



Psychology Q1

What is self-deceit?

Key Issues and Questions to Address

1. The Paradox Problem: How can someone both know and not know something at the same time? Is self-deception actually paradoxical?
2. Intentionality Question: Is self-deception intentional? If so, how can we intentionally fool ourselves? If not, is it really deception?
3. Motivated vs. Unmotivated Biases: How does self-deception differ from ordinary cognitive biases and heuristics that lead to errors?
4. The Evolutionary Puzzle: Why would self-deception evolve if accurate beliefs about reality seem advantageous for survival?
5. Levels of Awareness: Are there degrees or levels of self-deception, from completely unconscious to semi-aware?
6. Moral Dimensions: Is self-deception morally blameworthy? To what extent are we responsible for our self-deceptions?



John Locke Global Essay Prize 2025 Prompts Breakdown
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7. Self-Deception vs. Other-Deception: How does deceiving oneself relate to deceiving others? Does one facilitate the other?
 8. Cultural Variations: Do different cultures conceptualize and experience self-deception differently?
 9. Beneficial Self-Deception: Can self-deception sometimes be helpful or adaptive? When might "positive illusions" be beneficial?
 10. Detection and Prevention: How can we identify self-deception in ourselves? What practices might help minimize harmful self-deception?
 11. Therapeutic Approaches: How do different psychological therapies approach self-deception? How effective are they?
 12. Linguistic and Conceptual Analysis: What does the very concept of self-deception imply about consciousness, knowledge, and belief?