



Dr. John Vervaeke: Mindful Movement as The Confluence of Perspectival and Participatory Cognition



John Vervaeke has been an Assistant Professor of Psychology at the University of Toronto since 1994 and is the director of the Consciousness and the Wisdom Studies Laboratory. He teaches numerous courses in psychology, intelligence, rationality, mindfulness; the Psychology of wisdom, and the Cognitive Science of consciousness. Understand how to create a sense of self that is a functional system grounded in your sensory-motor embodied agency.

TOP EMBODIMENT TIP: To take up seriously a mindful movement practice to develop these skills.

There are Four Ways of Knowing: Proportional, Procedural, Perspectival, and Participatory

- 1) **Proportional Knowledge** (facts): semantic memory (disembodied), sense of truth
- 2) **Procedural Knowledge** (skills): procedural memory (embodied), sense of power
- 3) **Perspectival Knowledge:** episodic memory (highly embodied), sense of presence
- 4) **Participatory Knowledge:** autobiographical memory (embedded embodied), sense of affordances

This interlocking set of procedural, perspective, and participatory knowledge is increasingly dependent on a living body coupled with a dynamic world. Embodiment is this coupling.

Mindfulness: is to Rediscover Perspectival Knowing

- Mindfulness is perspectival knowing for its own sake. It is a meta-perspective of how one is in the here and now. One is playing with perspectival knowing so one can understand and shape it.
- Meta-perspectival knowing is the basis for wisdom, as demonstrated by different meditation traditions.

The Movement Revolution: is Sensory-Motor Experience for its Own Sake

- We are literally playing with our sensory-motor capacities. The more complex your cognition, the more seriously you need to engage in play. We play with movement-based activities to cultivate essential skills.

Cognitive Science: Emphasizes Embodied Forms of Knowledge and the Self-modeling Process

- Cognition is an interlocking system that is self-modeling, self-specifying, and self-relevant. It emerges from experience and is **exacted** from one's adaptive, autonomous, autopoietic, and embodied agency.
- This self-modeling process produces consciousness, intelligence, character, personality, and biology, depending on what time frame is sustained. Together, a sense of self is created. It is not fiction, but a functional system built out of real functional relations that are ultimately grounded in one's sensory-motor embodied agency.

Knowing Thyself: in its deepest form (i.e. cultivating wisdom), is realizing yourself within embodiment

- In pure consciousness events, what goes away is the autobiographical self. What is found, is the functional ontological self and it is the matrix - the procedural, perspectival, and participatory matrix from which agency, character, and wisdom emerge. That's why it is both "no-self" and "true self".

Resources

- ❖ **Website:** <http://johnvervaeke.com/>; <https://www.psych.utoronto.ca/people/directories/all-faculty/john-vervaeke>
- ❖ **Podcast:** [Awakening From the Meaning Crisis](#)
- ❖ **Social:** Youtube: [johnvervaeke](#)



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