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Percept Newsletter

The Percept Institute / 505-986-3922

Percept from an 88 year old perspective

Percept is an original orientation for living fully, created by John and Joyce Weir, and taught by them for over forty years. Although John and Joyce retired at age 85, in 1998, the Percept orientation is still being taught, now by Jake and Hannah Eagle.

The purpose of the Percept orientation is to *self-differentiate*—to become more fully the unique person you are as you grow and develop with age.

As John Weir recently said, "The best part of living in Percept, for me, is the freedom from striving to please others. I have a reduction of concerns, less obligations, no struggling or striving. There is a peace, quiet, and harmony. I take things as they are. Everything has its own life. Mine is uncluttered and autonomous. Nothing is important now. I don't bother with novels or movies—I have no desire to be involved in reconstructions or imitations of life—I'm too fascinated with my own experience."

The Percept Orientation

Percept suggests that people are not really interacting with a world "out there," but rather, with our inner world of perceptions, which we project and call "reality."

The Percept formation process starts with an energy stimulus, some event in the world, which then gets moderated and filtered by influences that are mostly unconscious. The filtering process has to do with our genetics, history, age-stage, education, values, and other factors. After all of our filtering we end up with our projection of reality, which we, as Percept teachers, call the Percept screen.

People then respond to their Percept screen with: thoughts, feelings, and actions. Although we each have some selective power over our Percept screen, mostly it is unconsciously determined. We each build our Percepts to maintain our personal universe in a way that makes sense to us.

In this system, feelings follow Percepts. Therefore, any attempt to change feelings and behaviors is working at the level of effect, not cause.

In Percept we don't emphasize the goal of change as much as the *process of integration*. We think that an agenda of change stems from self-alienation and judgment. Implicit in this stance is the idea that we are not okay. Our natural response to such an idea is to defend ourselves, which causes resistance. And from our experience we believe resistance gets in the way of healing.

However, there is a kind of organic change, an integrative process, that occurs naturally as a result of a four-step process that is taught as part of the Percept model.

These steps are: 1. aware 2. accept 3. await, and 4. act.

For these four steps to occur, we must create an environment in which openness and understanding replaces judgment and certainty. To create such an attitudinal environment, we use the Percept orientation to see through the illusion of right/wrong, good/bad, black/white dualistic thinking. This illusory thinking is replaced with a deep curiosity as to how each person creates their unique perspective.

The Percept philosophy

is implemented through the Percept language.

*What is the point of art?
This question was posed to Richard Serra, one of the greatest artist/sculptors of his generation.
His answer:
"To change meaning through perception."*

It is primarily through language that we construct and convey meaning. Percept is a way of changing our use of language so that we change the way we construct and convey meaning.

We think that Percept, as a philosophy, is unique because the Percept language backs it up. The Percept language provides a way to practice the orientation moment-to-moment throughout the day. This is not a practice that is separate from your life—it is available to you continuously.

Within Percept one person does not tell another person about that other person, because we believe that one person cannot truly know another person; we can only know ourselves. Since we believe that our percepts are truly unique to us, then I can never really know your percepts and you can never really know mine. I can never be you and you can never be me. You can only speak from your percepts and about the world as you create it. So when you speak about me, you are really speaking about the "me-in-you," the me that you have created in your head. And when I speak about you, I am really speaking about the "you-in-me," the you that I have created in my head. So I can't tell you about you, only the way I have you be inside of me. And you can't tell me about me, only the me that you have me be inside of you.

We don't want to give the impression that the Percept language *is* the Percept orientation. Percept language is a *vehicle* that allows people to enter this different orientation.

Eventually, one can actually live in the Percept orientation while speaking "regular" language.

We find it difficult to convey the profundity of Percept through the written word. We believe Percept is most easily understood through experiential learning and immersion into an environment where people speak nothing but Percept. This is how we learned Percept, and this is how we teach it. During a Percept training we create experiences that are designed to stimulate core issues for the participants. Many of the experiences are non-verbal and there is a good deal of emphasis on movement. The processing of these experiences is then done verbally—using the percept language.

