states of consciousness include sleep, dreams, hypnosis, hallucinations, meditation, and the effects of psychoactive drugs.'

EARLY RESEARCH ON CONSCIOUSNESS

'For thousands of years, the study of human consciousness was largely the work of philosophers. The French philosopher Rene Descartes introduced the concept of mind-body dualism or the idea that while the mind and body are separate, they do interact. Once psychology was established as a discipline separate from philosophy and biology, the study of the conscious experience became one of the first topics studied by early psychologists.'



Structuralists used a process known as introspection to analyze and report conscious sensations, thoughts, and experiences. Trained observers would carefully inspect the contents of their own minds. Obviously, this was a very subjective process, but it helped inspire further research on the scientific study of consciousness.

The American psychologist William James compared consciousness to a stream; unbroken and continuous despite constant shifts and changes. Psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud focused on understanding the importance of the unconscious and conscious mind.

While the focus of much of the research in psychology shifted to purely observable behaviors during the first half of the twentieth century, research on human consciousness has grown tremendously since the 1950s.

What is the Unconscious Mind?

KENDRA CHERRY: HOW DO PSYCHOLOGISTS DEFINE CONSCIOUSNESS?

One of the problems with the study of consciousness is the lack of a universally accepted operational definition. Descartes proposed the idea of cogito ergo sum (**I think, therefore I am**), **suggested that the very act of thinking demonstrates the reality of one's existence and consciousness.**

Today, consciousness is often viewed as an individual's awareness of their own internal states as well as the events going on around them. If you can describe something you are experiencing in words, then it is part of your consciousness.

In psychology, consciousness is occasionally confused with the conscience. **It is important to note that while consciousness involves awareness of yourself and the world, your conscience is related to your morality and sense of right or wrong.**

MODERN THEORIES OF CONSCIOUSNESS

Research on consciousness has focused on understanding the neuroscience behind our conscious experiences. Scientists have even utilized brain-scanning technology to seek out specific neurons that might be linked to different conscious events. Modern researchers have proposed two major theories of consciousness:



INTEGRATED INFORMATION THEORY

This approach looks at consciousness by learning more about the physical processes that underlie our conscious experiences. The theory attempts to create a measure of the integrated information that forms consciousness. The quality of an organism's consciousness is represented by the level of integration. This theory tends to focus on whether something is conscious and to what degree it is conscious.

GLOBAL WORKSPACE THEORY

This theory suggests that we have a memory bank from which the brain draws information to form the experience of conscious awareness. While integrated information theory focuses more on identifying whether an organism is conscious, the global workspace theory offers a much broader approach to understanding how consciousness works.

A WORD FROM VERYWELL

While consciousness has intrigued philosophers and scientists for thousands of years, we clearly have a long way to go in our understanding the concept. **Researchers continue to explore the different bases of consciousness including the physical, social, cultural and psychological influences that contribute to our conscious awareness.**



Suggested resources:

Consciousness is the Psychology of Awareness, Kendra Cherry.

<https://www.verywellmind.com/what-is-consciousness-2795922>

IONS Consciousness, Dr Cassandra Vieten: Pod Cast.

<https://theconsciousnesspodcast.com/episode-21-consciousness-spirituality-and-interconnectedness-with-dr-cassandra-vieten/>

What is Conscious-Spiritual Awareness -

Home page: <http://www.philipcrouch.org/>

