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How My Mind Works

Uncovering the Power in the Thought Process



OVERVIEW

As scientists unravel the mysteries of the human brain – the magnificent complexity of its structure – we have discovered the levels of the mind involved in the thought process. Our conscious, subconscious and creative subconscious levels work together to perceive the world around us, store our reality and make sure that each of us acts like the person we know ourselves to be.

OBJECTIVES

By the end of this unit, I will understand:

- the four parts of the decision-making process: Perception, Association, Evaluation, and finally, making Decisions.
- that all of my history is stored in my Subconscious, everything that has happened around me, and includes how I felt about each event.
- how each level of my mind works together to keep me “like me” – but the “me” of my past.

*When we speak about the mind,
we are talking about the brain in action.*

LouTice

KEY CONCEPTS

Conscious: the aspect of mind that encompasses all that one is currently aware of; that is, those aspects of mental life that one is attending to.

Subconscious: the level of mind through which material passes on the way toward full consciousness; an information store containing memories that are momentarily outside of awareness but that can be easily brought into consciousness.

Creative Subconscious: the source of mental processes that lead to solutions, ideas, conceptualizations, artistic forms, theories or products that are unique and novel. Self-regulating mechanism for behavior.

EXERCISE: Meaningful Change

We constantly compare current perceptions against our historical memory. If something similar happened to us in the past, it is a meaningful memory. If we compare and there is nothing in our memory, it is meaningless in helping us deal with the current situation. Select from the list below two experiences that are meaningful to you. Then, run them through the Thought Process to see how the past might be influencing your present decisions.

- Dropping out of school
- Struggling to understand course content
- Partying rather than studying for an exam
- Presenting in front of an audience
- Taking a mid-term or final exam
- Deciding whether or not to go to school today
- Procrastinating, filling my time with “busy work” and avoiding what needs to be done

PERCEPTION	ASSOCIATION	EVALUATION	DECISION	CONCLUSION
New information through my senses	Have I seen this before?	What is this probably leading me to?	Based on what can be or has been	Do I want to fix it or not?
Example: New relationship possibility	Yes, a couple of serious ones	Ended in heart-ache and lost friends	Choose not to get involved with new person because of past	If I want new relationship, I need to not let past negative feelings affect my current decision

EXERCISE: Maintaining Sanity

In the table below, we track how our perceptions of our abilities affect our decisions. Study the example below, then move to the next page and work through the exercise with some perceptions of your own abilities, what has caused them, and what you want to do to fix it and move forward.

Example:

MY PERCEPTION	HOW DID I GET THE NEGATIVE HISTORICAL MEMORY?	WHAT DOES MY CREATIVE SUBCONSCIOUS DO TO MAINTAIN SANITY?	WHAT AM I GOING TO DO TO FIX IT?
Not good in Math	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • algebra class in high school. Did not understand what teacher was saying • got yelled at when I asked questions • teacher threw chalk at the walls when I still didn't get it • was humiliated in front of my classmates at the chalkboard 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • gives me a "million" reasons to skip class • mind constantly wanders when I do go to class • always seem to be tired because the teacher is boring • never have enough time to do homework. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • discover other students in class who are "afraid" also • promise to look after each other since we have the same fears • make a vow to never miss class • find a classmate who is willing to be an accountability partner • Make sure that homework is always done first • see a tutor immediately if I don't understand something

EXERCISE: Maintaining Sanity, Part 2

Work through the exercise with a couple perceptions of your own abilities. List what has caused them, how your Subconscious keeps you sane, and what you want to do to fix it and move forward. (Use this same method to address other perceptions of your abilities.)

MY PERCEPTION	HOW DID I GET THE NEGATIVE HISTORICAL MEMORY?	WHAT DOES MY CREATIVE SUBCONSCIOUS DO TO MAINTAIN SANITY?	WHAT AM I GOING TO DO TO FIX IT?

SUMMARY: Fundamentals

First, let's get one thing straight: when we talk about "the mind" we are talking about the brain in action. It's a little like your car – you know the engine and drive train are making you move, but you don't see every little piece actually doing the work! Your mind is moving you along, but you don't actually see the neurons firing in the different parts of your brain.

In order for us to make sense of how your mind works, we break it into three parts: the Conscious, the Subconscious, and the Creative Subconscious. It's a bit like an iceberg. What appears above the surface of the ocean is like your Conscious Mind, and it is only a small part of the total iceberg. Your Subconscious and Creative Subconscious sit below the surface, reacting like an iceberg to the currents and water temperature, only they are reacting to what you are perceiving from the world around you.

