

Why Consciousness?

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As discussed above, a question often asked is *What is consciousness?* While this is a good question, it might be better to ask why there is consciousness. What drove the emergence of consciousness? Was consciousness merely an adjunct to some random evolutionary development (such as natural selection?) or a result of intentionality?

Since a great many of the lesser organisms have apparently survived for eons with little or no consciousness, evidently, a well-developed consciousness is not a prerequisite for survival. Basic survival seems to indicate that our awareness and knowledge of the world necessarily has to be enough so that we are capable of moving about with some degree of safety. That is, we have to have a level of consciousness awareness to be able to recognize hazards and other types of physical threats as well as the ability to obtain nourishment.

So, if, as it seems, a well-developed consciousness is not a requirement for survival, why spend so much energy and effort in developing consciousness? If we were mere machines, then, in a manner similar to the simplest living organisms, we would require only basic awareness for survival. Perhaps, to answer the *Why consciousness?* question, we need consider some notion higher than merely adaptive survival.

Possibly, consciousness exists because it is through a certain higher level of consciousness that the universe is revealed, since the universe without revelation through higher consciousness would be no different from the Void. That is, without consciousness capable of contemplation beyond mere survival the universe would essentially (or might as well) not exist.

Put another way, the universe requires witness or, perhaps, there is some larger purpose of which we are not aware.

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Either way, a basic requirement for witness is a consciousness developed enough to be knowledgeable about the shape, size, and extent of their local environment, the earth, the local galaxy, and the universe beyond. As far as we know, on earth this capability applies only to humans.