

## 1. ABOUT THE HUMAN CONDITION AND ITS RESOLUTION

### **WTM FAQ 1.16 Why can't I understand what this is all about? / Why am I struggling to read FREEDOM? / This material is so difficult to read surely it needs some serious editing? / Why is there so much apparent repetition?**

#### **The short answer:**

As is explained in [Video/Freedom Essay 1\\*](#), while, as the renowned biologist E.O. Wilson has written, 'The human condition is the most important frontier of the natural sciences' (*Consilience*, 1998, p.298 of 374), and in another of his books, 'There is no grail more elusive or precious in the life of the mind than the key to understanding the human condition' (*The Social Conquest of Earth*, 2012, p.1), the subject of the human condition has historically *also* been the most terrifying of subjects for humans to face. So even though the redeeming and relieving understanding of the human condition has finally been found (see [Videos/F. Essays 3\\* & 4\\*](#)), as soon as we start reading about the subject, our historic fear kicks in and our mind finds it difficult to take in or 'hear' what is being said or written.

As is explained in more detail in [Video/F. Essay 1\\*](#), the reason the human condition has been so terrifying is because trying to think about our seemingly horribly flawed, 'good and evil'-conflicted human condition while we couldn't truthfully explain it only led to suicidal depression. The poet Gerard Manley Hopkins described just how terrifyingly depressing trying to confront the human condition has been when he wrote, 'O the mind, mind has mountains; cliffs of fall, frightful, sheer, no-man-fathomed'! So, as is described in [F. Essay 30\\*](#), the only sensible way to avoid this fearful depression from trying to think about the human condition while it couldn't be truthfully explained or 'fathomed' was to 'resign' ourselves to living in denial of the subject, blocking the issue out of our minds. It follows that having practiced almost total denial of the human condition, what initially happens when discussion of it begins is that our mind goes into shock and our protective denial blocks the words and their meaning from entering our conscious awareness; at a certain point the words just wash over us, there is no absorption of them, and our minds effectively become 'deaf' to any more discussion of the human condition. Then, not knowing why we can't take in what's being written (because when we're in denial of something we obviously can't know we are in denial of it otherwise we wouldn't be in denial of it!), we can't help but blame the presentation, believe it's badly written and needs editing.

We have found that what is needed to overcome the 'deaf effect' is a preparedness to re-read and/or re-listen to what is being written or said. This process erodes our historic denial and counters the 'deaf effect', allowing the compassionate and immensely relieving insights to become accessible.

We also provide a free WTM Deaf Effect Course—see [Video/F. Essay 13\\*](#)—to help readers overcome the ‘deaf effect’ difficulty of reading about the historically off-limits subject of the human condition.

### **The elaboration:**

The situation described above is akin to giving someone who suffers from a fear of snakes a book that will free them of their phobia, but as soon as they open the book and see descriptions and images of snakes, they fearfully slam it shut; their fear blocks them from being able to access the book’s cure.

While this snake phobia analogy gives some idea of the problem of the ‘deaf effect’ resistance that blocks access to the compassionate, reconciling and immensely relieving understanding of our species’ condition, there is a much better analogy and description of it—one that was given by that greatest of all philosophers, Plato, way back in the Golden Age of Greece, some 360 years before Christ. (The greatness of Plato as a philosopher—philosophy being the study of **‘the truths underlying all reality’** (*Macquarie Dictionary*, 3rd edn, 1998)—was attested to by A.N. Whitehead, himself one of the most highly regarded philosophers of the twentieth century, when he described the history of philosophy as being merely **‘a series of footnotes to Plato’**.)

