

THE SUPERMARKET PARADOX

This is a transcript of a taped lecture by Mr. Dennis Stevens the author of TROM. It has been edited to enhance the sound, remove noise and an occasional illegible word as well as repeated text and interjections (where Mr. Stevens repeated or corrected himself) while keeping in mind the flow and content of the lecture. Time tabs (green print) indicate the elapsed time into the lecture as Minutes: Seconds: Editor.

Introduction:

This is a lecture by Dennis Stevens who died fifteenth December 1994. It's called The Supermarket Paradox. [The introduction was not recorded in the voice of Mr. Dennis Stevens: Editor].

The Supermarket Paradox

0:00 The name of this article is The Supermarket Paradox or reflections on level three of TROM.

Now a paradox can be loosely defined as anything that conflicts with one's preconceived ideas or notions.

An example of a paradox is a man going to a zoo for the first time and seeing a giraffe and exclaiming that there's no such animal. The giraffe clearly contradicts his ideas – his preconceived ideas – of what an animal ought to look like.

How does this phenomenon of the paradox come about? It comes about when a person's idea or model they have in their own mind of the way the universe is, is contradicted by the real universe. And it only happens when they don't know all there is to know about the situation, that is in front of them.

1:19 As a matter of fact, there are no paradoxes in this universe. The whole universe jogs along, based on the laws upon which it's constructed. The universe will not permit any paradoxes. A thing can not occur in the universe which is contrary to the laws upon which the universe is constructed, simply because it violates the laws and therefore can not be in the universe. So there are no paradoxes in the universe. But there is an awful lot of beings in the universe that have ideas and preconceptions about the way the universe ought to be which are at variance with the way in which the universe actually is. Can you understand this?

2:06 Once you grasp that you see that, that paradoxes can be rampant. Or, or to put it another way if a person understood the laws upon which this universe is constructed he would never be faced with a paradox. He would simply look at a situation – whatever he saw would be consistent with the laws of the universe. He would not be struck by this phenomenon of the paradox.

So a paradox always occurs, and only occurs when a person knows less than he could know about the laws governing the phenomena that are in front of him.

2:49 Now there's a very common paradox there that a person walks into at level three in TROM. It is so common that I've named it the supermarket paradox and I thought it might be a good idea to say a few words about it to stop people being puzzled by it.

The supermarket paradox occurs when a person get to level three in TROM and this person believes in such things as memory pictures or mental image pictures. This is how the paradox comes about. The person at level three is being encouraged

by the procedure to examine their incidents – scenes in their life. And they end up examining these scenes in much greater detail than they've ever before examined them.

3:56 And then they start walking into the – what I call – the supermarket paradox.

The simplest form of the paradox a person at level three in TROM picks up – a memory scene of being in a supermarket, shall we say - at the point of where they are purchasing or where they are taking a packet of cornflakes off the shelf and putting it into their trolley.

This is the moment in time that they're dealing with at level three in TROM at a certain moment in their therapy session. And this is how the paradox comes about. They examine the scene and they look around the scene. There is the cornflakes. Let's just put the cornflakes into the trolley. And they look around the supermarket and they become aware of the various bits and pieces in the supermarket. And they become aware of their body in the supermarket. They become aware of their head in the supermarket. And there they stop. There they walk into a paradox.

5:08 Or, I could say more precisely, they could very easily walk into a paradox at this point if they happen to believe that their memory scenes – memory pictures – are being generated by something in their brain or some part or some mechanism in their brain. So that they will now find that they're looking at the scene and in the scene they're looking at their body and their brain is in their body. How can their brain make a picture of the supermarket and in the supermarket is their body and in their body is their brain And in the brain there is the machine making the picture or making the recording. The device must be making a recording of itself. Because you look into the scene, look into the supermarket, there's the body in the supermarket and there in the body is the brain. So inside the brain is the device.

6:25 How can this be? How can a device in the brain be recording itself. So you say OK it records itself. Alright, well that only worsens the situation. Because if this device records itself, then it must also be making a recording of recording itself. And if it makes a recording of recording itself, it must make a recording of recording itself recording itself. And so on in infinite regression – in infinite series. So the situation got worse. You don't get out of it that way.

7:00 It worsens the situation –we're now into – a completely ridiculous situation. No we're up against the paradox. The paradox is essentially that – how can the picture of the supermarket be a figment of the brain when the brain is in the supermarket and is a part of the recording – the memory – in the supermarket. That is essentially the paradox.

7:34 Then of course is the added difficulty of: How come all this vast space in this vast supermarket all gets into one tiny brain? - while this tiny brain that's in the supermarket. You see that's the difficulty. Simply this problem: How to stuff a large supermarket into a tiny thing called the brain, while this brain is inside the supermarket, clearly demonstrating that the space of the supermarket is bigger than the space of the brain.

8:15 Again, a paradox. You see we're not only in the Supermarket Paradox, once we start on them we see a whole series of paradoxes. And I'm only naming the most obvious ones. Only the most obvious.

So we look around the supermarket and we see the body standing there taking the cornflakes off the shelf or putting the cornflakes into the trolley. And there's the body and there's the back of the head of the body. An___. Wait a minute. How can the brain take a memory picture of the back of the head of the body when the brain is inside the body and its only visual output is through the eyes and the eyes are at the

front of the head? How can it make a recording of the hair at the back of the head? But there it is, you're in the supermarket, you're looking at the back of your body and you're looking at your hair. No way - the paradox. I could go on, you see. So you say "OK, enough of that – we got that". It isn't – this is not the result of memory recording by the brain. This is a mental image picture which has something to do with the human spirit. This has got nothing to do with the body. That's why I can see the body in the scene. It's because it's made by me as a human spirit. Fine – fine – fine. OK.

