

# Excerpts from "Reflexive Self Consciousness"

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1. Before entering into the discussion of our subject we will quickly examine a few terms relating to **consciousness**... to express what we mean when we say we **know** anything...
2. We may say we **know** a thing,
3. we are **aware** of it,
4. we are **conscious** of it,
5. we **feel** it,
6. we **sense** it, etc.
7. Awareness, consciousness, feeling, sensation; all these words refer to **that whereby we know what we know**.
8. It is significant and important that we cannot indicate what we mean by one of these words without appealing to that in us which corresponds with their significance, that is, to **that in us which knows that it knows**.
9. All these words refer to **that in and by which we know**;
10. if we persist in asking what we mean by this we can reply only, "We **know** what we mean."
11. Consciousness is its own evidence.
12. Self-evidence is the means whereby sentience knows itself."
13. Nothing proves consciousness or sentience to exist other than itself.
14. But the existence of objects in consciousness is proved only by consciousness. Without consciousness or sentience, even if objects existed, there would be no actual proof of their existence.

## [Sense & Feel]

15. The word expressing what is most basic in the knowing process is "sense", a word derived from the Latin '*sentire*', "to feel".
16. We know what we mean when we say we feel. **Feeling is basic in the sense that of ways of knowing** it is general rather than special, universal rather than particular, undefined rather than defined.
17. A feeling is less clearly outlined than an idea, although a feeling of pain may be sharply localised.
18. We may say that **feeling** is our state when we know the **field** of our experience, **feeling** is **field-awareness**. To **feel** is to know a **field-state**.

## [Field]

19. A **field** in electronic theory is defined as a **zone of influence of a force**.

20. Psychologically we may say, a **field** is a **zone of feeling**, or a place where we feel some process, or sense something, without defining precisely what form it has.
21. In principle a **field** is ultimately **infinite**.
22. **The field of sentience is limitless**.

## [Sentience]

23. The Latin-derived word we may use for feeling is "**sentience**". **It has a less particularised use than "consciousness"**, and therefore may be used to express that faculty in us whereby we **know by feeling**.
24. By "**sentience**" we shall mean - **that which knows by feeling without sharply defined formal content**, but which is the ground of the possibility of formally defined **consciousness**.

## [Consciousness]

25. The word "**consciousness**" has a more specific significance.
26. It is from the same root as "science".
27. The **sci** in the word is seen in the Latin *scindere*, "to split, to separate."
28. **Consciousness** knows things as **separate** from each other.
29. **Consciousness** defines **analytically** what **sentience experiences wholly and none-analytically**.
30. (One of the most efficient ways of **developing consciousness** is by **verbalisation**, for words help towards analysis of its content).

## [Awareness]

31. The word "**awareness**" is derived from the Old English "*waer*," "**cautious**".
32. It is cognate with the Latin *vereri*, "**to observe anxiously**."
33. To be **wary** is to be **on guard in feeling**, to be **watchful**.
34. Rather amusingly the other word "ware", meaning goods or merchandise, is connected with the Old Norse "*vara*", meaning skin or fleece. No doubt in former times it was occasionally necessary to be **beware** of the **ware-sellers** in the market place in order to avoid being "fleeced."
35. **Awareness**, then, we might say, carries with it a sense of **being on guard**. Consciousness or sentience qualified by **caution**.
36. All these words may be used interchangeably with occasional preference for one or the other according to the requirements of the

context. All refer to **that in and by which we know what we know and that we know.**

37. The **objects** in the field of sentience are limited or finite. The **field** itself is not.
38. Every thing,
39. every definable idea,
40. every temporary feeling, state or emotion,
41. may be considered as a finite datum within a **sentient field** itself **infinite.**
42. The **field** must be said to be **infinite** because every limited **object** in it may be represented by a circle, and every circle, no matter how large may have another larger circle drawn round it, and so on to **infinity.** The **environment** of a thing is always larger than a **thing** and is in principle ultimately infinite.

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43. **The Infinite Sentient Field** must be conceived to be the **source** of all beings, for the fact of being is a fact only to consciousness, and however abstract thought may try to eliminate consciousness from being, it experiences no being other than in and of consciousness.
44. When we consider the ultimate **source** of all beings, we are forced to conceive it as such a source which has given rise to beings of our own order, that is, **conscious** beings.
45. There is a peculiar fact about **sentience**, or **awareness**, or **consciousness.** If we exclude it from the ultimate source of being, if we do not posit it as a property of that source present from the very **beginning** of creation or evolution, we cannot find a point later on at which we may logically introduce it. **Sentience** denied at the source of being cannot be later introduced into the stream flowing from it.
46. Attempts have been made by materialists to exclude **consciousness** from the source of being and then try to explain its presence in ourselves by saying that it has arisen by the aggregation of non-conscious material particles into complex patterns, like those we know in our nervous system and brain-structures.
47. Of this we assert, that whilst the complex brain-cell aggregate we possess may be patterned in such a way as to provide our consciousness with a **machine** complicated enough to serve as a **vehicle** for the expression of the complex processes of consciousness, if the brain is considered to be merely an aggregate of non-conscious material particles it cannot of itself give rise

to consciousness. If each material particle is non-conscious or insentient then the mere placing together of a large number of such particles, however arranged, cannot give rise to consciousness. If a material particle is a not-knower, then a million million like it can not add up to a knower. No number of zeros ever adds up to more than zero no matter how we arrange them.

48. **The ultimate source and origin of our being is sentient and conscious.** A stream cannot rise higher than its highest point. The consciousness in man cannot rise higher than its own ultimate source, and in the generality has not yet reached so high.
49. The greatest intellects of the world all bow their heads before the infinite potential of their origin. Only the ignorant lack humility.
50. To become conscious of our source is to become conscious of the source of all beings and all consciousness. It is to **become consciousness itself**, and **reflexively self-consciously** so.
51. To confine our consciousness to the consideration of the finite objects of our **five special sense organs** is unnecessarily to limit its scope. The **sentient field** is itself **infinite.** To concentrate consciousness fully upon a particular object within that field is to deprive oneself of the knowledge of what lies beyond that particular.
52. **To rescue oneself from the self-imposed ignorance of the particularising consciousness one has only to remove the stress placed by consciousness upon the particular and replace it in its source.**
53. The particularising tendency of **the lower mind** is a product of **the over specialising activity of the five special sense organs**, an over activity initially imposed on them by the **external stimulus situation.**
54. It does not need a great deal of thought to see that full concentration on a given finite thing deprives us of data beyond it. **The mind** which merely sees separate **particular** things, and not their world context, is a mind deprived of **universal concepts** which could confer **order** upon this sense data...
55. All contents of consciousness are **functions of power.** To confine oneself to particular sense **percepts** is to **deprive** oneself of the energy contained in **concepts of universal** validity.

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