

What is consciousness?

Consciousness: A person's subjective experience of the mind and the external world.

Your conscious perception is subjective

Your conscious perception is the content of your experience

Phenomenology:

How things seem to the conscious person.

Mind body problem:

The issue on how the mind is related to the brain and body.

Divided attention:

Many believe you are not paying attention to many tasks, but instead rapidly switching your attention.

Attentional blink: A brief slow-down in mental processing after progressing another event.

Your brain has limited resources for paying attention.

Altered states of conscious:

Meditation: **concentration meditation:** you can focus on one thing at a time.

mindfulness meditation: you let your thoughts flow freely, focus on them but not reacting.

- it can lower blood pressure, reduce stress and changes in hormones

Altered states of conscious: (cont)

- the brain's electrical activity changes and correlates with positive emotional state, better attentional performance or enhanced immune function.

Sleep: **The pineal gland:** helps control the circadian cycle of sleep and wakefulness by releasing melatonin

- bright light detection by the eyes is sent to a small part of the hippocampus then to the pineal gland.

Melatonin: travels through the bloodstream and affects receptors in the body.

Bright lights suppresses the production of melatonin, where darkness triggers the release.

When you sleep your brain enters different states from when you are awake and active.

Insomnia: Difficulty falling asleep or staying asleep.

Nights when you want to sleep most causes you to become extra sensitive to sleepiness making it harder for you to fall asleep.

Sleep apnea: A person stops breathing for a brief period while sleeping.

Narcolepsy: A disorder where sudden sleep attacks occur in the middle of waking activities.

Altered states of conscious: (cont)

Sleep paralysis: Experience of waking up, but being unable to move.

Usually happens when you're awake, but before you've regained motor control.

Sleep terrors: Episodes of screaming, having intense fear while sleeping.

Somnambulism: Sleepwalking. People usually walk with their eyes open.

Unconsciousness:

Unconscious processing can influence behaviour.

When an unconscious thought is suddenly expressed at an inappropriate time or social context.

Some might reveal unconscious thoughts and desires that can simply be cases of misremembering.

Found basic properties:

Intentionality: Is the quality of being directed towards an object.

- Consciousness is always **about** something.

Unity: The resistance to division or ability to accrue information from all the body's sense.

Selectivity: The capacity to include some objects but not others.

Shown through **dichotomy listening:**

- People wearing headphones hear different messages in each ear.

- **cocktail party phenomenon:** people tune in some messages while tuning out others.

Transience: Consciousness has the ability to change



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Efforts to compress concerns:

Mental control:	Attempt to change conscious state of mind.
Through suppression:	Conscious avoidance of thought.
Rebound effect of thought suppression:	The tendency of a thought to return to the consciousness with greater frequency.
Ironic mental control:	Occurs because the mental process that monitors errors can itself produce them.

Brain injury:

Coma:	Unresponsive wakefulness syndrome. When people emerge from a coma; do not respond to external stimuli for more than a month.
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Brain death:	Irreversible loss of brain function.
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Stimulants:

Stimulants:	Substances that excite the CNS, heightening arousal and activity levels - caffeine, amphetamines, nicotine, and cocaine.
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Depressants:

Depressants:	Substances that reduce the activity of the CNS.
Expectancy theory:	Alcohol effects can be produced by peoples expectations of how alcohol will influence them in certain situations.

Depressants: (cont)

Alcohol myopia theory:	Hampers attention, leading people to respond in simple ways to difficult situations.
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The dreaming brain:

Your brain is smart enough to realize its not actually seeing those weird images, but instead dreaming.

The motor cortex, visual association, brain stem and more are activated during REM sleep.

The prefrontal cortex is deactivated during REM sleep.

Freud's view: dreaming:

Dreams hold meaning:	Could be anxiety related or wishes.
Latent content:	A dreams true meaning.
Activation-synthesis model:	The brain imposes meaning on randoms neural activity.