The problem with most of us is we don't respect our subconscious enough. We think our conscious is very smart, and it is. But your subconscious is the genius. When you activate that, it's amazing what happens.

Now, the Conscious process has four functions – we call it the Thought Process. One function is what we call Perception through our senses. Before birth, some of your senses are activated. Balance is, sound is, temperature is. Then after birth, others get added. You take the information that you perceive and you store the information on the Subconscious level. This is what we call memory, caused by chemical changes that take place in the neurons of our brain.

The information that we have learned in books, experienced in our life, conversations, all of that information is stored in the neurons of your brain, never to be lost, never to be forgotten. That stored information is called "the truth." It is also called "reality." We have already learned that our reality, or truth, is incomplete.

Now the second function of the Conscious is that of Association. An association simply means that as you perceive a person or a situation, you're asking yourself the question, "Have I seen anything like this before?" You drop into your Subconscious, which is this huge database that you use to define You. If you have something stored from experience, it becomes meaningful. If you don't have anything stored, the perception is meaningless.

But you also have an emotional stored history in your Subconscious. And sometimes from an embarrassment, or ridicule, sometimes through being scolded, hurt, ashamed, that is there, never to be lost; unless you fix it.

The third function of the conscious is that of Evaluation. Evaluation is asking yourself the question, "What is this that I am looking at or experiencing probably leading me toward?" "What is this probably leading me to?" Something good or something harmful? Something positive or something negative? You are evaluating the probabilities of what you are experiencing. The accuracy of your judgment has a lot to do with your stored reality.

The fourth function of the Conscious is Decision-making, and you are making decisions about your

future, not based on what can be, but what has been. And it all happens in a split second! Most of the results you get will always be based, not upon what can be, but what has been.

Dropping to the Subconscious, we already know that we store our “truth” or “reality” about who we know we are here. The Subconscious also handles everything that is automatic for us, as well as our Habits and Attitudes.

I’m going to come over to the Creative Subconscious, which turns out to be a self-regulating mechanism. The creative subconscious has four functions. The first one is to maintain sanity, or what you and I refer to as reality. This Creative Subconscious needs to make sure you behave consistently with what you know to be true – about you.

Subconsciously, because we don’t realize this is happening, the Creative Subconscious is constantly comparing what we are doing and how we are acting against that vast historical database in our Subconscious. If the pictures don’t match, the Creative Subconscious releases energy and creativity to get us back to “normal” for us. It expands our awareness of other options and opportunities. So when you activate that on purpose, instead of reacting to a situation, it is amazing what happens.

And finally, our teleological nature – our ability to focus in on goals – seems to be a natural part of the Creative Subconscious’ need to make the pictures match.

You correct for mistakes based upon not your potential, but the reality you have stored. What kind of a student are you? “I’m a C student,” or “I’m a C plus student,” or “I’m an A student,” or “I’m a D student.” How are you at this subject? “I’m average or I’m a C, whatever.” What happens to a person who knows they’re a C student and for some reason they get an A in a test? If what I’m saying is true, the A is a mistake. Do you know what you tell yourself? “Now I don’t need to study for two tests and I can still get my C.” Am I right? You can’t make yourself study. Why? Because you believe you are a C student.

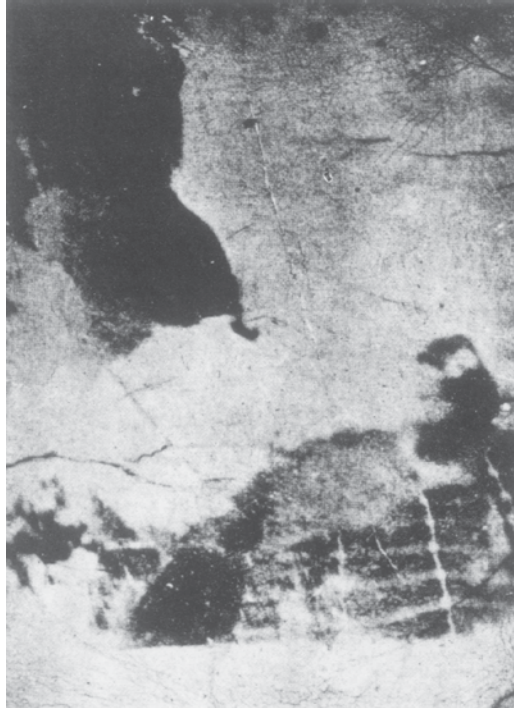
Now, if you’re a C student and get an F on a test (provided that’s how you grade) and you know you’re a C student, if somebody says, “Let’s go out this weekend,” what do you say? You’re going to say, “I can’t go out. I’ve got to study all weekend so I can pass my test and get an A.” How come? “So I can get my C.”