So what was Plato’s marvellously descriptive analogy of humans’ extreme fear of the human condition and the resulting ‘deaf effect’ difficulty we have when reading about it—and what importance did he place on the difficulty of the ‘deaf effect’ in his profound contribution to philosophical thought? Well, Plato’s most acclaimed work is *The Republic* and the central focus of *The Republic* is **‘our human condition’** (all these quotes in *The Republic* can be viewed at [www.wtmsources.com/227\\*](http://www.wtmsources.com/227*)); and, most revealingly, in describing **‘our human condition’**, Plato metaphorically depicted humans as being imprisoned deep **‘underground’** in a **‘cave’** hiding from the **‘painful’** issue of **‘the imperfections of human life’**—these **‘imperfections’** being, as he said, the issue of **‘our human condition’**. So the greatest of philosophers recognised that the central problem in understanding our behaviour is our fear of the human condition!

With regard to the problem of the ‘deaf effect’ response the **‘cave’ ‘prisoners’** would have to reading or hearing about the human condition, Plato then described what occurs when, as summarised in the *Encarta Encyclopedia* (see [www.wtmsources.com/101\\*](http://www.wtmsources.com/101*)), someone **‘escapes from the cave into the light of day’** and **‘sees for the first time the real world and returns to the cave’** to help the cave prisoners **‘Escape into the sun-filled setting outside the cave [which] symbolizes the transition to the real world... which is the proper object of knowledge’**. In *The Republic* Plato wrote that **‘it would hurt his [the cave’s prisoner’s] eyes and he would turn back and take refuge in the things which he could see** [take refuge in all the dishonest, **illusionary** explanations for human behaviour that we have become accustomed to from human-condition-avoiding science—see [Video/F. Essay 2\\*](#)], **which he would think really far clearer than the things being shown him. And if he were forcibly dragged up the steep and rocky ascent** [out of the cave of denial] **and not let go till he had been dragged out into the sunlight** [shown the truthful, **real** description of **our human condition**], **the process would be a painful one, to which he would much object, and when he emerged into the light his eyes would be so overwhelmed by the brightness of it that he wouldn’t be able to see a single one of the things he was now told were real.’** So that’s how

extreme Plato predicted the ‘deaf effect’ would be—‘he [the cave prisoner] **wouldn’t be able to see a single one of the things he was now told were real**’!!!

Significantly, the whole problem of humans living in Plato’s ‘cave of denial’, and the resulting initial extreme difficulty people variously have of not being able to take in or hear any discussion of the human condition that comes from outside that ‘cave of denial’, has been experienced by all ‘out-of-cave’, denial-free thinkers. Christ, for example, said, ‘**Why is my language not clear to you? Because you are unable to hear what I say...The reason you do not hear is that you do not belong to God** [living in a resigned state of denial of the human condition causes you to suffer from a ‘deaf effect’ where you’re unable to take in or ‘hear what I say’ about the human condition]’ (John 8:43-47); and ‘**The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness** [those resigned to living in Plato’s dark cave of denial of the human condition] **has not understood it**’ (John 1:5) (see [F. Essay 39\\*](#): *Christ explained*). So, the ‘deaf effect’ is not just a problem that occurs when reading about the human condition, it also occurs when trying to listen to somebody talking about the human condition, as Jeremy does in the Introductory Videos—as Christ said, ‘you are unable to hear what I say’.

### **Examples of the ‘deaf effect’**

The following are typical responses from people who have tried to access Jeremy’s explanation of the human condition: ‘**When I first read this material all I saw were a lot of black marks on white paper**’; and, ‘**Reading this is like reading another language—you know it’s English, you can understand the words, but the concepts are so basic and so different that they are almost incomprehensible—it’s a paradigm shift of a read**’; and, ‘**This stuff is so head on it can be crippling, which, initially at least, can make it hard to get behind what’s being said and access the profundity of where it’s coming from**’; and, ‘**At first I found this information difficult to absorb, in fact my wife and I would sit in bed and read a page together, and then re-read it a number of times, but still we couldn’t understand what was written there and ended up thinking it must be due to poor expression.**’

