

Psychedelics, Meditation and the Self. Jim Garrido

Psychedelic story “The telephone has no *knowledge* of itself”.

Presentation:

What is “knowledge”?

Knowledge is *representational* information created by *inter-action*. Interaction between external objects and events and the senses, or internal events and feelings.

A person *experiences* all these interactions and creates representations or “Knowledge” of them *within* their own awareness.

While this interactively created knowledge is experienced and contained *within* a person’s awareness as knowledge *about something* or *event*, they are not *the* actual thing or event in of *itself*. Ex: An apple example and the image/idea of it.

In other words; “*The Map is not the Territory*” Alfred Korzybski

What is knowledge about the self?

We humans *not only* create representations of things and events, we also create a representation of a *self as the center of interaction and experience*. The Self construct also acts as the emotional evaluation reference point of all created knowledge.

“*Self-consciousness itself may be best construed as an **integrated multidimensional construct***

SKIP detail: *including somatosensory*, agentine, narrative and social components*” (Psychedelics, Meditation and self consciousness)

Ways consciousness is imbued with a sense of Self:

1. **Cognitive** self-consciousness: *thinking* of oneself as oneself

(García Carpintero, 2015; Guillot, 2016)

2. **Spatial** self-consciousness: being conscious of one’s location (with respect to one’s perceived environment).

(Bermudez, 1998; Schwenkler, 2014)

3. Sense of **bodily ownership**: being conscious of one’s body as one’s own.

(deVignemont, 2018; Martin, 1995)

4. Sense of **bodily agency**: being conscious of one’s bodily **actions** as one’s own.

(Bayne, 2008; Haggard, 2017)

5. Sense of **mental ownership**: being conscious **of one’s mental states** as one’s Own.

(Billon, 2017b; Zahavi, 2005)

6. Sense of **mental agency**: being conscious of one’s mental **actions** as one’s own.

(Peacocke, 2006; Proust, 2009)

Psychedelics and meditation

Both Psychedelics and meditation can disrupt these *integrated multidimensional processes*. By interrupting and somewhat reorganizing the mostly unconscious nature of these processes. Afterward, the processes themselves can then be somewhat individually experienced, witnessed and understood *within* the field of a more basic, *unconstructed and less biased*, conscious awareness.

Psychedelics do this by interrupting and changing the automatic neural processes that were previously dominant. Creating new and novel connections within brain networks, eliciting new insights of how the constructive consciousness actually works. *“Psychedelics creates a space between you and your ego”*, Michael Pollan

Meditation does the same by cultivating new ways of directing basic conscious awareness through the training of our *“attentional”* capability. This skill is also able to interrupt and change the automatic normal neural processes. This disruption helps us *“See through the fixed nature of things, in particular the fixed images we have of persons, beliefs, identities, expectations and selves. The word Vipassana has the original meaning of Seeing by dividing”*. Mark Epstein MD.

Once the *temporary and fabricated* nature of these integrated multidimensional processes are seen as such, a less selfish, wiser and more effective orientation toward experience can be established. With practice, this new *“Selfless”* perspective can be experienced even during normal waking consciousness. **END presentation here?**

The selfless state is a *“Knowing”* that occurs *without any biased content of that of a “knower”*.

The phenomenal character of this selflessness. This content empty state shows up as an immediate *experienced presence of awareness only*.

This present awareness can move its *attention* toward and encompass the contents of normal conscious experience during normal waking activities. This is the dynamic of an **“Open Monitoring”** form of meditation.

Or awareness turn attention back as itself during a **“Focused Attention”** form of meditation. This empty imperturbable attentional state is called Samadhi.

Dependent Origination

Over time the repeated experience of this present awareness *becomes the attentional center from which all experience and knowledge arises and ceases (Rigpa or Buddha Nature)*. This content empty presence is recognized as *the very fabric* from which all experience and contents arise. All content is then known as merely fabricated representations based on the interaction between awareness and internal and external sensory inputs. As such they are *“dependently originated”*.

Emptiness

Because all contents of consciousness are both only *temporarily and interactively* constituted within the fabric of awareness, they lack any intrinsic self-existence and are thus *“empty”*.

Non-Dual Awareness

Witnessing the fabric of experience without creating a separated knower of the experience is known as the nondual state of awareness.