Now, why don’t you get an A all the time? “Because I’m a C student.” You don’t do it consciously. You do it subconsciously. Once you establish what’s normal for you, once you establish how you are, that process in the creative subconscious makes sure you stay pretty close to behaving like yourself. If you do worse, you correct up. But if you do better than you think you are, you correct down.

Remember, we act in accordance, we behave in accordance, with the truth as we believe it to be, about ourselves, our abilities, the situations we find ourselves in.

SUMMARY: Application

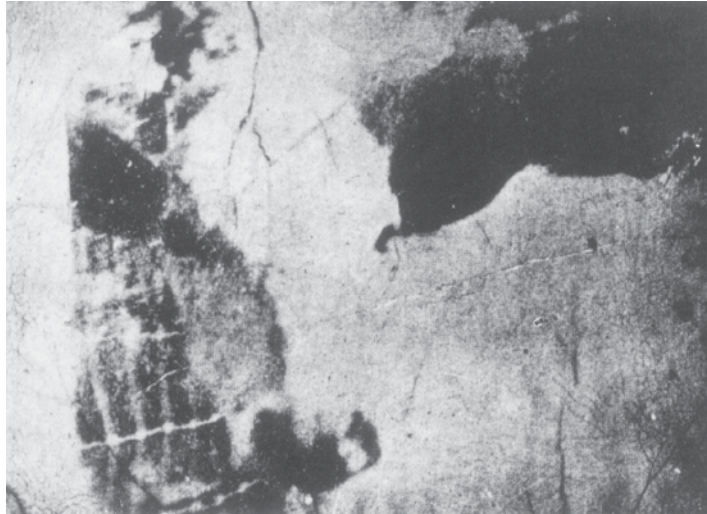
Look at his picture. What is it? It is a picture of a familiar subject. Can you see it?



Remember the thought process and how we take in information. We Perceive, Associate, Evaluate, and make Decisions. We Perceive through our senses and bounce those perceptions off of our stored reality (our past experiences) with a question, “Have I seen anything like this before?” You are looking for associations in your memory.

So, back to the picture. If you are by yourself, you’re stuck with your own perception. Therefore your association, evaluation and ultimate decision of what the picture represents is completely dependent upon your own perception. If you are part of a bigger group, you may get insights from others as to what they think it is. This gives you potentially more options to evaluate and help you to come to a more enlightened decision.

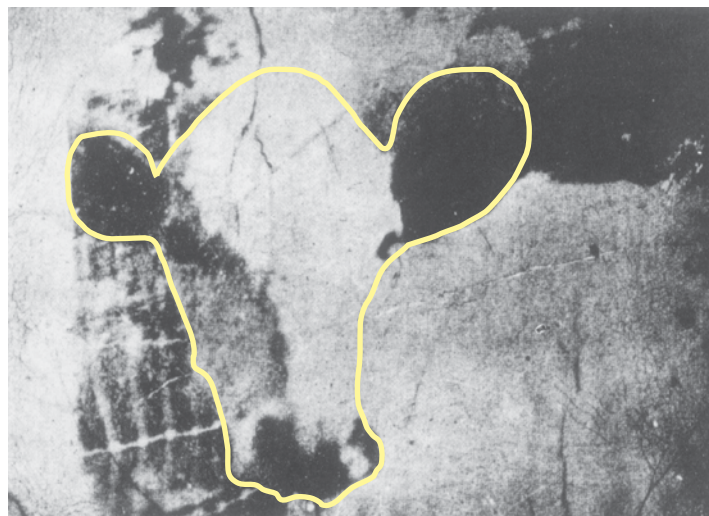
If you are stuck, and still not sure what it is that you are looking at, let’s demonstrate how smart you really are. How? By improving your focus. By offering you more clarity, you will see answers/solutions that you might not have thought possible. In fact, you will see the solution in a matter of seconds.



What you are looking at in this picture, is a common farm animal, a cow. In order to see the cow more clearly, it may be easier when the card is turned. Do you see the cow, yet? If you haven't, let's improve your focus a little further. You are looking at the face of a cow, so look for two eyes, two ears, and the long snout. Do you see her now?

Amazing isn't it? Your focus improved with a clear and defined picture. Once you knew specifically what you were looking for, you were able to shift your perspective, look for a specific association, and re-evaluate the image. You began to match the picture on the card with the dominant picture of the face of a cow in your brain until there she was. The more vivid the picture, the more you are drawn toward it.

Be very clear about your intention to get your education and how you intend to use those skills in your new career. You can make your future happen, and it is not so very different from this exercise.



PROCESS OF THOUGHT

