

TENSEGRITY #3: EPISTEMOLOGY VS SOCIAL DOGMA

READERS SUMMARY

1. DO YOU THINK FOR YOURSELF OR DOES YOUR TRIBE SPEAK FOR YOU?

Here is a a nicely written blog on why you need to tighten up your thinking to tighten up your cells function. Few people see how thinking changes your health trajectory. In my opinion it is the most important factor in human health. Your world view has to be structured in principle on some specific doctrine which shapes how you function and view humanity. Embracing QED is akin to wearing steel-toed boots in a ballet-slipper world.

By Dr. Neil Billeaud

If everyone else jumped off a cliff... Humans are social creatures. We are born physically, neurologically, and epistemologically dependent on others, for evolutionary reasons Jack has previously explained. Therefore, we do not build our worldview directly from nature as all other animals do. We learn primarily from elaborate symbolic communication with other humans. It is a great shortcut that allows advanced knowledge to be additive across many lives and lifetimes. A uniquely human neurological adaptation. But our greatest asset is also our greatest blind spot. Since much of

our knowledge is predominantly “absorbed” in this way, through language and concepts, rather than fully experienced and verified firsthand, it leaves us extremely vulnerable to potential manipulation by other humans, whether intentionally or unintentionally. This is most obviously seen with the pervasive influence that families and close friends tend to have. (Remember the old adage that you are the aggregate of the 5 people you spend the most time with.) But I would argue that an even more important influence comes from the economic and political leaders of society, who largely engineer the flow of “public information” or the so-called “conventional wisdom” which is typically taken for granted as fact.

Thus, human knowledge uniquely requires a process of constant refinement, verification, and error-checking to actually remain intellectually grounded, i.e., tied to reality. Otherwise, we fall prey to accepting “castles floating in the air,” a.k.a., elegant theories everywhere that may even be internally consistent but have gradually become disconnected from the basic facts over time. And we must often spend a frustratingly significant amount of time unlearning other people’s mistakes that we have unwittingly absorbed into our cognitive structure. All of this is really the purpose of epistemology.

Scientific education does teach us the method to directly observe reality for ourselves and draw conclusions from those observations. It is relatively effective at that, at least for the few of us that have experienced it. But what of education in the humanities? Or what about the integration of prior science, or interdisciplinary or meta-science? Or history of science? Proper education in those areas should really involve not just indoctrination, as it currently seems to, but rather a learning of a process of meta-cognition or what I might call cognitive filtration. Learning a thinking method that includes a process of evaluating and classifying the findings of other humans and then skillfully accepting or rejecting ideas, and

then categorizing and integrating all of this, with both: (1) internal structural consistency and (2) integration with interdisciplinary external reality as the standard references by which one measures the value of all these externally generated ideas. That is how a fully developed and educated human being is "supposed to think," in my opinion, and how he can, in principle, build a complex advanced cognitive structure that is beyond his direct observation, without absorbing others' errors. But very few ever really do that successfully today for a number of reasons. (Jack does and that's precisely why Jack is Jack, in my opinion.)

Instead, scientifically-trained "experts" typically build a significant depth of firsthand practical knowledge, some of them innovating brilliantly, but only in a very well defined and strictly delimited field, never to intermingle with the dogma they inevitably accept about the world outside of those chosen boundaries.

Complex modern societies are now constructed on a sort-of "paternalistic model" with the idea of a limited number of specialized hierarchical leaders (in government, science, and industry) and a great number of followers. The approved leaders in a field "interpret the facts" and establish the "version of truth," a.k.a., dogma, upon which the official story will be disseminated through appropriate channels and authorities. The dogma is constantly revised, BUT its revisions, like its construction, are loosely but not purely based on factual discovery. They are heavily edited and revisions are intentionally rate-limited, because of a society's significant economic, political, and military investments and considerations. Government sponsored science, mandatory professional licensure, and the scientific peer-review process are significant tools that maintain this social order and keep any potentially "disruptive discoveries" or "unauthorized sources" quiescent. Furthermore, I truly believe that the actual "form" a government takes is essentially

irrelevant in this issue. Republic, democracy, autocracy. They utilize different methods, some explicit and brutal, some covert and subtle, but all have this fundamental trait in common. They all control the flow of public information, or what we think of as common societal knowledge, or "CW," as some in paleo like to call it.

