

WEEK 2 ANSWER TO QUESTION 1
STEP 3.3 ASK MARK

So, welcome to the second week of the Ask Mark session. Just to remind you, what we normally do is have three or four questions which are selected by our mentors, and this week we have four questions. Here comes the first question: “Why not define "mind" as something that you have, like a brain, instead of something that you are?”

So my answer to this question is, really it cuts to the heart of the matter of this week's topic, subjectivity. The difference between *being* something and *having* something is the difference between a subject and an object.

When the questioner says, why not define "mind" as something that you *have*, like a brain, they're saying why not define "mind" as an object, like the brain, and I'm saying that the starting point of the defining properties of the mental is precisely that it is not an object. The mind is not something that you can *have*, that you can hold in your hands, that you can look at with your eyes. That's why I'm saying the mind is something that you are. It's something subjective.

Now, it is true that we do also have a brain. We do *have* a brain. The brain is an object, and the essential point here is that the brain is the mind when looked at from the outside, when objectified. But the difference between the brain as an object and the mind as a subject is that there are things that you can know about the mind by being it that you can't observe from the outside by looking at the brain.

The most obvious example is feeling. You can't *see* a feeling with your eyes, but feelings are at the heart of the matter of what the mind's about. So I know it's a difficult point, but I hope that by having asked this question that you've given me an opportunity to clarify it, and I hope that I have indeed clarified it.



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