

PRE-EMPTIVE LISTENING

The visual experience was so fascinating, that after a couple of days I started getting interested in how animals listen.

It seemed like a good first step to listen actively and openly to everything which was happening – as helpless and vulnerable as a newborn baby before they learn to filter out the everyday sounds.

But, I soon realised that listening to any continuous background sounds is dangerous for animals. However beautiful birdsong or the river may sound, listening to them is a distraction.

When we focus on any specific sound, we don't notice sudden warning signals until a second after they have happened.

Beyond The Panorama

Sounds are sometimes very sudden and vanish in a fraction of a second. Smells and sights generally last at least a few seconds. Listening requires and stimulates immediacy like no other sense.

Animals need to be ready and waiting for sudden sounds. Panoramic listening in its most sensitive form is pre-emptive. It is anticipatory listening, always open to sounds a second before they happen.

Animals need to listen for things which haven't happened yet, but could occur at any moment.

Predators listen-out for specific signals when hunting specific prey. This is a useful step.

It depends on where you are and what sort of background sounds there are, but I often listen-out for dogs and children; at night for owls and hedgehogs. I don't hear them often; hearing them is irrelevant, listening-out for them is the vital part.

Animals have been using their senses in this way for billions of years – it is clearly part of a successful survival strategy.

Whereas vulnerable animals usually alternate panoramic and focused sensing, predators combine the two. Predators generally watch over a wide, but not fully panoramic area, with the intention of catching specific prey. The predatory usage is governed by focusing.

The Human Experiment

Humans secured their survival by developing their focusing abilities. Unlike all other animals, we learnt how to survive without actively using our panoramic senses.

We developed an astounding ability to think – we could focus on memories and learn. We learnt how to shape flint tools, to make fire, and wheels, and gradually our modern civilisation developed. Focusing can be amazingly clever and creative, and it gets things done.

The problem is that nowadays, our modern early education of focused sensing and thinking, overwhelms our panoramic abilities before they even start to develop.

And we just don't recognise that everything we do, think, and want is happening because we focus on it. We don't remember that there is another way of sensing life. Our only knowledge of panoramic sensing comes from the subliminal use of the horizontal peripheries when driving, to alert us to something we might need to focus on.

After an amazing million-year long history of focusing for our survival, our one-sided strategy has now led us to a point of critical overload.

Today's free cultures are fracturing into extremes. And all we think we can do, is to focus on trying to find answers.

Animals would become extinct if they only ever focused.

Many aspects of our lives are being affected by the lack of panoramic awareness. The following is an example which will perhaps inspire people to do more than just think.

BELIEFS AND SAFETY

As our human abstract abilities evolved, we developed beliefs.

Beliefs are the epitome of focusing. Beliefs are awe-inspiring, often beautiful or perfect focal points.

Ancient cultures were bound together by their beliefs. They were mutually confirmed and openly celebrated. And for hundreds of thousands of years they enhanced human life. They gave us comfort, safety, purpose, identity, completion, and social cohesion.

It's a long story, but in the modern free world there is no longer any universal consensus on what to believe. Now, every individual is free to believe in themselves or their groups ideals.

And, it's like freewheeling downhill, acceleration is inevitable. There will always be new developments at shorter time intervals, new trends and types of religious and political extremism, more influencers influencing, and more crazy conspiracy theories and lies.

But this, or something like it, is what we would expect from a culture and species which only focuses. Focusing always singles out specific perspectives. It separates life into bits, and the bits always get smaller.

To find any sense of wholeness in our abstract reality we must join the bits together again. Beliefs try to join the bits together, but these days they seem to be having the opposite effect.

In our modern cultural climate, safety and wholeness are being confused with closed-mindedness and pride.

Panoramic vision is a 'being with' what I'm seeing – instead of looking at it – immediately and directly connected with all that I sense. It's a state of wholeness, at times even oneness and absorption in what I'm seeing.

And the garden where I used to sit was full of birds and squirrels which, compared to humans, all have extremely sudden and unpredictable movements.

I knew nothing about panoramic perception back then, but one thing was obvious, the quicker and more unpredictable the movements were, the more noticeable they were.

This was my experience, and it just seemed so logical and appropriate that vulnerable animals would need to sense in this way, in order to survive.

Relearning Amazement

Occasionally we have an intense experience of pleasure and fulfilment – looking into the distance over the ocean, at the stars, or with a panoramic landscape. At those times, we're not focusing on anything specific, but it opens our senses in a special way, and we're just amazed at everything.

By using our eyes in this panoramic way, we can feel this amazement, without having anything awesome or beautiful to sense.

Focusing is blind to this experience of life. I still don't fully understand how humans became so blind... Why have I never heard anything about panoramic vision?... Maybe it just doesn't fit anywhere in our highly specialised, focused world-view.

This is something we were all born with, and it's easy to relearn. There are any number of ways to unlock the feeling and speed up the relearning process. These are described in detail online.