

What do we really mean by conscious and unconscious/ sub-conscious?

This is a very good question, possibly one of the key questions that is not looked into deeply enough in the study of psychology and psychotherapy because if it were then these subject areas would otherwise evaporate in the wake of the findings. Before we go on, this article is not attempting to show understanding of psychoanalytic definitions but to present an alternative expression of these things. Consciousness is impossible to define and so many of the words associated with it are ambiguous. The nature of being awake we call conscious as opposed to knocked out or asleep, but we also call conscious actions are those with intension or mental focus/ “awareness” and unconscious as both psychologically reactionary but also (amazingly!) instinctive responses or response without mental focus or “awareness”. There are so many forms of this word it is extremely difficult to pin it down so in this article I am challenging all forms of the use of the word conscious and unconscious/ sub-conscious (including variations on this like super-conscious). The point is there is a way of view all this from a broader perspective so please bear with my use of terms.

Let’s look at this and clearly identify the nature of these two seemingly very complex aspects. Actually they aren’t, yet have become something very problematic and weighty. They need not be.

The conscious aspect of the human is the aspect that is the entirety of human knowledge and human culture. It might be called the analytic and abstract mental processes, meaning having to do with everything other than the immediate senses. It is everything that can be and is called “known” or “knowable” as far as the modern human being is concerned. This is basically a very small or narrow field. Even in scientific experimentation it is widely known that we actually know very little of what is going on in our day to day existence, what becomes “known” almost instantly drifts into the unknown and vice-versa. In fact all the time we believe we “know what we are doing”, the processes of “me” are being organized on top of a turbulent sea of total unknown or unconscious processes of the body mechanism.

What this means is that whenever we are dealing with the “known”, say for example “body physiology” we are actually using a microscopic part of the brain to grasp fragments of information about something so vast we cannot understand it. Basically what this means is that outside of analytic thought there is absolutely everything else in the universe all connected together. The unconscious/ sub-conscious isn’t a small box of goodies that we don’t understand, it is in fact everything that is Unknown in the whole of the universe and not only that it is also unknowable.

The ideology of science is to bring consciousness or the known to the unknown areas of the universe, be that of our own bodies or the vaster universe, in either case the Unknown is so vast that it is absolutely impossible to be known because it is a functional unit which is one thing occurring. Therefore not only is it not known, but far worse for the scientist, it is unknowable, now and forever more.

The impossibility and absolute infinite quality of things means that what is known is actually a trap. Even in religious fields there is the ideology that we can bring “awareness to things” or “shed light” on things, all this is the same language of something knowing something else. But to really live life instinctively as animals do,

the self-conscious process actually has to die, so consciousness actually has to give way and the ego or “self” has to die before there is a peace or natural return of the human animal. Simply viewing yourself as one thing being aware of something else is duality. When there is just one thing happening there can be no separate part viewing it. The duality state is based in fear, for it is us being unable to let go of viewing ourselves doing or acting, we have to be the audience as well as the participant of what we are doing as two separate things. This doesn't work and as a result the reality underpinning this contracted energy state is Oneness.

The deep sense is that the conscious mind is actually something that is the dis-ease of the human and is something that is so hard for people to grasp because the “me” is the consciousness...hence we don't want to be without this for it would literally be the end of our worlds. UG Krishnamurti pointed out to a questioner once *“There is nothing outside of yourself!”* This may seem baffling, but outside of “self” there literally is nothing that can be known or identified as there is no longer a conscious process to be aware of itself.

It's a bit like what happens when one is inebriated! Many unconscious processes happen in this state, a person is unaware of things occur. Often violence or aggression cathartically ejects itself out of the body, or there is a sexual expression of this, or one may do things one would never have done when in a conscious state. Very often the things people do when “under the influence” are because that energy is hidden internally and when the alcohol or other substance lifts the lid on this all hell breaks loose. This of course is the basis of the Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde paradox of the human or the “normal schizophrenia” in which we live.

The point is that when released from the conscious a person doesn't know what they are doing, in this state they are often called “animals” by passers by, but this is because it is seen as being wrong or bad to be unconscious of actions and to simply follow natural drives and expressions. In fact it is totally destructive to society to do just this, which is why there are so many laws associated with all forms of drugs. The point is that the unconscious processes of the human are the actuality of the human being, the honest truth of their expression, not necessarily in an alcohol-induced state but still in a state where the “self” is no longer functioning.

While we believe in and so strongly uphold the conscious mind, it is in fact consciousnesses that is the main problem. Gradually people are letting go of these ideologies and moving to a more natural state. This draw of the wild pulls people back to natural connection and back to the sub-consciousness which is the vast sea they were missing the sense of, the one sense behind all the others. It is not so much bringing something to the light or forming something extra, but rather allowing that which is not necessary to die, in order for the human to go on, the additional consciousness which has blocked natural flow for many thousands of years in human existence. Consciousness has to give way to the unconscious beneath it for there to be a resolution or peace.