In most of the "enlightened" world today, clever propagandizing has replaced explicit censorship. But the results are the same, perhaps even worse with propaganda, because censorship was crude and more easily opposed. Propagandizing's subtlety makes it actually more insidious because it becomes "invisible" to most. But either way, this "social-epistemological" structure is preserved across all advanced civilizations. I don't think it necessarily has to be that way, but it pretty much has been so far. Whether this is actually the best way to organize society should be open to debate at least. It certainly has the advantage of being very efficient and relatively stabilizing for long periods, which is likely why it is ubiquitous. But truth and even justice are ultimately subordinates in this model, the obvious disadvantages. Historically, when a society's dogma drifts too far from truth or justice, it becomes exposed and unsalvageable, leading typically to scientific and/or political revolution and eventually to the installation of a new "better" dogma.

There was seemingly one famous exception in Western history, for a brief time in classical Greece when the quest for knowledge and truth and justice were briefly revered above all other social considerations. That society is still revered today by many mainly for that reason.

But "education" today is nearly always dominated by indoctrination and dogmatization. Ever wonder why schools and nations so fiercely promote their football (or soccer or Olympic etc) teams? A trivial example perhaps, but another part of the indoctrination process. As are fraternities and

sororities and all similar organizations. Once you start establishing arbitrary loyalties, your own neurology and epistemology become more easily able to be hijacked to rationalize, serve, and support some “position” rather than to actively seek the truth. (I’m not suggesting that merely liking some sports team or pledging a frat is inherently “bad,” just recognizing a potential slippery slope.)

The sad fact is that most people today use their cognitive powers primarily to intellectually defend arbitrary “positions” they have accepted, rather than to seek the truth. Read this: [hyperlink](#). The “positions” are naturally typically either economically or emotionally favorable to the person or the group holding them. But these “positions” are also often absorbed from others and blindly habituated as well. Many organizations specifically exist today primarily to divert your mind from seeking truth or even from its other “positions” to instead support their particular “positions”: public relations firms, political strategists, all forms of advertising and marketing, religions, lobbies, charities, special interests groups, the media, etc...

The point is that you actually have to actively and continually choose to keep your mental resources focused on truth. Or they will be diverted, by the formidable winds of society, like a sailboat with no one at the mast.

Seeking the truth unconditionally is scary and unpredictable. It involves rejecting both “positions” and the comfortable artificial security blanket that societal dogma offers. A real “truth-seeker” must mentally filter, assimilate, and adapt. Always and ruthlessly.

Humans differ epistemologically primarily in the quality of their cognitive filters and in the depth, breadth, and consistency in which they apply them in order to expand and correct their aggregate knowledge-base.

The actions of DHA in harnessing electrons and photons provide the energy to optimally power those filters. But, somebody still has to be “at home upstairs” to flip the switches on and keep them pointed at the target. And I believe a person needs to find that desire and focus within himself or herself. I have never been able to figure out how to give that to another person, not from a lack of trying.

And so the real answer to the question, “why must I think for myself?” whether about health or anything else is basically simply because it is the only method that leads you back to reality, i.e. is consistently in accordance with nature. Of course, you could always opt for the insulation of “society’s security blanket” instead. Well, at least you could have in the past. The problem today is that this security blanket is unraveling at an alarming pace. The dogma is now uncontrollably diverging farther and farther from reality, which is destabilizing the structure of society. The evidence of that is everywhere. People are clearly losing faith in the fairy-tale, but most have nothing to replace it with! Why? Because the majority today happen to lack the neurological structure (lack of DHA, excess nn-EMF, dehydration) and also the epistemological framework (lack of practice, poor education, shoddy mental organization) to actually be able to think much for themselves at all. But in my opinion, this societal “luxury” of outsourcing the majority our cognition may not be available much longer, given the current trajectory of modern society.

...would you jump too?

I consider this post a deeper exploration of what I wrote here in March 2014: [hyperlink to forum](#)

What say you?