

Impact of Our Viewpoint on Our Knowledge of 'Self' and the World?

Our Knowledge of the World Is Based on How We See Phenomena

Different people around us have their **own** individual **beliefs** and **thoughts**. What distinguishes them from each other is their **viewpoint** on their '**self**,' life, the world, and others. Some people care about academic and career achievement, while others give special importance to their appearance, clothes and belongings. Some have social and political concerns, and some give priority to religious matters. Some people pry into the lives of others, while for others life may have no special meaning.

In fact, we shape our lives and define our lifestyle based on our **viewpoint** and the way we **define** our existence. Although this may seem quite obvious, it is actually one of the most crucial and decisive matters in our entire lifetime.

If we take a close look at our daily lives, we will see how our decisions are based on the way we **interpret ourselves**: we decide where and how to live, what kind of career to choose, who to socialize with, what kind of movies to watch, what kind of music to listen to, how to **treat** others, and thousands of other issues which lead to the difference in opinion among different people and societies. All these differences are rooted in our **point of view**. In fact, whether we want it or not, we adjust all our **thoughts, behaviors, decisions, and relationships** according to the way we perceive and define our '**self**,' the **perception** that determines our **viewpoint** on life.

The Importance of Our Viewpoint

Seeing that the foundation of our lives is nothing but our daily **thoughts, beliefs, decisions, and relationships** makes the importance of this issue even clearer. If we adjust these four aspects of life on the right basis, they will lead us to happiness. But if we choose them carelessly and without proper knowledge, they will bring us nothing but harm and damage.

Maybe if we could live so long that we had enough time for frequent trials and errors, our **decisions** would not be so important. We could live the wrong way for one hundred years, and then we could try to make it up in the next hundred years. But the truth is that life never gives us that opportunity. Every second of life is important and decisive. We may endanger our destiny and that of our descendants even by choosing the wrong place to live in. Therefore, we should get familiar with the **knowledge** which directs our **viewpoint** in life.

Which Knowledge?

What does '**knowledge**' mean? Is it enough for me to know my name, family, social class, ethnicity, nationality, and religion? Almost all of us know the answer to these questions. So what is the reason for all this agitation and confusion around us? Why is our life not filled with lasting **love, peace, and happiness**, which result from stepping on the right path?

The answer is not complicated: We do not have a **true definition** of our '**self**.' In fact, right where we should define ourselves based on our '**true self**,' we are stuck with the '**false self**.' It is our '**false self**' which has determined how to dress, how to speak, which party to go to, which major to choose, and thousands of other **decisions** we face in life.

The Scope of Our Viewpoint Can Light up the Path

What gives our lives the right direction and **meaning** is knowing our **'true self.'** We should adjust all our **thoughts, behaviors, decisions, and relationships** based on the interests of our **true self.** We might ask, "Does it make any difference?" These definitions just result in two types of lifestyle. But if you look deeper, the truth becomes clearer.

Imagine that you want to build a house. Having information about only where you are standing or knowing what is going on ten meters away, or even having an aerial map of the neighborhood, all will definitely impact the decisions you will make to build the house. Perhaps, if you have comprehensive information about the area, you may even forget about building the house there.

Our **decisions** in life also depend on our **point of view** and on our **knowledge** about **ourselves** and the universe. The more accurate and broader this **knowledge**, the more precise our **decisions** in life will be. Let us clarify this with an example. Imagine two people with two different points of view: first, a person who has defined life based on his **'true self'** and his **spiritual dimension**; second, a person who defines his **'self'** based on his **material** dimension and believes that life is limited to the period of time between birth and death.

These two people will never make the same **decisions.** For the former, decisions are made for an eternal life; for the latter, life ends with death. The person who does not see his beginning and end as limited to this worldly life is willing to give up many advantages and pleasures for the sake of his eternal life. On the contrary, the person who sees death as the end of his **'self,'** we will do everything to make the most of this world.

So far we have realized that our **thoughts, behaviors, decisions,** and **relationships** depend on how we define our '**self.**' It is good to know that the scope of our **viewpoint** causes us to **evaluate** our '**self**' and our life differently and determine our happiness based on that.

If you want to know more about the value of the self, see "What Determines the True Value of a Human?"

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