

## WHY IT IS EASY TO FEEL FREE WITHOUT HAVING FREE WILL

Free will at best is a guess and can't be anything else. You can feel free and not be free. You do not experience free will. You just go by a feeling. A common error in philosophy is how we are told that the feeling is telling us the truth that we really are free. In fact feeling free is just feeling free and has nothing to do with free will.

## WHEN DECISIONS SEEM TO JUST APPEAR!

A lot of the time the decisions we make seem to come from nothing at all. It looks like that we are observing what we are doing and thinking as opposed to really doing and thinking ourselves. It is like something else is doing things through us. The mind is tricking us.

The decisions do not magically come out of nowhere. But that is how it feels. It is a proof that we cannot rely on our feelings to determine if we are creatures with free will or not.

## FEELINGS AND FREE WILL

It seems to most of us that we cannot choose our feelings. Our feelings and emotions are below the level of conscious awareness and control. Pulling strings in ourselves to help us feel a certain way at times is possible. But pulling strings means it is not guaranteed to work. And manipulating ourselves to feel a certain way simply proves we are not in control. We may feel it but we are not. This feeling is an illusion and so is feeling free. That feeling is part of the reason we feel free. People say we can choose our thoughts. Again we can try to think something and fail. We do not bring up the thought. We open ourselves up to it and it may come and it may not.

What about the view that feelings are like waves - we do not create the waves but we choose which one to surf? We can have several different feelings but we can choose one and still not feel what we want. Our feelings care little about what we choose. They often do not care at all.

If you have free will, you did whatever you did in the past using it. You were responsible then but not now. You are not responsible for the past now. You are only responsible for the present and the future. You are not responsible for what anybody else does unless you force them to do it. You feel free despite all that. You are not as free as you feel.

The feeling of being free is like a psychological compensation for not really being free. It is like a painkiller. The feeling is what sunglasses are to midday intense sun.

## FEELINGS AND FACTS

Feeling that something is true means you strongly sense that it is a fact. That will make it seem more convincing to you than cold hard logic and evidence and proof. But do not forget that whether the "fact" is true or not, you have created the illusion that it is true. Feeling something true is true is embracing the truth for the wrong reason. You put yourself under the bondage of feeling. So feeling free does not mean you are free but that you are not.

## OBJECTIONS TO FREE WILL BEING AN ILLUSION

Determinists, people who think the causes of our choices do not involve any real free will but fixed causes, will never live or act all the time as if they think determinism is true. What about their choice to believe that determinism is true? Surely they contradict themselves? No. In fact if determinism is right then there is no choice to recognise that or believe it! But what they think or feel has nothing to do with determinism being true or not. A computer may swear it is free and be wrong.

The book Religion is Reasonable says that the reason free will cannot be an illusion is because it would be impossible for all of us to be under the illusion all the time (page 25). But it is not a serious illusion in a sense. It is not like seeing visions of pink elephants all the time. It is only a feeling and most of us have feelings that could mislead us. Don't we live under the illusion that many evil things are good all the time? Don't all agree that evil doing is a symptom of delusive thinking? Don't we feel and act as if we will never die? If we took our own death seriously we would be horribly depressed every time we heard somebody has died. The arguments of religion against determinism are wafer thin and serve only to show the weakness of their position.

## WHY DO WE FEEL FREE AND WANT TO FEEL FREE?

We know that we do not know how we are free and how we are able to do it if we have this freedom. Therefore no matter how free we might think we feel, we could be wrong.

The feeling of freedom is necessary to prevent fear. It would be scary if we felt compelled. The feeling is a good thing for to feel that fate controls you by pulling you one direction and another is a scary thing so you have to feel as if you can do what you want. But we can have the feeling and deny free will. Denying it then is not a sickness nor is it hypocritical.

Some determinists say the simplest way to respond to people who tell us we feel free and are free is, "What do you expect when we always do what we want?" The determinists are indicating that the feeling is necessary for us to have a will but it does not make that will free or unfree.

Yes from moment to moment we do feel we do what we want.

The wants are perceived to be mechanical and unfree when you look over the several thoughts and acts of will that led to the acts. So the feeling of being is actually accompanied by the feeling that you are not free though you do what you want. It is almost an ambivalent situation. For some they can stop feeling free altogether when they consider how the thoughts and feelings and motivations work.

If you notice that if you cannot do what is evil just because it is evil it follows that no part of your evil actions intended to be other than good under the circumstances. But you were wrong so you were insane when your mind became distorted to assume evil was good. The feeling of being free do to evil is an illusion for you only look for the wrong kind of good. That is not the same as reaching out to evil intentionally.

It is as certain as  $2+2=4$  that nothing can prove we have free will or even that we might have it. If religion denies that then it denies that  $2+2=4$ . In denying that, they implicitly dissent from free will for if reason makes no sense then free will is impossible to use for there is a connection between it and reason. Free will is following reason as you see it.