In the taking of the shamanistic-psychoactive medicinals this is fundamentally always the background feeling, that of something vast and impossible to explain which holds the whole experience For a moment these herbs block the dis-ease structure of the conscious mind and stop it from functioning as normal, thereby letting in the “light”

that was already constantly there. These functions of feeling and seeing this are always with us, but as we move into adulthood and away from childhood much of the mechanism of the natural body stops functioning in order to focus all energy into the dis-ease process of the body which is the conscious mind and head-focused state.

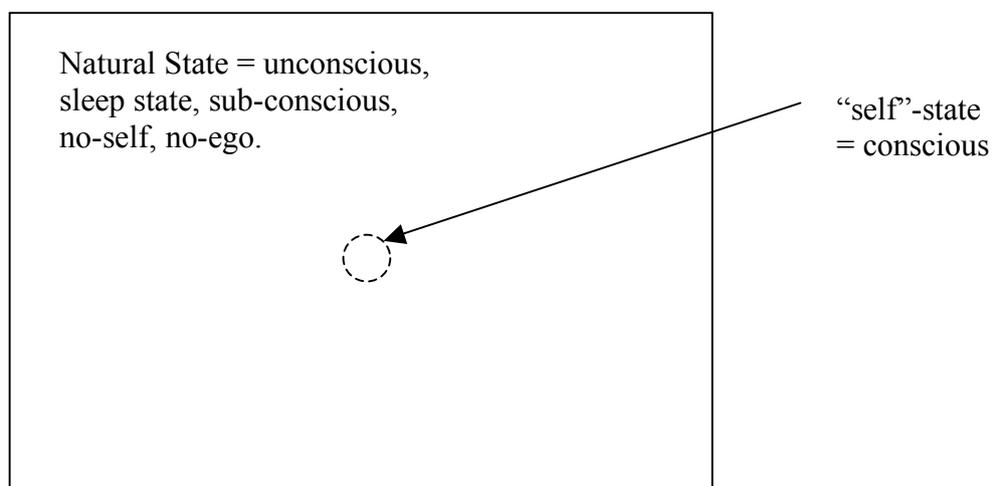
We very rarely get to experience the unconscious process of the body's expression, possibly during sex, childbirth and sometimes urination and defecation but rarely anything else. These things are all hidden by society and so the conscious mind of the ego hides the reality of the unconscious/ sub-conscious human-animal expression which lurks just below the surface. It is a masked ball of superficiality that blocks the reality of life from coming through. A bit like diplomacy built on anarchy, or a house built on sand!

The point is that this cannot survive and does not when aggression is roused, then this underbelly of society can almost instantly erupt into mass violence. Why? Simply because it is there. The same is true of other ways of expressing the creative energy, such as through sexuality. The reason people are so hidden with regards to sexuality is that if people were truly free with this it would create a totally different world, one which is totally unrecognizable from the one we see.

Ricky Gervais's 2009 film "The Invention of Lying" makes some brilliant points about a world that cannot tell lies or essentially constantly expresses the sub-conscious. Though the film takes place in a still contracted modern arena, the world is a totally different place without the "lie". In a way the "self" is a lie that we all know at a deep level hides something else. We all truly know that the persona of "me" isn't all there is if we really consider it...but it is impossible to really and truly see this, as "self" cannot see itself. It is either there or it isn't. We have lived since childhood in a dream of the known, a dream of the idea that the unconscious is to be feared, rejected, overcome, brought to light, but actually it is of far more use than we know. As a result, as Freud found out, we are stagnated peoples who are unconscious that they have a heap of energy that has never been expressed hidden, thereby internally destroying our senses and making a mockery of life.

The reality of when the unconscious comes to the fore is when the human lets go and has the trust in life that comes only through nature's process through us, for it is not the human who invented "self" but nature. Through its unravelling it is seen that all things have been perfect, however tyrannical and awful they seem to our known ideology. The saying that seems most appropriate is that "God moves in mysterious ways". In a sense, the conscious is akin to a droplet of ice in the sea, it is melting very quickly, while all the while believing for that moment that it is separate from the sea.

We will never overcome the unconscious for it is everything that is outside of "self" and in fact includes the "self" itself! The contraction of energy that makes up the identified "me" is really the dis-ease not the cure.



"Psychoanalysis is that mental illness for which regards itself as therapy."
- Karl Krauss

"You do not have to be good.
You do not have to walk on your knees for a hundred miles through the desert
repenting.
You only have to let the soft animal of your body love what it loves"
- Mary Oliver

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17/10/2013