



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.

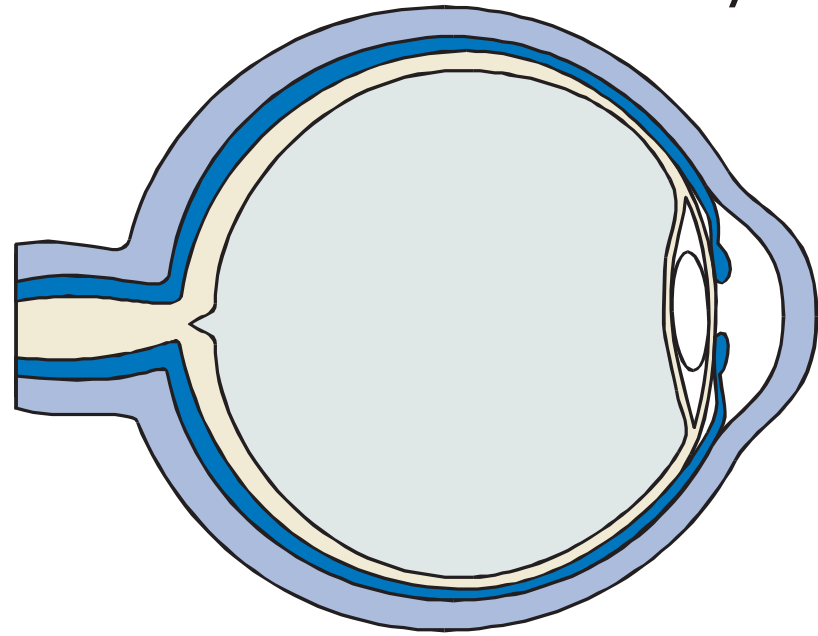
Keith is the host of the Internet talk radio program "Progressions of Consciousness" which airs weekly on the Community Listening Network station (CLNradio.com), the number one rated Internet Radio station in its genre today. Topics of discussion include metaphysics, philosophy, and other esoteric subjects 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 **Three**

What does modern science reveal about how we perceive our world and how reliable that perception is?

Perception Science

Introduction

Perception is a phenomenon that takes place in the mind, not in the five physical senses. The senses are the gateway through which information comes into contact with the physical body, is converted into electrical data, and then stored in the brain prior to the process of perception. (e.g. it's not the eye that sees, it's the mind that sees) In fact, perception relies more upon the mind than it does the senses. (e.g. Helen Keller had only the senses of touch, taste, and smell at her disposal, yet she became a highly regarded author, political activist, and lecturer, and the first deaf and blind person to earn a Bachelor's degree)

No one actually sees, hears, tastes, touches, smells, or perceives in real time. There is always a short delay in the information gathering and processing operation which yields the involuntary, relative, and subjective response of perception.

The American Heritage Dictionary defines perception as: "Recognition and interpretation of sensory stimuli based chiefly on *memory*; The neurological processes by which such recognition and interpretation are effected."

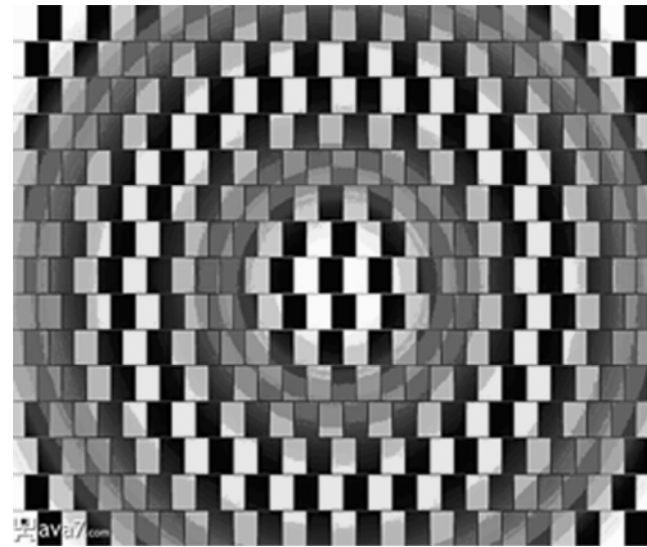
The data we receive through the senses is a different version of reality than what we perceive. The senses record everything within their range of receptive capacity indiscriminately. But the mind perceives only what our subjectivity allows it to. Since we perceive our world through a shroud of neurological processes, relativity, and subjectivity the conclusions we come to as a result of relying upon perception can't be proven to be anything other than inaccurate. Pure objectivity doesn't exist in our experience.

CONVERSATION TOPICS:

- 1) How does the prospect that perception is at best relative and inaccurate affect your *thoughts* about what you hold as truth and reality?

- 2) How does the prospect that perception is at best relative and inaccurate affect your *feelings* about what you hold as truth and reality?

Perception and Illusion



This first optical illusion tricks the mind, making it think that the horizontal lines are wavy lines. But all of the horizontal lines are straight and horizontal with each other. The eyes see straight lines, but the perception sees wavy ones. This

image shows the effect of *intentional deception* upon perception.



This second optical illusion is not designed to fool the perception, but to draw upon the subjectivity of the observer. How many faces do you see? Which face did you see first? Which face or faces are more or less pleasing to the eye? This illusion shows the effects of *subjectivity* upon perception.

The third image is not an illusion, but a humorous look at how perception can miss obvious things in favor of others.



The caption in the picture reads, “A very good optical illusion. If you look at the picture carefully you will see a boat in the background.” This image shows the unavoidable effects

of *predisposition* upon perception. We see what we want to see.

A perennial issue when it comes to perception is the difference between how men and women think. As it turns out there are actual physiological roots to this blaring difference between the sexes. This is the effect that *physiology* has upon perception.

The Perception Problem

The fact that sensory perception is such an unreliable means of discovering the truth about the world around us gives rise to *The Perception Problem*, which manifests in the following ways:

- 1) The Perception Process Begins with Illusory Matter
- 2) Perception is Completely Dependent upon Perspective
- 3) Perception is Highly Influenced by Environment
- 4) Perception is Subject to Physiological Influences
- 5) Perception is Very Easily & Routinely Manipulated
- 6) Perception is Often Mistaken for Objectivity or Fact

When confronted with factual information about such matters people tend to experience two conflicting responses simultaneously – a mental response and an emotional response. And little wonder. The prospect that our entire world view may very well be flawed is not a very comfortable posture to take.

CONVERSATION TOPICS:

- 1) How does prospect of *The Perception Problem* affect your *thinking* about your own personal prejudices and biases (i.e. racism, etc.)
 - 2) How does prospect of *The Perception Problem* affect your *feelings* about your own personal prejudices and biases (i.e. racism, etc.)
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The Bottom Line

If our own personal view of the world around us is based on a flawed system of sensory perception, what about the people around us who have contributed to our world view; parents, siblings, teachers, friends, advisors, clergy, etc.? Information that has been passed down to us was filtered through this same *Perception Problem* we ourselves experience.

What a person believes in their heart to be true is most likely inaccurate at best. But to accept this truth fully can leave a mental and emotional vacuum that might be difficult to negotiate.

The purpose here is *not* to have anyone trash their ideas about truth and reality. Rather, it's to open the student up to the possibility – even the probability – that there are realities at play that transcend the status quo. Employing critical thought in search of higher levels of accuracy creates hope that there is a way that is different than what we have come to accept as *the only way*. It encourages us to start searching for and asking different questions than we have been asking.

The most powerful questions are rhetorical questions. What rhetorical questions come to your mind based upon this lesson?