

Experiencing Consciousness and the God Idea

The word consciousness denotes the qualitative experience of what it is like to be something. It tells you you are a person not a worm. It is related to your value and quality. A worm cannot match you in worth.

Consciousness is a form of life. Consciousness is self-communication of the fact of existence. It means you know you exist. You are aware. All conscious beings are in communion for all have consciousness.

When you don't think, you find the sense that you are aware. Try not to think. You will just be aware. You are therefore not your thoughts. You therefore have consciousness that is just aware. And you have consciousness that is able to experience thoughts.

Some people think they are their thoughts. For example, Elijah may live and breath and sleep computers because his image of himself is that of a computer whizz. But if these thoughts could be erased from Elijah he would still be Elijah. He is not his thoughts and desires.

Think about what is left if you have no body. Think about what is left if you have no feelings. Think about what is left if you have no memory. Think about what is left if you empty your mind. All you have left is pure awareness or consciousness. You still have a sense of self-identity. All it is is a sense that you exist.

Religion makes a huge deal over the question: "Why is there something rather than nothing?" And it answers God. It takes God as the best explanation. It denies that it makes sense to ask, "Why is there a God rather than nothing?"

Actually, there is a question more important than that. "Why do we experience consciousness? Why are we not just machines that don't even know they exist?"

We do not experience consciousness. Consciousness experiences us. We are consciousness.

I experience myself when I am conscious. Consciousness is experiencing itself. Consciousness is for me just as I am. It is not for me as an agent of moral good or moral evil. Thus even if I choose the eternal damnation of Hell, God cannot let it happen to me because my consciousness is about me not my morals. I take priority and not me as a moral agent. If you disagree then you may as well say that people being doctors is what matters and not their being people.

Nobody seriously suggests that if a person who chooses damnation cannot get eternally damned they will suffer far more than they would if they were put in Hell.

We are conscious that we are conscious. We only experience ideas and thoughts. When you see a table, your mind forms a replica of it in your thoughts and you see that. What you don't see is how the table is really virtually empty space in terms of physics. Bishop Berkeley argued that because we only experience ideas that there are no such things as material things. But the fact that we only experience ideas does not mean we are wrong about the existence of matter. Instead of worrying about how we know matter exists, you just get on with life.

Some ask if consciousness has any use or if it is useless. Some say no. This supposes that as long as an entity does good work it does not matter if it is conscious or not. That is a very strange position. Consciousness can exist even if we have no memory or intelligence or power to have intention. We can still be conscious beings. A person with advanced Alzheimer's does not have our powers but is our equal in consciousness. Conscious beings do not necessarily seek to avoid pain and embrace happiness. We are conscious for its own sake.

We have meaning in life simply because we are conscious.

Some writers discuss the allegedly infinite potential of your consciousness. Here is their argument. My comments in red.

Each moment of time belongs to eternity and is in eternity. Thus if we could freeze the present moment forever we would live forever but in an unchanging state. Our minds have the potential to be everlasting and indestructible. Einstein said that if we can travel at the speed of light time would stand still for us.

The mind might have the power in itself but there are other facts that stop it reaching its potential. Time is more powerful than the mind. The only way to see if we can travel at the speed of light is to do it. But we cannot. It is possible that it could be so much for our minds that they die.

The importance of realising that we have godlike powers and are in some way eternal and indestructible assures us that nothing is ever a complete disaster. It may feel like our whole world has fallen apart but we must resist despair. We will survive all and we will overcome all. We will be better and stronger than before. Whatever does not kill you makes you stronger and better - this is a popular saying and 100% true! Even death can't really kill us. This is trying to provoke our feelings to want to believe - but this has no place in a logical argument. Wanting to live forever is not going to make us live forever.

Infinite means there is no final number of times. Time is infinitely divisible. No matter how much a moment can be broken down it can be broken down further. The perception of time differs from person to person. To one person's experience, the day goes past like a flash. To another it drags and to their mind it is like a week. Your perception could take a moment and break it down infinitely. If that would happen, you would experience experiential eternal indestructible life in a moment of time. We can't ordinarily do that but it is a proof of our eternal potential.

We sense that each moment is one unit. In other words, our experience of a moment is like one unit. You can imagine breaking that experience down infinitely just like you can imagine dividing a grain of sand forever. No matter how much dividing you do, there is always something left to divide. So each experience of a moment is infinitely divisible. That does not mean it is actually infinitely divided. But it means that every moment has infinite potential. If you can break the experience of a moment up into two, you get two moments at least in your mind, and if you break these up you get four, and you can get infinite experiences of moments. There is something infinite then about our potential for experience. Infinite means without number and therefore indestructible. Nothing can destroy your inner core. You are the power of consciousness and it is infinite and therefore permanent even though something is blocking you from changing your perception of this moment so that you experience it infinitely.

Not true. What is infinite in one way is finite in another. Imagine there is an infinite line. That does not mean the only thing that can exist is an infinite line. The line is infinite but it is finite in the sense that it is not the orange. If there is something infinite about our minds it does not mean that they will have extended infinite life. It is infinitely extended life we need to prove and we cannot.

Does the fact that we have the potential to experience everlasting life mean that we actually live forever? The nurse can potentially kill a patient but she doesn't actually do it. So possible and actual are distinct. But possible or potential power to live forever means we can live forever. We can only do this if there is some unlimited power in our hearts. Having this power proves that there is a part of us that is indestructible.

Being indestructible now does not mean we will necessarily be indestructible in five minutes time.

To realise the truth about time is an extremely important affirmation in itself - it is proof that no matters how bad things seem to be they can get better. This truth is the only truth that really matters. It is not God or religion or prayer we need but that truth.

Pity the argument is full of errors.

Consciousness is the ultimate good. It is too good not to persist forever. If we were unconscious puppets there would be no good in that. We would as well not exist at all. Consciousness is good in itself. If you suffer the consciousness of torment forever it is what the torment is doing to the consciousness that is bad and not the consciousness itself. Know that your consciousness is your core - it is a faculty that can never disappear from the universe. A mighty fortress is your consciousness.

This argument is so awful that it is barely worth answering. It presupposes that if something is very good that it cannot perish. That does not follow.

We only know the present 100%. In other words, I know I experience the now. Thus no evidence, no Bible can ever refute this doctrine for it does not have the force of direct experience. In principle, the present moment matters more than the past or the future or even God. The present should be my God.

Consciousness seems almost magical. The problem of consciousness is not solved by saying it came from God for God does not even have a body and we cannot have a clue how he could be conscious. The problem is made worse for it is hauling in a God of the gaps who cannot fit the gap. A gap filler is a cheat - you can fill a hole with just anything.