

Is Self-Awareness a Mirage?

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One of the most unsettling findings of modern psychology is that we often don't know why we do what we do. You can ask somebody: Why'd you choose that house? Or why'd you marry that person? Or why'd you go to graduate school? People will concoct some plausible story, but often they really have no idea why they chose what they did.

We have a conscious self, of course, the voice in our head, but this conscious self has little access to the parts of the brain that are the actual sources of judgment, problem-solving and emotion. We know what we're feeling, just not how and why we got there.

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