

Starting Discussion of "Free Will"

Post by "KDF" of March 26, 2018 at 5:52 PM

Eric,

Thanks again for the interesting analysis and discussion. I am trying to tread lightly on this topic, because judging from the responses (as well as from the thousands of pages that have been written on it) it is a topic that individuals feel is central and essential to their philosophical world view. I am coming at this from a perspective of having wrestled with it and then having dismissed it as not relevant to my philosophical views. I dismissed it because I feel that our lack of free will or volition has no impact on one's ethics. We have a perfect illusion of free will, so if it walks like a duck and quacks like a duck, as far as I am concerned it is a duck.

You make a few points in support of "free will" or volition. I thought that it might be productive to outline my view in response to your points:

1. **"You now have the choice about responding to me or not."** - The fact that I am responding does not prove that I am doing so out of free will. We make what appear to be thousands of choices every day. The fact that these appear to us to be conscious choices does not prove that these choices are not predetermined.
2. **"Everything you said is based on the ability to assess evidence and decide on conclusions."** - If we had the perfect illusion of free will (which I hold that we do) how would the experience of assessing evidence and deciding on conclusions be any different?

Our experience is that we have free will and volition, or as Einstein put it, "We can choose what we do, we just can't choose what we choose." That is enough for me.

Kevin