

# What is wisdom?



I. Has your view of wisdom changed since the beginning of the course?

Explain how and why. Since the beginning of the course, my view of wisdom remained the same. However, I was able to enrich my knowledge because of the definitions and discussion on the subject by the different philosophers whose ideas of wisdom greatly shaped the word. After taking the course I was able to come up with the conclusion that wisdom can be defined differently according to observations of a person towards how wisdom is being used or misused. Interestingly, even scholars and the learned have their respective sets of definition for wisdom.

However, it will still be evident that in the bottom line, wisdom will still be one thing and this is how a person uses the capability of his mind to create or make decisions. There are things in my preliminary essay which I questioned throughout the course. One example is the thought that wisdom is the use of intellect. There were times in the course of study where wisdom is discussed in terms of emotion, or the heart. This made me wonder whether wisdom is purely the mind's work, and assessing the different definitions I came into the conclusion that my preliminary thoughts were true.

Still, there are parts in my former definition of wisdom that changed. I pointed out early on that wisdom amongst children and the younger adults may be lacking due to being inexperienced which I now proved otherwise. As Thoreau points out, the older a wise person becomes the less his wisdom becomes significant because of new things and developments that occur everyday. Thus, there are certain aspects where a child or a young adult may know more while an older, more experienced person know less or

nothing about. In the same way, old knowledge may be more familiar to an older person when compared to a younger one.

Yet I still remain faithful to the fact that the definitions pertinent to wisdom are numerous, as I pointed out in my preliminary essay. Wisdom can be identified with the current pre-occupation of the person defining it—whereas a scientist may define wisdom in a scientific way, a teacher may define it in an instructive way, and a student may define it in a learner's way. The possibilities in which wisdom may be defined are endless. II. Whose view (Socrates, Thoreau, Huxley, Piper, or Frankl) seems to be most reasonable? Why?

Of the views discussed in class, Thoreau's is the most significant. He stated that a man's wisdom and ignorance are results of his time, citing the yield of people to superstition of their time as an example. (Creating Minds, 2007) This is especially true even to this day and age. A person may be wise for his age, but new studies, inventions, and scholarly developments can tend to outdate his wisdom and in the process introduce other people who can seem wiser and fuller because their knowledge is far more updated than the wise people ahead of them.

In hindsight, this is why a person would never cease learning, because once he does his wisdom will definitely deteriorate. Mencken states that the older he grows he realized that wisdom does not come of age. This is ratified by Van Buren, who likened wisdom coming from age with wine saying it a person will only be wise with age like wine if the grapes are good enough to begin with. (Moncur, 2007) True enough, knowledge does not come of age.

Wisdom is brought about by a never-ending free-flow of knowledge despite age.

Children and young adults can get a deep well of wisdom if they are motivated to learn, and adults will also improve on their wisdom if they do not stop learning. Continuous learning is an important aspect of sustaining wisdom, whereby new information consistently is being added up to one's well of knowledge which he can process and use to make sound and wise decisions. To be wholly wise, it is important that a person gets out of his somfort zone and try things that are not normally done by someone his age, or someone whose occupation is similar to him.

When a person is not open to learn new things, even if he has the age capability to learn them, he will be outdated with information and his well of wisdom gets short of this additional information. III. Whose view (Socrates, Thoreau, Huxley, Piper, or Frankl) seems to be the least reasonable? Why? Of the views discussed in class, Frankl's is the least reasonable. To begin with, he insists that wisdom comes from the heart and that this can make wisdom more sensible than the wisdom wrought from the mind.

Given that this is factual in its deepest sense, wisdom still goes back to being a function of the mind. Questioning everything, Lichtenberg said, is the first step to wisdom—and altogether accepting that everything is the last step to wisdom. (Moncur, 2007) Therefore, it is difficult to accept that wisdom from the heart, though claimed more sensible, is the real essence of wisdom. It is true that wisdom can be affected by what the heart feels, but the capability

to be wise is exclusively spawned by the mind. There may be contentions to this.

A charity worker, for example, may prove it wise to day that true wisdom comes from the heart because the nature of the work he is in touches more in emotion. On the other hand, a scholar whose preoccupation is more on knowledge and improving this knowledge will prove this otherwise. Again, definitions will vary according to who is defining the word. Yet it is still improbable to say that this is reasonable as compared to wisdom's other definitions by other scholars and philosophers, especially those whose ideas were discussed in class.

This sums up how the work of the mind breeds wisdom. It is not the heart which is wise. Emotions bred by the heart are also not acceptable, as scientifically it has been noted that it is the hypothalamus and not the heart that is capable of telling a person how to respond through emotions. In summation, this says that Frankl's definition of wisdom can be misinterpreted in a lot of ways, and thus it is the least reasonable as compared to the definitions by other philosophers whose definitions were discussed in class.