

SPIRIT OF FREEDOM

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Abstract

Each one of us is created with some purpose in life and that purpose can be attained by practicing free will. Free will is that we have the right to be free from the constraints that others might place on us. Sometimes, these restrictions are within our own psychological makeup. From the Humanistic perspective, freewill emphasizes the values of morality, dignity and personal transformation which mean that each human being is a good human being and each one needs love, acceptance and respect. But do we really get that? Are the individual differences accepted? The main purpose of this study is to understand that the choices we make and our actions are the combination of the energies in the cosmos and the way they progress through time. This paper also considers why free will needs attention and how mastery to control the will results in the freedom of choice.

Key words: Free will, Freedom and Determinism

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Introduction

Freedom is basically the ability of the person to follow his own will and has control over the actions for which he is accountable for, throughout his life. The choices we make are shaped by many factors but what really matters is the type of psychological machinery that pushes one towards a particular situation. Our brains give us a perception of choice but no choice is truly being made. The brain activity is constrained by rigid natural laws and conscious human minds are the product of physical brain activation.

Our choices and many of the prior actions, and the present actions, are effects of certain causal sequences. Behaviourists like Skinner believe that “free will” and “motivation” are the real causes of human behaviour. According to him, the cause of all behaviour lies in the environment i.e the reinforces and punishments. Determinism holds

- (i) that free will is put in doubt because every event is produced by prior events operating within a linear causal chain and
- (ii) that the nexus of physical events is closed under natural laws, thus: Kant believed that everything happening in the world happens in accordance with the moral laws created by the person himself and each event results in the action which again leads to another event.

“A person acts freely if he does of his own accord what must be done” where the “must be” is given a causal (not rational or moral reading) within a temporal sequence of **neural** and psychological events within the agent. Random chance(‘freely’) generates options and human decision making is then effectively determined by the causal effects of life experiences and a psychology based on biological mechanisms.

Studying and understanding human behaviour is really complex as behaviour is dynamic (continuously changing). The question is how to practice free will without offending others. First and foremost is a control on our thoughts. Once the thoughts are channelized it is easier to work on other aspects. For example if two people meet they could be friends, they might not like each other or make a compromise. Free flow of thoughts either positive, negative or neutral is very important. The cognitive processes (Problem solving, Reasoning and Memory) are dependent on how we regulate our thought processes. Cognitive psychologists believe that rational processing of information leads to the decision-making process.

Our thinking processes are based on our perceptions is based mostly on our past experiences. When a similar situation is presented to different people, they perceive the

situation in a different way and solve their problem with a different solution. The conscious reflection of the behaviour helps in achieving the goals along with planning and organization of thoughts.

It was found that people with low self - esteem blamed others for their situation and looked for short cuts to come out of that problem. These individuals see the situation as an end to their world and stop making efforts to come out of it. Learned helplessness is also seen in such individuals. Hearts of hearts they start enjoying being in that situation as they get attention. They curse God and visit various holy places and ask for mercy. There are people who believe that what 'is' is inevitable are therefore they believe that they don't have the ability to control their destiny. This means the determinism is influenced by the conditions outside the individual which are preordained.

On the other hand, there are people who perceive the situation to be temporary and face it boldly. They use effective coping strategies to get out of the mess. Seeking social support and problem focused strategies work well to be stress free. Use of ego, defence mechanism is also used. Displacement, rationalism, escapism and repression are used. Freud believed that all the thoughts and the corresponding actions are controlled by the unconscious.

Each individual is born free to have control of his life. Living life to please others, being over compliant and submissive behaviour are personality traits which harm the mental and physical health. Man is a social animal and compassion brings us together, while resentment and annoyance drives us apart. Scientists have shown that where constant anger and hatred undermine our immune systems, compassion strengthens our general well-being. We need benevolence to live a tranquil and peace in our day to day lives.

Continuously being under control and not being able to take independent decisions leads to failure of immune system lead to many deadly diseases. Autoimmune disorders are when healthy cells of the body are unable to fight with the unhealthy ones. Risk of cancers, heart conditions and arthritis increases. Each one of us should respect others individuality and work on creating harmonious relationships. Life is too short to be taken seriously. Present moment is the most powerful one and one should savor it. In his book "Fear of Freedom" Freud argues that each one of us can make our own destinies but we are scared and unsure of our decisions.

We give up our liberty and become the slaves of conditions, surroundings, situations, other people, political influences or unreasonable and illogical feelings.

Conclusion

Human behaviour to practice freewill needs to be studied from different perspectives and certain laws of behaviour should be framed to understand the uniqueness of human beings and their freedom to choose their own destiny can be used to predict events. People need to relearn how to agree to disagree (live & let live). How one feels about something changes as new input are reserved on emotional & spiritual levels. If seeing the perspective, the other person has, then they stay a person in the mind, not something to discard or banish or punish. Letting go, forgiveness and unconditional love are the character strengths which helping in understanding others and being better people. Working on the self is more important rather than trying to change other according to our own ways.

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