

Exchange On Knowledge From January 2020

Post by “Elayne” of January 2, 2020 at 7:20 PM

I would say knowledge is awareness of information (obtained through senses, feelings and/or prolepses) which a person feels sufficiently sure about to say "I know x thing". "Sufficiently" often in a subjective way. But in science, according more to accepted requirements for independent replication.

I read quite some time ago about a "sense of knowing " which could be triggered by stimulating the brain directly. Without any content-- the person would be suddenly struck with a feeling of certainty but not knowing about what! Very weird. I'll see if I can find it. My intuition is that there is a sensation of knowing, or at least I myself experience that (although always with a topic).

I think of it as a prolepsis. Some kind of pattern recognition in the brain that kicks off when a piece of information has satisfied whatever criteria the pattern needs. And of course unless you are going by statistical rules, this will vary from one person to another. Some people require a lot more input before they feel "sure" and others leap right to it.

Right now, I "know" the street that is always outside my condo is there. This is my "fast brain", also sometimes called system 1-- I'm not thinking hard about it, but if someone said "hey, do you think the street is still there?" I would immediately say "what? Of course it is" and have no feeling of doubt. If you pushed me on it, I'd eventually say ok, whatever, maybe a silent bulldozer just came by and removed it-- I'm not looking at it, after all. But that's so far-fetched as to not be worth bothering with. I know, pragmatically speaking, and that's good enough.

Words are easier to define for me like that, with examples, in context. I think everyone here knows what knowledge means, lol. I would avoid getting wrapped up in one of those definition things that goes into recursive absurdity.