

**“KNOWING HOW TO KNOW” ESSAY # 4**  
(Issued April 25, 2010)

**VIEWPOINT**

**This “KNOWING HOW TO KNOW” (KHTK) series is being published and made available freely with the hope that this information may help people at grass roots level to improve their conditions in life, and the conditions of their loved ones.**

This essay examines the layers of considerations, experience, education, and thinking, that we look through; and their affect on our viewpoint. Here we apply in earnest what we learned in the first three essays of KHTK.

A **viewpoint** is generally defined as a position from which something is observed or considered. The simplest viewpoint would be a location in space, from which you view your surroundings, such as, looking down from a mountain top into a valley, or looking at distant mountains.

Suppose a person walks into a room sees a large cube in the middle of the room, he may not recognize it as a table because he is taught that a table has four legs. Suppose a little puppy in the room barks at him. This makes him momentarily afraid. Underlying this reaction may be an experience of being bitten by a dog as a baby. Suppose he now notices a woman in that room and looks away feigning disinterest. He may have a consideration that women are not nice because once a girl in school rejected his advances just because he was fat.

Thus, beyond perceiving from a viewpoint, one’s perceptions are colored by one’s education, experience, considerations, etc. It is like looking at the world through some sort of “glasses.” In other words, we “look through” a filter, which influences our perceptions in ways we are not aware of. Thus, we do not see the world as it is. The filter determines how things appear to us. We then act based on that appearance.

It is very likely that this filter has something to do with the conditions that have been stalking us throughout our lives. Maybe by exploring the contents of this filter it is possible to overcome some of those unwanted conditions.

The purpose of this fourth essay is to help develop the following:

**BECOME AWARE OF “WHAT YOU ARE LOOKING THROUGH.”**

In other words, take a step back, and look at the very filter that you are looking through. You may see a picture, or just an idea. It does not have to be a long mental video. But you may discover some things that, unbeknownst to you, have been influencing perceptions from your viewpoint.

The components of this filter – experience, education, thinking, and considerations – are tightly interwoven into each other like the strands in a rope. In the following exercise you just look at these components as they come up.

### 😊 **Exercise 1**

**Choose a broad subject area from the following,**

- |                          |                                 |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>(1) Bodies</b>        | <b>(4) Friendships</b>          |
| <b>(2) Personalities</b> | <b>(5) Survival</b>             |
| <b>(3) Relationships</b> | <b>(6) _____ (add your own)</b> |

**Look at what is there in that subject area. You may start with a broad view or narrow down to specifics. Recognize the various components of the filter – experience, education, thinking, and basic consideration – as they come up. Do not resist or suppress back any feelings, emotions, etc.**

**DO NOT COMPUTE UPON WHAT COMES UP. DO NOT RESIST ANY RESPONSE. END OFF WHEN THE ATTENTION IS OPTIMUM.**

## THE FILTER

The primary components of the filter are as follows:

**(a) Experience:** This is what we get from direct interaction with the environment. Our bodies and personalities have desires, likes and dislikes. We get elated when our desires are fulfilled. We get hurt when we lose our loved ones, or our favorite possessions. We develop relationships with others. Some of these relationships turn into deep friendships. We try to improve our survival. Some of these experiences may get embedded in us and influence what we perceive later.

Many of our basic experiences are hard to access. They usually get buried with the passage of time under layers of later experiences, education and thinking; but they continue to exert a strong influence on us. When these experiences are accessed and brought to full view, many problems get resolved, and conditions in life start to improve.

**(b) Education:** This is what we get from our family, schools, religious affiliations, TV, etc. We get educated in language, mathematics, sciences, social studies, etc. We also get indoctrinated on God and religion. We pick up cultural biases from the surroundings we grow up in. We copy the behavior of our parents unconsciously. A lot of education is simply absorbed without much attention given to it.

Education generally consists of taking in other people's experiences and ideas. From these we derive rules to follow, and principles to think with. These have the most restrictive influence on our creative imagination. When this education is brought to full view, we experience an incredible renaissance.

**(c) Thinking:** This is what we are immersed in at any moment of our life. Each one of us encounters situations in day-to-day living. Most of the time we are busy evaluating these situations, deciding upon courses of action, and then engaging in efforts to resolve them. These situation could be self-created, for example, a person who has just gotten married, may be thinking about working to change their partner to make marriage more "harmonious" in the future.

Normally, one goes about one's life unaware of such thinking. A lot of thinking may become automatic and may express itself in habitual patterns. Almost all of this thinking derives from our education, experience, and basic considerations. As we become aware of it we can start to chip away at its automatic nature. This can rejuvenate us in a short order.

**(d) Basic considerations:** These considerations are so fundamental that we never think about them. We take them for granted, yet they determine our very perception of the world, our experiences and the way we use our education. These considerations are often the result of sudden decisions made when we are feeling on top of the world; or when we are faced with some difficult circumstances. We often compare ourselves to others, but there could be a moment when we unconsciously decide to be like another person. These are strong postulations to which one gets glued to.