"The significant problems we face cannot be solved at the same level of thinking we were at when we created them." Albert Einstein

Percept offers people a way to step out of the original structure in which they create their problems. From outside of that structure people have more freedom to grow themselves if that is what they want to do. If we accept that we are the only ones that make meaning for ourselves, then we give up power struggles, defending ourselves, attacking others, manipulating, and trying to get others to make us whole—because each of these responses is based on the idea that someone else is trying to impose meaning on us. By moving into Percept, we take responsibility for how we create meaning. This requires moving more deeply into ourselves, exploring and integrating what we find. As we step more fully into our distinct self we experience a revival of our innate health.

No Praise and No Blame

Within the Percept orientation there is no praise and no blame. Many people understand the value of not blaming, because they see how blaming causes defensiveness. Praising is the flip side of the same coin. If you behave in such a way that you get me to praise you, you have traded power for approval. The danger in this dynamic is that I hold the power and some day I may choose to withhold it in the form of withholding praise. This is a set up for you to feel vulnerable and will eventually result in a power struggle—just the same result that comes from blaming. Consider the implications of living without praise and blame.

- >> It means a different way of raising children that encourages them to be more self-determined and self-reliant.
- >> It means a different way of relating with your partner, one that is less reactive and in which you stop using each other as an excuse for your own frustrations.
- >> It means being free to be who you are if you stop trying to influence others so that they will praise you, which is ultimately an exhausting dynamic.
- >> It means you can accept all of who you are and perhaps capture that evasive love of self, which is a prerequisite to truly loving anyone else.

Percept Training: March 16-23, 2003 in Arizona

The next Percept training will be held in Arizona during the early part of March. We have reserved Rancho Sano y Salvo, a beautiful facility, exclusively for our group.

The menu includes delicious natural, whole foods prepared by a creative chef. Spring temperatures, a soothing outdoor spa and heated swimming pool will add to a nourishing week of rest and discovery.

There are rooms for thirty-five people. Only eight private rooms are available. Please sign up early.

Tuition ranges from \$700-900 depending on income level.

Lodging and all meals will be \$133 (plus tax), per day. Private rooms are additional. Please inquire.

Financial assistance is available on a limited basis.

CEU's are available for therapists: please inquire.

To register: use registration form, or call 505-986-3922

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into our distinct self
we experience a
revival of our innate
health.*

*"Percept makes life
simple."
Tom Dillenberg*

Percept as Meditation: by Hannah Eagle

Having been a body worker for thirteen years and now a homeopath, I enjoy leading the movement in the Percept trainings, as Joyce Weir has, to integrate the body with the mind.

In homeopathy we understand that true healing takes place from the inside out. In a similar way the percept experience allows unknown parts of our selves to surface in a gentle, non-blaming way. These parts can then be embraced and integrated so that we become more of who we are. I experience this as a true healing.

For twenty years I attended many weeklong mediation retreats. I have benefited greatly from each one. I emerged from each retreat with my mind cleared and my heart opened, and I experienced being present in a profound way. But, I felt there were essential pieces missing which made it difficult to continue to carry this new way of being into my ordinary life.

With Percept I found these missing pieces. First, Percept gave me a way of using language, which is clearly a way to keep alive my "in the moment" orientation throughout the day. Percept language reminds me to be present, and I empower myself with the knowledge that I am creating my experience of every moment, right now.

Secondly, in contrast to meditation retreats, where sensory input was discouraged and my body forced to conform to stillness, the movement in the Percept training and the savoring of the senses, anchors the experience in me on a cellular level, making it easier to be present as I move through my life after the retreat is over. With Percept, there is less contrast between the "workshop me" and the "out-in-the-world-me."

Basically, I get to the same profound place with Percept, in mind and heart as with meditation, but with Percept I bring my body along and have a lot more fun in the process.



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