



## Consciousness One- Pager [www.pager.one](http://www.pager.one)

### **Our modern consciousness emerged 3000 years ago.**

The Australopithecus (forerunner to Homo sapiens) shouted, made noise, grunted, for example as a warning signal to her family. From grooming (animals) to gossip (humans), from pantomime to speech, also seen in a child's development. Singing evolved, followed by storytelling. The Greek invented written vowels: when reading something you also knew how to pronounce it. This accelerated the development of language and a linear way of thinking.

Consciousness emerged, ca. 3000 years ago, independently in Greece, Israel, Persia, China, among Hindus, and much later in Mesoamerica. Until then there was not yet a 'self'. When you heard a sound, this sound always came from someone or something else. Whenever people had to make a decision, this decision was given to them by voices. People heard a voice in their head. They heard someone else speaking what to do. The clan leader, or the king, or their father who died gave advice to do something in some situation. Hearing such voices was common for thousands of years. When language evolved the voices (chiefs, fathers, gods) became less important, the language processing function of the brain was looking at the hearing-voices function and said: I can decide for myself, I am not going to wait for a voice that tells me what to do. Here our modern consciousness evolved. And the gods went silent. Today, hearing voices, or auditory hallucinations, is a common experience for some people and for all people living with schizophrenia. This evolution of the self, of consciousness, happened several times on earth, at different times and in different places.

In the Bible (Old Testament) we can follow this development of consciousness, and also in the Iliad and Odyssey. In the Iliad, there is no self yet, no imagination, no fantasy, no romantic love. People had no guilt yet, but shame, no anxiety, but fear, no hatred, but anger, no sexual fantasy, but mating. Then just a few hundred years later, as language and with it self-awareness developed, the Odyssey was sung. Here all the components of our modern consciousness are present: self, fantasy, feeling of freedom, contemplation of our own death.

In the Odyssey, Circe suggests two alternative routes to Odysseus to return to Ithaca: toward Planctae, the "Wandering Rocks", or passing between the dangerous Scylla and the whirlpool-like Charybdis. For the first time in the history of mankind, a human being can choose: until then gods' voices told him what to do, from now on he can and must make his own choices and decisions. Consciousness has emerged.

### **We can see the development of consciousness in children.**

From their first birthday onwards, children start viewing their own mind as if from the standpoint of others. As they grow up, they are motivated by those around them to reverse perspective, engaging with other minds on the model of their own. Selection pressures favour imaginative empathy, joint attention, moral judgment, project-oriented collaboration and the ability to evaluate one's own behaviour from the standpoint of others. At the same time they may hear voices of their imaginary friends.

### **Our brain is a memory system, some regions oscillate in harmony, giving rise to consciousness.**

Our brain cells are organized in columns of 6 layers of cells. We combine feed forward information, actual input, with feedback information, a prediction. Every moment in your waking life, each region of your neo-cortex is comparing a set of expected columns driven from above with the set of observed columns driven from below. Where the two sets intersect is what we perceive. Neurons' default state is firing, and groups of neurons fire together. When several orchestrations of neurons fire in harmony, consciousness sparkles.



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