These considerations are very basic. They are what they are. They are arbitrary. They do not follow any logic. As we explore these considerations, we gradually become aware that we have the choice of either continue holding to them, or detach ourselves from them. And with that power of choice we get a glimpse of a tremendous freedom.

## 😊 **Exercise 2**

***On the subject area that you picked up in Exercise 1, consider exclusively***

- |                                   |                                       |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <b><i>(a) YOUR EXPERIENCE</i></b> | <b><i>(c) YOUR THINKING</i></b>       |
| <b><i>(b) YOUR EDUCATION</i></b>  | <b><i>(d) YOUR CONSIDERATIONS</i></b> |

***Look at what is there and experience it fully until attention returns to optimum on each component.***

***You may cycle through these components at random until you find that your attention is consistently at optimum.***

***DO NOT COMPUTE UPON WHAT COMES UP. DO NOT RESIST ANY RESPONSE. END OFF WHEN THE ATTENTION IS OPTIMUM.***

## THE GUIDE

Here is an example how one may go about doing these exercises.

Suppose you chose “bodies” as the subject. You settle down to looking. You are not thinking. But then you might become aware of opinions or computations going in your mind, such as, “Fat bodies are ugly,” “Fat is not good for health,” “If you are fat you die early,” etc. You simply recognize the presence of this thinking and continue looking. You might get a mental picture of a fat body. It might not be somebody familiar, but it may soon change to a long forgotten incident. Intense feelings or emotions may come up. You experience these flows without resisting; and as you continue looking and experiencing, you may become aware of ideas and opinions about bodies that you acquired from others. And so on until you uncover some basic considerations.

Your attention may jump back and forth among the various components of the filter. You may get involved into speculating into reasons and answers. Or, you may encounter something disturbing and avoid looking in that direction. These are the moments where a guide is of immense help.

The guide was introduced in KHTK Essay #1. He is simply a partner or a friend who is also interested in doing the exercise. You do the exercises and your partner guides you in doing the exercise. Your roles are reversed when one of you completes the exercise.

The guide simply ensures that you are applying the KHTK principles as laid out in this series of essays. The guide does not challenge in any way what you are doing; but he gently guides you back if you stray away from applying the KHTK principles. For example:

***Student: I see what happened here. These are the problems that have always plagued me. Now I must make a decision about ...***

***Guide: Please take a closer look at what is there without thinking.***

The guide does not have any opinion about what you may be looking at. He does not analyze or give advice. You needn't give him any details of what you encountered during your looking. The guide is not interested in the details. If you tell him something he would make sure that he understands it. He would then focus on any concerns about looking and experiencing if they exist.

If the guide finds that your attention is getting dispersed then he may help you look for resistance that might be throwing you off. He may do so by asking you questions that get you to look at the various components of the filter.

***Student: This is the same problem that keeps on coming up. I don't know where to go from here.***

**Guide:** *OK. Take a look if there are any considerations relating to this problem area.*

*Or,*

**Guide:** *Are there some considerations preventing you from looking closely at this area?*

**Guide:** *Are there other experiences connected with this area?*

**Guide:** *Is there something that you have picked up from others about this area?*

**Guide:** *Look at the thinking going on in this area.*

**Guide:** *See where your attention is at the moment.*

In short, the guide may encourage you to look at the subject matter in different ways always framing the question broadly. You are free to discuss with the guide the difficulty you may be encountering. The guide may listen carefully and help you look at your considerations at that moment. This may help you come up with creative ways to look at the area of interest.

The whole idea of the guide is to help you look and experience whatever is there without thinking and resisting. Now and then the guide may check the state of your attention. If the attention is optimum, you are done with the exercise. If the attention is non-optimum then the exercise may be continued in the direction indicated by the non-optimum attention.

You may continue to add more subject areas to Exercise 1. The possibilities of subject areas are endless. You may study about a subject, and then look at that subject through these exercises. As you continue with these exercises you may find that your attention is staying at optimum for longer and longer periods of time.

### **Exercise 3**

***Go through Exercises 1 & 2 many times with different subject areas. Always choose a subject that you have the most attention on. You may do this with the help of a guide as necessary.***

***DO NOT COMPUTE UPON WHAT COMES UP. DO NOT RESIST ANY RESPONSE. END OFF WHEN THE ATTENTION IS OPTIMUM.***

## SUMMARY

We look at the world through multiple, interspersed layers of thinking, education, experience and consideration. Unbeknownst to us, these layers influence and even determine the perception of the world around us.

Hidden influences, however, lose their power as they are brought into awareness. The exercises outlined in this essay help you uncover those hidden influences. You may repeat these exercises as many times as you wish until this deep looking becomes a part of your second nature.

The whole idea in this essay is to practice the following:

### **BECOME AWARE OF “WHAT YOU ARE LOOKING THROUGH.”**

As you discover the contents of what you are looking through, you come face to face with your basic considerations that have been controlling your view. You discover that you now have a choice to continue holding on to these considerations, or to detach yourself from them.

With this power of choice comes an exhilarating sense of freedom as well as a sense of great responsibility. The thinking becomes very clear. The complexities of life seem to reduce to utter simplicities.

You find that you can now immerse yourself in the joy of creating.

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