

Eric's personal outline

Post by "Eric" of September 16, 2024 at 4:17 PM

I thought that I might write my outline in separate posts as I go through DeWitt's book. I already had the time to write some of my own thoughts on knowledge and then revised the logic and language a little after I read the relevant chapters of the book.

My thoughts on knowledge

The sensory organs send raw unprocessed (i.e. "true") sensory data to the brain when something in this world stimulates them. Using the sensory data with the innate sensory data processing mechanisms, the brain makes interpretations of the data and assigns quantifiable "importance" to it with it in memory based on spikes of neurotransmitter activity modulated by:

- the feelings acquired by comparison with previously acquired or imagined or innate (anticipated) interpretations (comparison result: cognitive consonance or dissonance)
- the feelings already present at the time of the sensation. (drugs, hunger, having a good time/boredom etc. can influence the "importance" of an interpretation)

This importance is what manifests (or simply is?) our confidence/faith/trust in the interpretation. When the "importance" is high enough, we are confident that the information is true and we may call it knowledge.

Confidence is pleasurable. Lack of it can be painful, particularly for important or profound issues under processing. Skepticism (the confidence in that nothing can really be known) erodes confidence in the trueness of one's senses, anticipations and feelings, and naturally - as lack of confidence is painful - will not be tolerated forever and we usually eventually find a way around this pain by trusting something. The wise person chooses to be confident in the honesty of his senses, anticipations and feelings; yet shall not be hasty in his interpretations; and shall revise his interpretations when evidence to the contrary presents itself. Perceptions and interpretations can be false on all stages of processing as can be demonstrated via experienceable examples such as optical illusions (initial processing) or delusions (later processing).

Sensations, anticipations and feelings should be taken as priority over reasoning as they are direct information from the environment (or the environment of your ancestors as is the case with anticipations) for you to use, and reason is only indirect information of the environment.

I feel like I could maybe say more or try to make myself more clear but I am content with posting the above.

Comments and criticisms are welcome :)