

Consciousness

Its Nature, Purpose, and How to Use It

Dr. Bernhard Kutzler

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The search for the nature of consciousness is one of the oldest endeavors of humankind. Modern science tries to understand consciousness by studying brain states, however, this approach assumes that consciousness is a function of the brain or that its nature can be found by physical measurements. What if that's not the case? All we can safely say about consciousness is that it leaves *traces* in the brain. No more, no less. Hence, researching consciousness by studying brain states may be like researching an elephant by studying its footprints.

Some people explain personal consciousness by declaring it an aspect of "a" universal consciousness, the latter often denoted as *capital-C Consciousness*. However, this does not explain anything, it just shifts the question about the nature of consciousness to a level that is much more difficult – if not impossible – to explore. Capital-C Consciousness is usually considered inconceivable and is rarely questioned with logical rigor. Such an answer is a non-religious version of saying that there is a God and that God is in everybody.

The only non-limiting approach to exploring consciousness is to observe consciousness without making any assumptions about it. Since consciousness is the most private of all experiences, the only consciousness one can observe is one's own. In doing this for four years I finally uncovered the nature of consciousness and its purpose.

What follows in this book is not just a summary of my findings, it is a description of the mental voyage that led to these findings. With this text you will be able to follow my thought process to discover consciousness for yourself. You will see the nature of consciousness, how it emerges, how it works, and how you can use it effectively. You will understand the purpose of consciousness as the core of the most powerful tool in your possession and you will see your full potential as a human – as well as how to access this potential.

There are no prerequisites needed for you to be able to follow along on this mental voyage – except a healthy dose of curiosity. However, it is helpful to understand why I came to explore consciousness the way that I did.

The Background Story

My first career was in mathematics. I taught at a university, conducted research, and ran my own business. I devoted my body and soul to what I did. I would often work day and night, seven days a week – not because I had to, but because I wanted to – and I became successful both as a scientist and as an entrepreneur. But after working twenty years in this field, everything became routine. Everywhere I went, I felt like I met the same people and had the same conversations about the same topics. I was bored. I needed a change.

I always had an interest in humans and human behavior and over the years I had taken classes in subjects ranging from nutrition to psychology to Ayurveda. Craving a change, I left the university in 2009, closed my business, and shifted my focus to helping people. I started a new business as a mindset coach. In doing this I finally felt invigorated again. However, this time my enthusiasm did not last long. After two years, everything once again became routine.

In 2011, I attended a seminar on the question ‘What am I?’ The speaker had devoted her life to finding an answer. I was so inspired by her story that I hung on her every word. From that day on I wanted to find an answer.

What am I?

I am a human and thus an animal. But the human character is completely different from the character of an animal. All lions are similar and lead similar lives. No lion has ever changed its lifestyle to become a vegetarian, practice yoga, or offer seminars to propagate its ideas. No bird has ever built cubist nests, thus establishing a new era of nest-building. No ape has ever started a soccer team or introduced a compulsory school system for the young apes in its forest. Humans do all this – and more. Animals and plants change their behavioral patterns slowly and only if necessary. Humans can change their behavioral patterns radically and at will in a short time. All specimens of an animal or plant species behave more or less the same. Within the human species, behavioral patterns vary tremendously.

Science has had difficulty explaining this difference between animals and humans. Nevertheless, this difference *must* exist and it must be *substantial* as the above considerations clearly show.

What is the full potential of a human? We don't come with an instruction manual. What we know about ourselves and our potential is what we have found by trial and error. Our understanding of ourselves may be incomplete – or even incorrect.

*

To answer the question, 'What am I?,' I knew I needed to observe and explore my emotions and my behaviors as precisely as possible, including my thinking. I had to interrogate myself, taking nothing for granted.

I tried to do this while continuing with my normal life, reflecting on the question 'What am I?' amidst the demands of my business and my relationships. After three years it became clear that the distractions of daily life were preventing me from observing myself to the extent that this project required. If I was to make significant progress, I had to dedicate my life completely to this exploration.

Therefore, in 2014, I gathered my courage and made a clean break. I closed my business, gave away all of my belongings, sold my apartment, said farewell to family and friends, and moved to a place that inspired me: the Almtal in Upper Austria. I refrained from social contact and all print and electronic media. I focused exclusively on exploring myself, in particular my emotions, thoughts, and body states.

During this exploration I came to understand why I behave the way I behave. I found that my behavior comes from what I call the *human program*, and I saw that all humans have such a program. As a baby I was 100% authentic. By the age of twenty, I had already learned numerous rules about how to behave within the social groups to which I belonged. I had also learned to *want* to belong to certain social groups as well as to *have* to belong to others.

*Man is born free, and everywhere he is in chains.
(Jean-Jacques Rousseau)*

I saw that the human program is much deeper than anything we usually consider to be belief systems or the results of upbringing and education.

The roots of the human program reach back as far as the emergence of humans some 100 to 300 thousand years ago, with these oldest roots bringing forth behavior that today is considered “normal” or “natural,” hence it is never scrutinized. I scrutinized it.

The question that I had started with could as well be formulated as ‘what am I beyond all rules, belief systems, and other programs that I had learned intentionally and unintentionally, voluntarily and involuntarily throughout my life?’ As Aldous Huxley wrote in *The Island*: “If I only knew who in fact I am, I should cease to behave as what I think I am; and if I stopped behaving as what I think I am, I should know who I am.”

The human program is an aspect of *consciousness*. This word originates from the Latin words *com* (= *together*) and *scire* (= *to know*). My consciousness is comprised of what I know. And I know what I have *learned* to know. All the rules that I had learned while growing up and all of my education are part of my knowledge and thus part of my consciousness. By exploring the question ‘What am I?’ I had explored my consciousness and how it works.

The Book

This book documents what I have found that is relevant for all humans. All results are logically deduced but are 100% inspired, guided, and backed by personal experience. The text is a chain of logical arguments with Chapters 2-7 (Part 1) laying the foundation for Chapters 8-15 (Part 2), and Chapters 8-15 laying the foundation for Chapter 16. Because of this structure, you will be able to derive all results for yourself as you read.

Many of the results in Chapters 2-7 are known. However, they are important milestones on a holistic path of thought – and like most voyages, the path to the destination is as important as the destination itself.