



Keith David Henry was born in 1962 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. By trade he is a Certified Systems Engineer, a Certified Trainer, and a published author. He has been an Information Technology professional for over thirty years, and has been an adult educator since 1986.

Having previously been an ordained Pentecostal Minister for a church in Philadelphia he later turned his sights to more esoteric pursuits, becoming conscientiously involved in the study and practice of various metaphysical disciplines. His reevaluation of mainstream religion coupled with his trademark sense of curiosity and propensity toward research opened up a whole new venue of expression for him. He prides himself on his wide range of general knowledge within this venue and has over the years become a Theoretical Metaphysicist.

Keith is the author of several books on Metaphysics and Philosophy and has recently published his first science fiction adventure novel. He is also an accomplished artist.

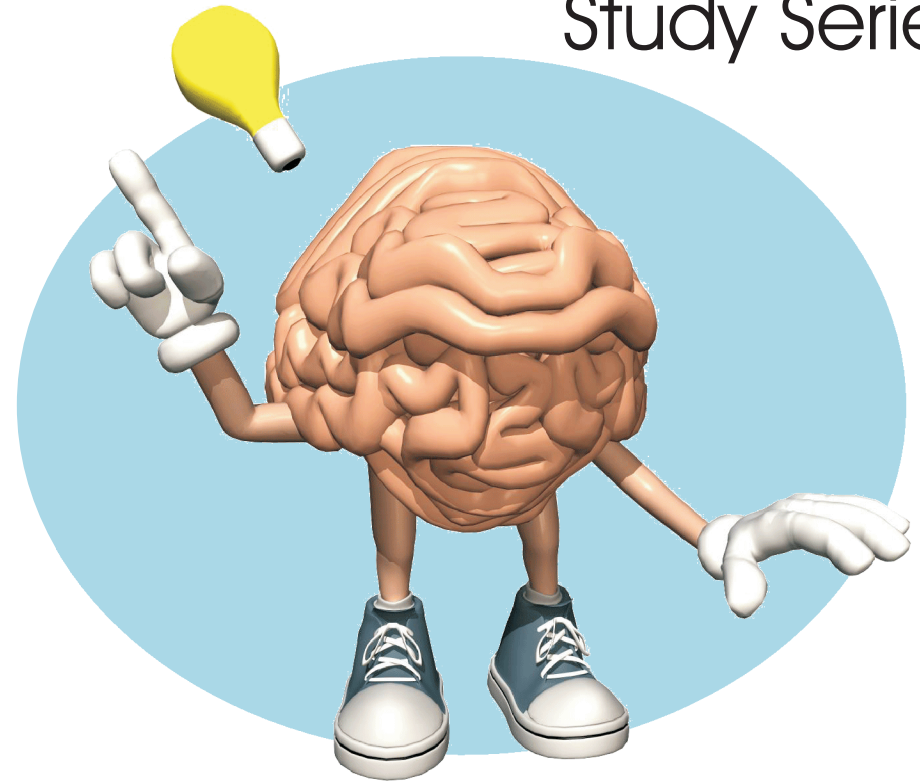
Keith is the host of the Internet talk radio program "Progressions of Consciousness" which airs weekly on the Community Listening Network station (CLNradio.com), the number one rated Internet Radio station in its genre today. Topics of discussion include metaphysics, philosophy, and other esoteric subjects of interest. His broadcast may be accessed by visiting his web site: www.CLNradio.com. Click on the "listen now" link at the scheduled times.

"The mind, once expanded to the dimensions of larger ideas, never returns to its original size." - Oliver Wendell Holmes



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Inner Potential Study Series



Lesson **Seven**

The brain processes sensory information. But what about the mind? Where does *thought* come from?

Consciousness

Introduction

The philosopher says, “*I think, therefore I am*”. The pragmatist says “*I think, therefore I am thinking*”. Consciousness simply says, “*I am*”. All three perspectives allude to *thought*, but none of them ever attempts to explain or define thought or its origin.

We learned in lesson three that perception happens *after* the physical senses have done their job and that perception is based upon memory as it must wait for all of the sensory data to be gathered and processed before it can proceed. So then, sentience is only a physiological process that’s followed by thinking. But where do *thought* and *consciousness* come in? Which one is cause, and which is effect?

Thought happens in the mind. But no one has located the mind. We know that it has something to do with the brain, but the brain is only a machine – a computer, albeit a living one. How are those electrical impulses stored in the brain translated into thought? And where does thought happen? Does it happen *inside* of us? If so, where inside of us does it happen? To say that it happens in the soul or the spirit is just another way of answering, *I don’t know* to the question, as soul and spirit also remain undefined with no specifics about location to be had.