9:48 So when you're in the supermarket taking the cornflakes off the shelf and putting them into your trolley you are occupying the viewpoint of your body. So presumably any recording made by you as a human spirit at that moment in time would have been made from that viewpoint. Right? Then how come, in recall, it's very easy for anyone to recall that same scene from six foot behind the body? Or two foot above the body. Or three foot to the left of the body. How come? Paradox. So you say OK no problem there. There's the memory picture – we make the memory picture and we simply move the picture right, to the left, up and down. So we can get various viewpoints in the picture. The whole thing is just an illusion. Which is, the being stays still and moves the picture. Fine, fine, fine. So you solved that paradox you think?

8:46 So you look out around the supermarket and you look out through the wall of the supermarket. And there's a green fence and on top of the green fence _ _ _ But _ . Wait a minute, wait a minute you've never been outside that supermarket and seen this green fence with your body's eyes. And at the time of the incident you had no awareness of this green fence. So if you had no awareness of this green fence at the time of the incident, how come you've got a mental recording of this green fence?

And there it is, you go back to that moment in the incident and you look across and you look through the wall. No doubt, there is the green fence. And you look past the green fence and there is a truck parked and there are the wheels on the truck; on the other side of the truck there is a, a garden fence; and on the other side of that garden fence there is someone's back garden; and in the garden there's a lawn an _ _ . etcetera, etcetera. The further you look you just see more and more universe – more and more town. More and more universe. Just exactly what you'd expect to find if you were there looking through your eyes. Paradox. O, you say "I'm a spiritual being and I have a machine that makes copies of the whole universe, moment by moment in time. And I'm completely unaware of it – I don't know its happening. The picture is always available to me. Any time I can refer to these pictures and each picture is a complete picture of the whole universe." Well now that's quite a machine. That is quite a machine.

12:59 All right – let us suppose there is such a machine. Now if there were such a machine it would show up sometime in therapy. Yet there's no reports of such machines ever showing up in therapy. And worse is to come.

If such a machine existed and you created a copy of such a machine - and continue to make copies of such a machine, each copy, by your own postulate, was able to make pictures of the universe and do exactly what the original machine did. Eventually you will take over the automaticity of the original machine and the original machine would start to falter and start to break down. And something would happen – start happening – to your memory pictures. But nothing happens.

13:57 You can create such a machine and play with it, and do this with it, and do every known process with this machine. You can create it; un-create it; move it

around; chop it up; bring it together; make it produce pictures; stop it; start it; change it; paint it green; do what you like with it.

You get back to the supermarket you get exactly the same phenomena you got before you played around with the machine. You haven't changed the machine in the slightest.

Now, it's very difficult to conceive of such a machine under those circumstances. Very difficult to conceive the machine; but it's your machine that you used to take pictures, moment by moment, of the whole universe. That you have so little control over that you can't do anything about it by your own creativity in present time. Now that in itself is a paradox.

14:57 Now there is a far, far simpler solution to all of these paradoxes. It's a very, very simple solution and it solves all of them.

That what you're viewing in the supermarket is not a picture of the supermarket; it is not a figment of the brain; it is not something produced by a machine in the brain; it is not something which is produced by a machine in your psyche as a spiritual being.

What you're looking at is the actual supermarket at that moment in time as a spiritual being. In other words: You are looking at that moment in time as a spiritual being. Now this explains the whole phenomena.

There are no mysteries now. This is why you can look through the wall of the supermarket and see the green fence. Why you can see the truck. Why you can see the wheels on the truck and the fence behind the truck. And the person's back garden with the lawn in it. This is why you can see all these things.

You're simply looking through states of that moment of time in the physical universe. You are looking at the real universe at that moment in time as a spiritual being. There's a whole universe there for you to view. Now once you grasp that? The paradox ends.

16:36 You junk the mental image picture theory that you've got a machine that makes pictures. Exit one imaginary machine, it never did exist. You've now got rid of it. No need for it – no need to keep this, this useless bric-a-brac in your mind. The machine never did exist so you dump it. Exit this idea that you've got something in your brain that makes all these wonderful pictures. No such thing, nothing in there. Nothing in there that makes pictures – NO – it's just you.

Just got a spiritual being who can look at scenes. You can look at the *then* scenes and you can look at the *now* scenes. And if the *then* scenes - if the *then* scenes seem a little less real than the *now* scenes it's only because he's made them so.

And that ends the supermarket paradox once and for all. And it ends all supermarket paradoxes of that type – all paradoxes of that type which you can call supermarket paradoxes.

17:50 On that subject your ideas are now completely consistent with the way things are. And so you do not suffer paradoxes anymore on the subjects of memories, memory pictures, memory scenes and so on.

Once you grasp the truth of this the paradoxes go and everything you look at and understand along these lines is quite consistent with the way the universe is. You no longer get the puzzles of the supermarket paradox.

Now I hope this article, in conjunction with the theoretical material on this subject given in TROM, will assist you to resolve these various paradoxes.

Thank you very much.

End of tape.