

Biosong Blog 2 (June 8, 2022) Intelligence

I am a human being, so I believe that, like everyone, I have and need Intelligence to help me live my life. But what is it, exactly, and how does it help us?

Have you noticed that everything that really matters to human beings is impossible to pin down in a precise definition? Satisfaction, happiness and love are other examples. We all sort-of know what Intelligence is and we appreciate it when our decision-making seems to be largely successful and our relationships are mostly strong. We all live differently so we say there are different kinds of Intelligence according to what each of us needs to be doing.

We speak of Social Intelligence and Emotional Intelligence and good old-fashioned Cognitive Intelligence that is measured by an IQ test.

How can I say, in last week's Blog, that it's on the decline? We have eliminated some major diseases and tamed our environment sufficiently for many of us to be comfortable and well-fed, invented amazing technology and flown to the moon; our immediate future looks like a computerised 'paradise.' Surely we're going ahead at a great rate.

Researchers found that the IQ test results in Western countries had improved substantially every decade from the early 1900's to the 1980's, but they also warned us not to take this too seriously because it didn't tally with other kinds of Intelligence testing, nor with common sense. It implied that 150 years ago people could barely read and write and very soon our grandchildren will be teaching us everything we need to know. The change they measured was due to the 'scientising' of our minds. I will explain that further as we go along. The increasing exposure to 'science,' by a wider population, was changing our average minds towards exactly what was being measured in the IQ test.

We like to feel secure so we tend to cling onto thoughts that are reassuring and set aside those that may increase our fear. The idea that we are continuing to develop our Intelligence as we develop our technology is an example of that mistaken belief. It leads us down a dangerous path.

All Intelligence test scores, including IQ, have been declining since the 1980's in most of the countries studied. This is most evident at the upper end of the IQ spectrum and in certain other kinds of Intelligence test. At each level of education, teachers are lamenting the lack of basic skills in the next group coming through. It's the subjective opinion of quite a few of us that leadership at all levels has deteriorated in recent decades.

How does Intelligence help us? I mentioned decision-making and the strength of our relationships. We recognise in one another a certain wisdom or ability to speak clearly about a complex matter, which we may find to be helpful in our individual lives. We learn from one another new ways of thinking and BEING. Without this we will not thrive and evolve.

We will arrest the decline in our overall Intelligence as more people rediscover and value the great resource we have been given, which is the enormous **breadth** of our mind – as distinct from its cleverness. One of the threats we face as human beings is the narrowing of mind that is occurring without us realising what is happening.

There is far more to it than just this, but I will start with the idea of expanding the **breadth** of our mind – in next week's Blog.