

Influences & 'the fact of freedom'

Such a simple collection of words but seems to be very hard to pin down and can cut in many ways. But the following is my attempt at some classification of influences both internal and external and the way in their fact of freedom – not sure I get this last part, but this will probably be reflected in my ideas below. These are in a general sense the things that influence me (and all of us). They are actually very inter-related when I think about them.

Internal

Desires. Things we feel we need. If we want something then it will have an influence upon us. Can have many faces (ie its a whole class of influences) – might be simple such as I am feeling cold so feel that want the room warmer. Or might be that I want to spend more time with someone – its things the we desire. Not sure I can a lot of freedom here. Perhaps in that these are not influences that we really need to act upon,

Needs. Things that we need. The basic requirements of life. For example food – we need to eat. Eating provides an influence upon us – the strength of this influence depends upon how obtainable food is – so if we are hungry then we are greatly influenced by our need for food. Probably no freedom here – no food then you die. So the perhaps the freedom comes about because we do not have to spend all out time thinking about our needs – if action is required then we will be influenced into taking the required level of action.

Our body. It is an influence in that if we are sick or injured then we are influenced to either do nothing or take remedial action. It is a freedom in the same sense as our needs. Actually related to both first 2 influences...

External

Environment. The world that we inhabit is an influence. If comfortable then it will enable us to achieve things other than trying to make it better – it may be a 'positive' influence, but if our surroundings are not comfortable then we will be more inclined to either make them better or feel pretty unhappy. So the freedom of the environment is in that it provides us a for us to achieve things – either through stimulus (both positive and negative)

People around us. We interact with people – they give and take from us. They want us to do things or perhaps do things for us. How we feel about the people about has an impact – do we want to impress them or are we impressed by them. People free us from having to do everything ourself and in the sharing they provide.

Information. Information comes to us in many forms from books, the internet, the media and advertising to name a few, and influences us in equally many ways. Many things we think or do are based on the information we are subjected to. Its freedom comes in that it saves us from working everything out ourself.