Sentience vs. Consciousness

Consciousness can be defined in different ways. It can refer to awareness, wakefulness, or cognizance. But where does this ability come from? Some people say that when we sleep we are unconscious. But even during that time we have thoughts that can be measured. So there is still some sort of consciousness happening during sleep, or “unconsciousness”.

Consciousness says “*I am*” without any definitions or qualifications. Once we remove the idea of subjective perception from the equation all we have is awareness... not of

anything in particular, but simply the awareness that we are aware. Again the question begs to be answered, from where does this *awareness that we are aware* originate?

CONVERSATION TOPICS:

- 1) Who is it who interprets the information that is captured during sentience?
 - 2) Who and where is the one that says, “*I see*”, or “*I feel*”, or “*I think*”, etc?
 - 3) What’s the difference between a dream and the waking world? (Are we *awake* when we dream, or are we *dreaming* when we’re awake?)
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Many believe that this magical gift of consciousness evolved as our species evolved. To them the jury is still out as to whether or not lower life forms are conscious. (They are sentient for sure, but are they conscious?) Still others believe that consciousness was the starting point – the singularity from which the big bang proceeded – so that consciousness is the source of all things, and that everything is conscious, whether or not it is sentient.

Whether or not one wishes to answer any of the above rhetorical discussion questions, what’s very clear is that the mind and thought are things that we cannot identify or quantify.

But there is another element of consciousness which must be discussed. Typically we view consciousness as a one-way process, i.e. we are aware of this or that. But the Unified Field Theory of particle physics (discussed in lesson two) indicates that all sub-atomic particles are constantly exchanging information between themselves instantaneously at all times regardless of distance. In other words, they are always aware of

each other. And since all matter is made of these sub-atomic particles (including us) we may speculate that consciousness is not something that we receive only, but rather something with which we participate interactively on a universal scale. Is it possible that this mechanism that scientists have found is actually the force or fabric of consciousness? Could consciousness be a rudimentary state of being rather than an activity? Unified Field Theory suggests this is the case.

What we have discovered about the nature of physical reality might also suggest that consciousness is all there really is, and that perception is simply a subjective exercise of that consciousness within the context of relativity.

Also, there are many who seem to have experienced what's called Extra Sensory Perception (ESP), that is, perception that is not dependent upon sentience. We have all experienced this to varying degrees at some point in our lives. What is the source or location of this ESP? Its origin doesn't seem to be the brain.

CONVERSATION TOPICS:

- 1) Discuss instances where people have been aware of things that were not directly told to them or perceived with the five senses, yet were later shown to be accurate.
 - 2) Discuss the sensation that accompanies these events.
 - 3) Briefly discuss Gnosticism.
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I Am That I Am

When Moses was ready to confront the Egyptians he asked God, "Whom shall I say has sent me?" God answered, "Tell them *I Am that I Am* has sent you." What?! No definition? No

titles? What was God trying to say? And whatever God was saying, can't we say the same thing about ourselves? We are self aware. (The obvious next question is "who is *self*"?)

The fact is, anything else we might say about ourselves is purely subjective and dependent upon flawed perception and therefore can't be proven. The only thing we can truly say about ourselves and be completely accurate is, "*I am.*" This is the nature of consciousness in contrast to sentient perception. Sentient perception reasons something (i.e. takes an educated guess) based upon gathered information. Consciousness has no such luxury. Consciousness is an autonomic reality.

The Bottom Line

When we marry consciousness to subjectivity we find ourselves with the ability to conjecture about the world around us. But we can never truly define consciousness as we ourselves and everything we think, feel, or "know" about ourselves is a constituent of this mysterious force.

When we examine any thoughts that we have ever had about anything we must conclude that those thoughts *came from someplace*. But we never consciously ask where they came from. Like wind up toys we go about thinking and feeling without ever realizing just how amazing the gift of reasoning really is. With all of our scientific knowledge no one has come up with the definitive word on the origin of reasoning.

Religious thought might say that God is the origin of reason. But what is the purpose of reasoning? Wouldn't it be more efficient to live like the insect which predates the human by hundreds of millions of years? Their success is a testament to the value of thoughtless instinct. So why has the human mind been given the ability to apply reason to consciousness and exercise free will? But more importantly, why do we often forsake this capacity in favor of blind instinct and conditioning?