

Know Thyself—Know Your Operating System

These days, computers in all their configurations are designed to be user-friendly—to work right out of the box with no or a bare minimum of instructions.

Humans are user friendly too—we work right out of the box though our nervous systems are not fully developed until about 20 months of age. By then, we are each well on our way to loading our individual memory banks with experiences/information about how the world works for us and what we want to experience. Given what we want and the environment at the moment, our behavior/action is automatic, just what it needs to be to “make it so”. Action serves to control our perceptions, *not* the other way around.

But as with computers, if you understand something about the Operating System (OS), you can do more, and be more effective, in this case leading to more satisfying relationships with all the people in your life (among other things). The basic insight about the Human OS, simply put, is this:

People are living control systems

This is a fact and it is easy to show with compelling interactive demonstrations. But it is far from intuitively obvious, just as the fact of the solar system was far from intuitively obvious before Copernicus and Galileo recognized and promoted it.

This insight is unique to *Perceptual Control Theory* (PCT), the third Grand Theory in psychology.

The first Grand Theory was *Behaviorism*. The second Grand Theory is *Cognitive Psychology*.

The third Grand Theory, PCT, lays a foundation for psychology to become a natural science, not merely a soft pseudo-science of subjective descriptions and marginally significant statistical generalizations. It has much in common with the natural sciences. PCT relies on physical modeling of underlying neural mechanisms; generates predictable results under new circumstances; has no need for statistics; and the interactive demonstrations always work.

Mats Lundqvist, head of the entrepreneurship program at Chalmers Univ of Technology, said: “Perceptual Control Theory (PCT) is an innovation that destroys expertise on a massive scale.”

PCT provides an in-depth explanation of how our nervous system functions. PCT provides no prescriptions or advice. It just helps us understand what is going on as a consequence of how we are constructed, and allows us to reason from basic principles in any situation.

See *Perceptual Control Theory: An Overview of the Third Grand Theory in Psychology; Introductions, Readings, and Resources*. A free pdf at www.livingcontrolsystems.com.

Dag Forssell (MSME, Chalmers 1965, MBA Univ of So Cal 1973) is available to present an overview of how PCT compares to contemporary psychological theories, followed by compelling interactive demonstrations of control and the human hierarchy of control systems, and Q&A. See www.livingcontrolsystems.com – Presentation.

Dag’s two-hour presentation is designed for people with a background in the natural sciences, willing to study and experience a technical explanation of how we all function.



Dag Forssell MSME, MBA
dag@livingcontrolsystems.com
livingcontrolsystems.com
Hayward, CA (510) 727-0377

All living organisms control as long as they live. Controlling and living are inexorably intertwined. A natural science of life will depend on a correct understanding of how control works and what is controlled.