



There is just too much going on, not only in the world, but in our own bodies, for consciousness to manage. Many of our essential processes have to be delegated and handled automatically. It's awe-inspiring to think about how our heart beats without our management, decade after decade.

On an organism level, the brain's 80 billion cells track the 10 trillion cells that comprise us, as well as the 100 trillion foreigners in us and on us, including bacteria, viruses, yeasts and fungi, and parasites. The brain filters information and presents the critical stuff to consciousness for decision making. Human consciousness is unique in that, better than any other species, it allows us to utilize our accumulated life experience (past) to make decisions in the now that will affect the future. However, like the federal government, the capacity to respond is limited, due to the competition for attention and resource.

The emotional system is tied to survival; and when activated for good (sex, eating) or bad (running, fighting, recovering), intellect is essentially short-circuited. We all have had the experience of carrying out some behavior that is emotionally driven and compelling (eating, yelling, procrastinating, fantasizing), while all the time the language/ intelligence part of our mind telling us to do the opposite.

Both intentionally (conscious) and unintentionally (sub/unconscious), we constantly make choices about how to perceive and act. It requires an extended childhood and adolescence to acquire the experience, skills and mastery to balance intellectual and emotional functions.

### Disconnected

In the 1960's Roger Sperry tested the neuropsychology of patients with epilepsy who had to have the Right and Left sides of their brain structurally disconnected. He won the Nobel prize for his discovery that consciousness can be compartmentalized. Similar experiments, using functional approaches like hypnosis demonstrated the ability of the brain to isolate functions, or even complete personalities within its whole. Like a computer network, we have several structural and functional systems that interconnect and overlap, but can be separated to one degree or another. F

Functional MRI's have demonstrated that various patterns of activation correlate with specific tasks, such as calculating math, performing a visual-spacial activity, or playing music or sport. Such activities demand blood flow and attention; therefore other activities are not presented to consciousness. For example, while driving when listening to a conversation, it is common to miss road signs--the brain can only process one language source while driving. The terms we use for this phenomenon include: ignoring, forgetting, being distracted, inattentive, or dissociated.

### Modern Disconnection

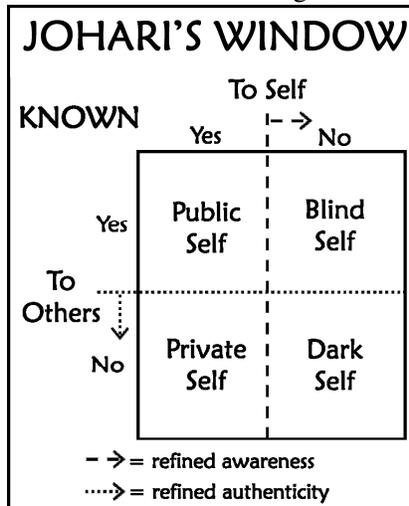
We remain in the best of times and worst of times. Our attention is hijacked by weather reports, terrorism, sexy ads, our kids, our health, and the chemicals in our food, air and water. Our electronics both connect us and disconnect us. The auditory and visual parts of our systems are perhaps

over-utilized, leaving the kinesthetic and mystical aspects of humanity with less attention. How much touch, movement and prayer we need to become and remain optimal is a question not yet answered. There is clear data that disconnected people have shorter, poorer quality lives.d

Community, religion, music and art, sport, are ways of remaining connected over the planet, species and time. "Culture", defined as accumulated experience and ritual serves to keep us connected; whether the connections of My Space, Facebook and Twitter will do the job remains to be seen. We are also disconnected from our food sources and preparation, our natural sleep-wake and seasonal rhythms, and the impact of our lifestyles on the planet's resources. Corporations have been given the rights of individuals, but disconnected from moral accountability. The line between disconnected and dishonest is very subtle, and involves "intention", which means conscious choice. Whenever we take action (or even thought) that we know, on some level, is not right, we are disconnecting. See Johari's Window for the various regions of disconnected consciousness.

### Consciousness

We can train ourselves, to a large extent, to choose how our nervous system compartmentalizes, and to re-integrate some of them. Practices such as yoga and meditation enable us to recognize when we delegate a thought or action to "automatic", "habit", or "anxiety/fear". We learn to apply the brakes before the train starts rolling. Isn't this what we call maturity? We can emphasize thoughts and acts based upon priorities that may cause short-term discomfort in order to gain long-term benefit, not only for self but for other. Isn't this what we call wisdom? We can connect with our "inner voice", a form of intuition, and to use that awareness to make decisions that might go against thought, emotion, or herd. By virtue of having human consciousness, the ability to re-connect is always present. Dis-ease may be as simple as dis-connection; healing as simple as re-connection.



### IMPORTANT NOTES:

1. **This educational material may not be used to influence medical care without supervision by a licensed practitioner.**
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3. Dr. Cheikin's website has related articles and references such as "Seeing the Obvious", "Baskets of Emotion" and others.

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