

Cyber Psych Links for GENERAL PSYCHOLOGY: WITH SPOTLIGHTS ON DIVERSITY

Chapter 4

Normal Waking Consciousness and Levels of Consciousness (pp. 128-133)

In many ways it may be claimed that to be alive is to be conscious. To be conscious is to be aware of your environment and aware of your own mental activities. For the science of psychology, consciousness has always been a slippery concept, and it remains so today. Indeed, most of the websites on the Internet having to do with “consciousness” are only tangentially related to any of the discussions found in Chapter Four. Most sites are commercial and involve someone wanting to sell you something, often a way to an altered or “higher” state of consciousness. As is always the case, we caution a skeptical eye as you exam even these sites.

<http://assc.caltech.edu/index.htm>

The site of the Association for the Scientific Study of Consciousness.

<http://consciousness.arizona.edu>

The site for the “Center for Consciousness Studies” at the University of Arizona.

<http://consc.net/online3.html#general>

A gazillion papers/articles on consciousness—scroll down to “Science of Consciousness: General” for the most relevant selection and click away.

<http://psychclassics.yorku.ca/James/consciousness.htm>

A true classic: William James’ “Does Consciousness Exist?”—1904.

SLEEP (pp. 134-138)

Research on sleep has come a very long way in the last 50 years. We understand the basic physiology of sleep and—with the discovery of REM sleep—have a window to a sleeper’s dreaming. As is often the case in science, it is the “why” questions that remain elusive. Why do we sleep when we do and for as long as we do? Why do we dream? Why do we dream what we dream? These websites expand greatly on what we have covered in the text.

<http://www.dreamviews.com/sleepstages.php>

A nice, straightforward summary of the stages of sleep. The site is devoted to “lucid dreaming,” and is well worth a moment to check it out.

<http://faculty.washington.edu/chudler/sleep.html>

Many good ideas, extensions, and discussions having to do with sleep and dreaming in general, with a particularly good section on **why** we sleep, and many great links to other reliable websites.

<http://www.helpguide.org/aging/sleeping.htm>

A noncommercial gem amidst a forest of sites trying to sell us things related to sleeping. It deals with “getting a good night’s sleep,” and provides—at the bottom of the home page—a good list of helpful links.

<http://sleepnet.com/depriv.htm>

A good site in general and in particular, this is a nice piece on sleep deprivation—mostly in teenagers.

<http://www.sleep-deprivation.com>

This site is as its name suggests. It’s a great site and is constantly updated.

SLEEP DISORDERS (pp. 139-141)

At some point in time, all of us will find that we are having difficulty sleeping. In nearly every case, we know exactly why—or have a pretty good idea why. Maybe we're just experiencing an inordinate amount of stress in our everyday lives. Perhaps we are suffering from some physical illness or injury. We may find ourselves in a strange or unusual sleeping environment. Such incidents are seldom a matter of great concern. Sometimes, however, sleep-related problems are more than a person can fully understand and more than can be dealt with simply and easily. In such cases, that person may have a sleep disorder. There are several such disorders. The good news is that all are very treatable.

<http://www.medicinenet.com/sleep/article.htm>

A very good summary article on sleep, with an emphasis on sleep disorders.

<http://www.sleepnet.com>

A website devoted to “Everything you always wanted to know about sleep disorders but were too tired to ask”—a strength is a set of links to over 200 additional sites.

<http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/sleep>

A website hosted by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and The National Institutes of Health. I found the homepage section on “Publications and Fact Sheets” most helpful

HYPNOSIS (pp. 141-143)

I hardly need to warn you, do I? Taking steps to alter consciousness can be a pretty scary business. You might to explore hypnosis or meditation, but please tread carefully.

<http://www.hypnosis.com>

The website of “The American Board of Hypnotherapy”—mostly for professionals, is very flashy, has many links, but most are commercial.

<http://www.hypnosis-research.org/hypnosis/index.html>

The website for the “American Society of Clinical Hypnosis”—it offers links to thousands of articles (which are not easy to access or to sort through).

<http://www.apa.org/divisions/div30/hypnosis.html>

The APA’s Division 30—hypnosis—homepage.

MEDITATION (pp. 144-145)

Of all the safe (everything is relative, of course) means of altering one’s consciousness, meditation is likely the oldest technique. At root base there are only a few meditation activities, but there are hundreds of variations of these few themes. Like other truly transforming activities, it seems difficult to self-teach effective meditation. Among the thousands available, here are three websites inviting visitors to at least experiment with meditation. (The third one is a website on “Yoga Meditation of the Himalayan Tradition.”) They attempt to provide “user-friendly, clear, straightforward meditation instruction.”

<http://www.meditationcenter.com>

<http://www.meditationsociety.com>

ALTERING CONSCIOUSNESS WITH DRUGS (pp. 145-153)

There is no doubt that there are many, many substances—some legal, some not—that can alter a person’s state of consciousness. An extra mug of coffee on the way to class may do it. A couple of beers after work may do it. Simply being in the same room where marijuana is being smoked may do it. Free-basing crack-cocaine is most certainly going to do it. It is difficult not to be “preachy” in this section. I’ll provide just a few websites for you to explore, but they are good ones.

<http://www.health.org>

A great source of up-to-date research and statistics on drug use.

<http://www.nida.nih.gov>

As good a source as you will find anywhere—from the National Institute on Drug Abuse of the National Institutes of Health. It doesn’t rant or rave or scream or scold. It simply provides the facts. It is simply the best place to begin on this subject matter.