If you feel free, if you feel you have free will, the feeling will vanish or at least diminish if you start listing the things you cannot choose. You are unable to choose that your child should get a terrible disease and die horribly.

## A GUESS NOT A BELIEF

Free will is a mere assumption. It is a guess not a belief. Thus belief in free will cannot entitle us to believe in rewarding and punishing. Yet that is what believers want the belief for. Belief can only entitle us to give what might be a reward or punishment depending on whether the person is free or not. But you can only guess not believe. Here is a consequence. If you reward a good person you will do it with the following sentiment, "If you are not free then this is a gift not a reward. It is only conditionally intended to be a reward. In other words - if you are free then we reward you." You might as well not even bother assuming free will exists.

An animal has no free will yet when you take your dog's bowl off the floor in order to put his food in it the dog will know that his dinner is coming and he will follow you around and watch you and beg for his food and lick his lips in anticipation. The animal intends to have the food and acts this way because he has a goal in mind – his dinner. When the animal can behave like that it is madness to say that the fact that we think and decide what we feel before we do something means we are free and have free choice. There is no difference.

I saved a child's life last week who was running across the road. Religion and free will believers claim that if I could rewind I could have done something different and maybe walked on by and let the child get run over. Is that judgemental? Yes - until somebody can rewind nobody can say that I would have done other the good deed I did. Innocent until proven guilty. Risky until proven risky.

## PERSONHOOD AND BEING THE SAME PERSON

Not every philosopher and thinker thinks you are the you you were when you were born or even ten years ago. They think each person gradually turns into another person. Christians invent the idea of spiritual soul to avoid that thought. The soul is supposed to be the same no matter what else changes so you are the same person all the time. The soul is an excuse for denying that John at 10 is the same person as John ten years later and ten years after that. It is an excuse because there is no evidence.

Personal identity and personal responsibility is the foundation of everything. But even if we have free will we have no right to reward and punish somebody who has changed a lot. Some people seem to turn into new persons faster than others.

Free will does not give believers what they mostly want. Thus the doctrine is only fit for discarding.

Many of us see that we do not feel that it was us that did the terrible deed whatever it was ten or whatever years ago. Feeling free is only important if you feel you are the same person who say went to America ten years ago. But you cannot feel that when you let yourself see how much you have changed.

## HOW TO FEEL FREE AND KEEP FEELING IT

The more you use a person for your own ends the more you treat that person as a thing. The more you value what you want them for and not them. If I see my universe as a thing and the people around me as things then I see everything as non-personal and cold. I see everything and everyone else as a thing that acts on me and my life. I will lose the feeling of freedom. I will make myself a slave. I need to start appreciating things and then I will feel free.

## THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THROWING YOURSELF OFF OR BEING PUSHED

You feel free if you jump out of a window. You do not feel free if you are pushed. You know that you have motivations and impulses you are not aware of. A conscious choice is not as conscious as it looks. So maybe you could have reacted to avoid being pushed. Maybe you could have done something but your inner self made sure the push would succeed. If you believe in psychic or supernatural power maybe you don't know how you chose that the other person would push you? Think of that and the feeling of being free will be exposed for the superficial sham it is.

## FINALLY

We could be programmed though we may feel free for we could be set to feel that way and to act free though we are not really free at all. Nobody is able to explain how free will works, meaning all have to at least admit it is possible that the feeling of freedom is misleading. Also the feeling of freedom is easily taken away. Feeling free cannot prove free will when sometimes we do not feel free.

Belief in free will is based on errors. People are told to believe that they are free because they feel free or terrible things will happen. For example, God will be offended and blamed for evil. Also, you will go off the rails morally because you don't believe you are accountable for anything you do. They are blackmailed to believe.

People are conditioned to believe in free will because they think they experience themselves as free agents. The dog feels free to eat his dinner and nobody seriously suggests a dog has free will. We must know subconsciously that the doctrine is rubbish. Basing free will on feeling, is basing morality and life and religion and God on a feeling! Any reasoning built on that is not motivated by a concern for truth but is based on feeling. It is horrible to think that atheists who depend on reason are often insulted by those who make a god of their feelings like that! If your faith in free will is based on a feeling then what right have you to condemn people who harm others? It is malicious to base such a big thing on so little! You are really no better than those whom you point the finger at.

If we are misled by feeling free, that is a necessary evil for we need to feel free far more than we will ever need free will. Life would be awful if we did not feel free. A necessary evil is something that is regretfully needed. People using God to feel more free than they need to is disgraceful. Or to ground free will. There are other ways to feel more free without implying a perfect God put a lie in your constitution and at the core of your being.

It is evil to use your feeling free as an important or even worse the only reason for accepting the idea that humankind has free will. It is too big of claim for such a flimsy foundation. And its selfish and egotistical. Unconditional love is a myth for nobody really equalises the person who is saintly and heroic with the malevolent person who is knifing innocents. Free will means the good will end up being loved conditionally on the basis that they use their free will well and will be punished or hated for doing bad. A feeling is not a reason for hurting another even if they do deserve it.



