

In-Sight Publishing
Ask A Genius 120 – Existential Crises and Coping¹
Scott Douglas Jacobsen & Rick Rosner
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[Beginning of recorded material]

Scott Douglas Jacobsen: So this leads to a question, which we discussed off tape a few days ago. Which is on the nature of the brain's, not only functionality but the, contingency plans through trial-and-error in evolution have been selected for and in-built. So some critical moments for some organisms—existential crisis of the organism, whether an ant, [Laughing] questionably, or a human, in some cases more obviously, the brain appears to have mechanisms to cope with this extreme inability to handle new information and, if here is such a thing, repressed information or crises of the organism-as-a-whole based on the processing.

Rick Rosner: What you're talking about is when you're in extreme perceived danger, for one thing, things seem to slow down because you're extremely focused on what's happening to you. You're trying to take in as much information as you can, and the normal chatter shuts down. So you have a very clear picture of the situation—sometimes in slow-mo, and for some people in some situations, you get a massive information dump.

Where that life flashing before your eyes thing, which is probably some extreme version of the brain trying to help out with relevant information under stress, that if—that, I assume that, extreme stress triggers extreme focus on associations. Any possible association; when you're focused just on what is happening directly in front of you, then your entire associative structure of landscape switches to cater to that situation.

So you pull up a lot of stuff. I assume that if you crank it to 11. You pull up just about everything, so much stuff that it seems as if your life is flashing before your eyes.

[End of recorded material]

¹ Four format points for the session article:

1. Bold text following “Scott Douglas Jacobsen:” or “SJ:” is Scott Douglas Jacobsen & non-bold text following “Rick Rosner:” or “RR:” is Rick Rosner.
2. Session article conducted, transcribed, edited, formatted, and published by Scott.
3. Footnotes & in-text citations in the interview & references after the interview.
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1. American Psychological Association. (2010). Citation Guide: APA. Retrieved from <http://www.lib.sfu.ca/system/files/28281/APA6CitationGuideSFUv3.pdf>.
2. Humble, A. (n.d.). Guide to Transcribing. Retrieved from <http://www.msvu.ca/site/media/msvu/Transcription%20Guide.pdf>.

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