Freudian unconscious:

Dynamic unconscious:	Contain thoughts, feelings, and desires that were denied to conscious awareness because of psychological force.
Repression:	Removes all unacceptable thoughts and memories from consciousness and keeps them in the unconscious.
Cognitive unconscious:	Gives rise to a persons thoughts, choices, emotions and behaviours, even though they are not experienced by the person.
Dual process theories:	We have two different systems in our brain for processing information.

Conscious disorders:

Coma:	Deep sleep state, no response to things.
Vegetative state:	Regular periods of time when people appear to be "awake."
Minimally conscious state:	People can respond but inconsistently to sensory stimulation.

Levels of consciousness:

Minimal consciousness:	A low-level of sensory awareness. Occurs when the mind inputs sensations and outputs behaviours.
Full consciousness:	You know and are able to report your mental state.
Self-consciousness:	A distinct level of consciousness in a person towards themselves.

Blindsight:

Some people lose their vision due to damages to their primary visual cortex.

Some find a "second sight." Their unconscious minds guide their behaviour correctly.

Selective attention:

Attending to one thing while ignoring others.
You only consciously experience the content of the text you pay attention to.
When you try to ignore many of the things and events around you to focus on one.
The stimuli you try to ignore are distractions that must be eliminated or excluded.
The mental process of eliminating those distractions is called filtering or selecting.



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Conscious perception:

Although you see all these things, you are only consciously aware of a few.

Binocular rivalry:

Two dissimilar images are presented simultaneously to each eye and your conscious perception alternates.

Sleep and dreaming:

Altered state of consciousness: A change in ones normal mental state as a result of trauma or accident or included through medication, drugs, etc.

Circadian rhythm: A naturally occurring 24 hour cycle.

Daydreaming and the brains default network:

A state of consciousness in which random thoughts come to mind

Your brain is always active

Default mode network: Activations of brain areas when people day dream

When you are working on mental/cognitive tasks, DMN tends to decrease.

The DMN is also connected to our feelings and self-perception. It plays a role in overall happiness.

Mindfulness meditation is an effective way to reduce DMN activity.

Hemispatial neglect:

Disorder of attention.

Deficit in attention to and awareness of one side of the visual field.

They often have no sensory loss. No visual deficit.

Kept neglect is more common: Caused by the left side of the brain

Hemispatial neglect: (cont)

Some brain regions in the parietal and temporal lobes are associated with neglect.

Egocentric neglect: Never "sees" what is on their left side even when they change perspective.

Allocentric neglect: Never "sees" the left side of any object.

Motor neglect: Failure to move one side of the body when there is no paralysis.

Tactile neglect: Inattention to tactile stimuli on one side of the body.

Auditory neglect: Inattention to sounds on one side of space.

Unconscious processing can influence perception:

Priming: When the response to a stimulus is influenced by recent experience with that stimulus.

- it can influence how you perceive an object.

Subliminal perception: When stimuli are processed by sensory systems, but does not reach the conscious.

Information in the unattended ear:

People cannot report the contents of the message in the unattended ear, but: They know that there was a message

They know the gender of the speaker.

Some superficial nature of the speech.

Drugs and consciousness:

Psycho-active drugs: Chemicals that influence consciousness behaviour by altering the brains chemical message system.

Drug tolerance: tendency for larger doses of a drug to be required over time to achieve the same effect.

Physical dependence: Unpleasant physical symptoms from withdrawal due to drug use.

Psychological dependence: Desire to return to drugs even when physical symptoms are gone.

Problem of other minds:

The fundamental difficulty we have in perceiving the consciousness of others

We lack the ability to directly perceive the consciousness of others

Narcotics:

Narcotics ad opiates: Highly addictive drugs derived from opium that relieve pain.

- reroutes the endorphins. These temporarily flood the endorphins and stop them from producing naturally.

Hallucinogens: Later sensation and perception and often causes visual and auditory hallucinations.

Weed: Contains psyc active drugs called tetrahydrocannabinol.



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