### **Unaware of our psychological denial of the human condition, we blame the presentation**

As the last response above indicates, a consequence of being unaware that this resistance and block-out is occurring in the reader’s mind (because, as has been mentioned, when a person is in denial of something they aren’t aware they are in denial, since obviously if they were they wouldn’t be in denial of it!) is that they naturally blame the inaccessibility of what is being put forward on flaws in the presentation; they think it is, as readers of my books have so often said, ‘**badly written**’, ‘**impenetrably dense**’, ‘**disjointed**’, ‘**confusingly worded**’, ‘**too intellectual for me to understand**’, ‘**it takes time to get used to Jeremy’s strange way of writing**’, ‘**it’s long-winded**’, ‘**unnecessarily repetitive of vague points**’, ‘**desperately needs editing**’, and even ‘**lacking in any substance or meaning**’. Frustrated readers have gone so far as to request ‘**an executive summary so I have some idea of what it is that you’re trying to say**’!

With regard to people finding Jeremy’s analysis of the human condition ‘**repetitive**’, which many people do, there actually isn’t unnecessary repetition of the same particular concept or material, rather it is the continual elaboration and analysis of long-forbidden

and exiled subject matter that can cause people's minds to become agitated because they want it to stop happening. As emphasised in [Video/F. Essay 1\\*](#), the human condition *has been* an absolutely terrifying subject for humans, which means it's only natural that the mind would want analysis of it to stop. In the 'cave world' of denial any references to subject matter that brings the issue of the human condition into focus was only ever done sparingly and obliquely, never full-on and directly, which is what Jeremy necessarily has to do in his denial-free exposure and demolition of the subject of the human condition. As Jeremy has written in *Freedom Expanded*, **'at best, our [human-condition-avoiding] minds can only tolerate the subject of the human condition being alluded to remotely and briefly...The truth is, we humans have only been able to talk about the human condition in code, in ways that only the initiated can understand. We limit ourselves to esoteric inference and innuendo.'** Similarly, as Jeremy writes in paragraph 1103 of *FREEDOM*, **'the whole point...was to avoid...the question of our self-corruption...the issue of our 'good and evil' human condition...While not overly confronting us with our upset, corrupted, fallen condition the great writers of our time have, through great literary skill and device, managed to throw light on it [without overly confronting us with it].'** Yes, as Jeremy summarises in [F. Essay 31\\*](#), **'great literature, art, poetry and songs have...allowed the light of some honesty about our corrupted human condition to escape from that dark 'tomb' in which we have been hiding'**. Scrutiny of Jeremy's writings has always shown there *isn't* any unwarranted repetition. Also, how could Jeremy be sound enough to plumb the depths of the human condition, as he does page after page in his writing, and at the same time be so unsound as to unnecessarily and stupidly waste words.

### **The solution**

We have found that what is needed to overcome the 'deaf effect' is a preparedness to re-read and/or re-listen to what is being written or said. Significantly, Plato, in describing how when the cave prisoner **'emerged into the light his eyes would be so overwhelmed by the brightness of it that he wouldn't be able to see a single one of the things he was now told were real'**, went on to say, **'Certainly not at first. Because he would need to grow accustomed to the light before he could see things in the world outside the cave'**. This process of re-reading and re-listening to what in truth is a very clear presentation, of becoming **'accustomed'** to the explanation, erodes our historic denial and counters the 'deaf effect', allowing the compassionate and immensely relieving insights to become accessible, as this response from a reader of *FREEDOM* who has overcome the 'deaf effect' demonstrates: **'Wonderful book! Full of so much wisdom and yet the author was able to write it in such a way that I think a middle school student or a high school dropout or anybody that can read at any level would be able to understand it. Or in other words, it is not full of language and words written just for college graduates'** (see [wtmsources.com/243\\*](http://wtmsources.com/243*)).

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For further explanation and examples of the ‘deaf effect’, and solutions to it, see [Video/F. Essay 11\\*](#), or read [chapters 1:4 and 1:5\\*](#) of biologist Jeremy Griffith’s book *FREEDOM: The End Of The Human Condition*.

And as has been mentioned, the WTM also provides a free WTM Deaf Effect Course—see [Video/F. Essay 13\\*](#)—to help overcome the ‘deaf effect’ difficulty of reading about the historically, but no longer, unbearably confronting subject of the human condition.

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