

Biosong Blog 3 (June 15, 2022) Perceptions

I am a human being, so I want to use all my Intelligence, and learn new things every day, if I can. I should acknowledge the teachers from whom I am learning, especially Dr Iain McGilchrist and his recently published book, *The Matter With Things*. That would be one of the set textbooks if this was a more formal Course, but it consists of 1600 pages in two Volumes, and is very heavy, so I wouldn't expect you to turn up with a copy in your hand!

My perceptions and yours will be different, of course. I'm not talking here just about our thoughts. In scientific terminology, we begin our encounter with the world by Attention. That is HOW our world comes into existence for us. So our lives will consist of whatever we choose to attend to every day. This is important because it gives us some control over the **breadth** of our mind.

Knowing WHAT our world is like begins with our Perceptions, which are sensory processes – what we see, hear, smell, touch, and feel, and thereby recognise as our reality. Our Judgments about this come quickly in the next stage and will include intuition and imagination as well as our reasoning and scientific knowledge – our whole thinking process.

We do all this with our whole body; most importantly, with our incredible brain. The brain is so complex and capable of such **breadth** in our connecting with our world that we don't utilise all of it at once. We need its **breadth**, as I said last week, but we also need its sharp focus. There are always small details that we need to know about.

The two hemispheres of our brain – right and left – have now been researched in great depth and what has been found is very helpful. Our Intelligence stems from the fact that the two sides engage with our world in completely different ways, so each side complements and balances the other. I don't mean that the right side does drawing and the left side does words. That was an oversimplification that grew into an erroneous folk psychology. I mean that our Perceptions of the world will be different as we favour one side or the other, which we do when we choose where to put our Attention.

For our mind to have **breadth**, the first and easiest step is to be aware enough to utilise both sides of our brain. Deliberately using our left brain, we perceive useful details and see how we can use these to manipulate our reality. That gives us some control over our world and even a sense of ownership, which is a rather dangerous illusion. But without the right brain, the Perceptions it gives us are often faulty. I will explain this further. Adequate Perception requires an awareness of context and meaning and other human values that are available only by deliberately drawing on our right brain.

Hence the right brain is the natural leader as the two sides work together. It enables us to utilise the detail and logic perceived by the left side in a way that maximises our Intelligence. The left hemisphere on its own is not capable of understanding reality or living harmoniously with it because it is **apprehending** our world, not **comprehending** it.

This marvellous brain gives us an extraordinary human Intelligence as long as we allow its right hemisphere to be the leader. That will happen naturally – it is happening, anyway. But if we are trying too hard to manipulate and control, what might we be missing that is important to us in our daily lives?