

Why?.....Because

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We have at least seven different ways to ask a question. Which one we choose depends on what we want to know. “What,” “Where,” “When,” “Who,” and “Which” seek different kinds of facts, and pose the simplest challenge to answer. “How” questions generally require a narrative explanation of process. “Why” questions are by far the most difficult to answer, if they are taken seriously and not just answered with a humorous put-on or a ready made cop-out.

Why Are “Why” Questions So Much More Challenging?

The answer to this “why” question is contained in the very word that we use to introduce an answer: “Because,” or Be Cause, or the Cause Is. “Why” questions require an answer that identifies the cause of something, and in many cases cause is not simple to ascertain. Why?...Because most phenomena have many causes. So, what do we do? We either depend on the quick ready made traditional answer, or we try to identify the “primary” cause. Only in formal contexts does our answer take us on a lengthy journey through the complex of participating causes. And if we probe this complex to its ultimate end in our attempt to fully answer almost any “why” question, it reveals that everything in all of reality participates and has “causal” involvement in any other phenomenon. This is the case because ultimately all “things” in reality are connected to some degree.

Why, or Cause In Applying the Law

Notice that when someone is accused of breaking a law and is being held responsible in the legal system, the first move is to establish What happened – the Facts. The law then proceeds to ask the “Why” question – Why did this person or persons break this law. Was the cause accidental, out of ignorance or due to insanity, was the causal motive for personal gain or as a response to propaganda, was the act a response in the moment or intentional – even to the point of being conspiratorial? Answering the “why” questions about cause surrounding the Facts makes a huge difference in the charge brought and the judgment that gets rendered and applied [eg. 2nd Degree Manslaughter verses 1st Degree Murder]. Determining “Why” in the law is very challenging, and in many cases it is the center of attention!

The “Why” question has enormous scope – from the most micro to the most macro material and social levels. For humans, the ultimate “Why” question is “Why Do We Exist? I address our efforts to answer this question in a separate essay.