

Why Men Don't "Get *It*"

by
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At least 75% of the male population world-wide don't "get *It*". They don't "get *It*" because they have no clue that there is an *It* to be got. *It's* an imponderable for most men no matter what their culture or geographical location. Not having *It* is what gives men their distinctive style, their characteristic male mojo. It makes them seem boorish, crude, and dense to those who do get *It* because the don't-haves lack subtlety, finesse, and sensitivity of feeling. They are just *men* in the same sense that a massive boulder is a big, dense mass of hard stuff called "rock." It has weight and it occupies space—lots of weight and plenty of space--which is why it has such a noticeable presence. If you want to go beyond the boulder, you have to go over it, around it, or somehow move the damn thing to a different location. This last option is usually too big of a job to tackle. The thing is big, and it's inert. It's intrusive simply because it *is*. That's the man mode. Live with it.

Now there's another 5% of men who, from time to time, are aware of *It*. Occasionally, some men have a spontaneous, unexpected experience of *It*. Unfortunately, although they recognize their experience as weird and unusual, they attribute *It* to a happy coincidence of factors that puts them "in the zone". It's something that happens when everything goes right in an unexpected way. Men often perceive *It* in sports contests when a player seems to make all the right moves in spite of the opposing team's best efforts to stop him. The player's actions seem inspired, as though he has a greater awareness of what needs to be done and the timing necessary to do it far beyond what the other players can manage. But no one accounts being "in the zone" as miraculous or paranormal. A player "in the zone" is simply realizing his peak performance capability. Given his age, his training, his experience, and his unique aptitude, plus his high level of fitness, he is more likely to be "in the zone" than less favored players. So *It* is a lucky accident, both amazing and rare. To see *It* happen is thrilling, but not something men think can become a regular part of their everyday lives.

Most men are secure in their outlook—or maybe just stubborn—and an *It* experience is merely another feature of their outlook inventory. Despite recognizing *It* when they see it and being thrilled by *It*, they have a completely skewed understanding of what constitutes the genuine nature of *It*. They are far more aware that "shit happens" than that *It* happens so that they get far more shit than *It*.

Bruce Lee was acquainted with *It*. He experienced *It* in moments of inspired combat. In his teaching of Jeet Kune Do, he extolled the benefits of *It*, which he associated with the Taoist virtue of "no-mind". He refers to Zen in this regard, but then Zen is Taoism by another name. His book is entitled, *Tao of Jeet Kune Do*,

not *Zen of Jeet Kune Do*. In it, he says, “The spirit is no doubt the controlling agent of our existence.” This principle is not an item in the typical male outlook inventory. When it comes to control, men draw upon their own resources: courage, strength, cunning, endurance, analytical intelligence, single-mindedness, and passionate commitment. “Spirit” is too intangible to serve as a handy tool for the task-oriented man. He can’t hold it in his hand, or tighten it with a wrench, so what’s it good for?

Lee explains further: “*Nirvana* is to be consciously unconscious. That is its secret. The act is so direct and immediate that intellectualization finds no room to insert itself and cut the act to pieces.” But this is precisely what the left-brain-dominated male does. Men are instinctively reductionist. Whatever the experience, a man has to get to the bottom of it and reduce it to its lowest common denominator. What is the operating principle? What are its parts? How can it be reproduced? What applications can it have? What technique can be used to apply it? This approach is what creates such male-dominated disciplines as science and engineering, which are not noted for their conscious unconsciousness. They effectively cut any act or experience to pieces. Whatever *It* might be is assimilated into familiar conscious reality and de-mystified. *It* isn’t got because of a reflexive damping down of awareness. As Lee adds, “When you are completely aware, there is no space for a conception, a scheme, ‘the opponent and I’; there is complete abandonment.” No wonder that men don’t “get *It*”.

The best that men can aspire to in a quest for *It* is technical proficiency—being a professional, being skilled at what one does, being an expert, being an authority in one’s chosen field, and making lots of money because of it. But that ain’t *It*. Compared to *It*, that kind of achievement is a sham. As Lee says, “One can never be the master of his technical knowledge unless all his psychic hindrances are removed and he can keep his mind in a state of emptiness (fluidity), even purged of whatever technique he has obtained.” This purging of technique, i.e., ideas, thoughts, concepts, expectations, and outcomes is what prohibits men from “getting *It*”. It is outside their perceptual framework, alien to their mindset, and inadmissible to their outlook inventory.

Here is an example of a particularly irritating habit of thought fairly typical of men. Say that witnesses report seeing a UFO. Not only that, but there is good video footage of the object in flight and subsequent analysis of the pictures shows no evidence of tampering of any kind. The visual documentation of the UFO appears highly credible. Nonetheless, a team of skeptics sets about recreating the event using props, computer graphics, and special editing. Their duplication of the UFO incident is practically identical to the original recording. “Aha,” say the male skeptics. “Because we could duplicate the UFO using special effects, that has to be how it was done in the first place. It was a hoax!”

Now there is a process taking place here that hard-nosed, “realistic” men employ constantly to protect their outlook from being shaken. I call it “reality doubling”. It’s a way of projecting a familiar reality into areas where things are different. It is a form of denial, of course, but a creative one. It is said that the Italian fascist dictator, Benito Mussolini, would review the same troops and military weapons he had already inspected by having those he had passed moved to the head of the formation before he got there, thus increasing the apparent size of his forces. It was truly a “re-view” or *deja-vu* of his army. In other words, if the reality you prefer isn’t accessible, you fake it. Depending upon the reality you want, you can add to or remove the parts you don’t like. In either case, the preferred version is validated. For men in general, because something extraordinary, unusual, or paranormal can be faked, then there is nothing that *is* extraordinary, unusual, or paranormal in their reality. It is called “debunking” and is a highly-regarded male activity that confers authority and status on one’s particular view of reality. It fills a gap in the male perceptual apparatus. Men cannot perceive differing levels of reality. Their left-brains filter out most of what their right-brains are processing as symbolic, non-verbal, multi-dimensional information. That’s why most sociopaths are men.

So, at this point, we have 75% of men clueless about *It* and 5% who have occasional experiences of *It*, but who are unable to recognize what *It* is. That leaves 20% of men who “get *It*”. Well, sort of. Of this remaining 20%, about 15% acknowledge *It* and have a conceptual, ideational understanding of *It*. They discuss *It*, write about *It*, and promote an acceptance of *It* to the public at large. But they still don’t “get *It*” as a subjective, transformational experience. This is the paradoxical “turd in the punchbowl” for male “spiritual” understanding. *It* cannot be conceptualized. *It* cannot be identified as a technique or integrated into one’s life as a reliable, repeatable component. *It* will not lend itself to categorization or serve as a “talking point” for cultural assessment. *It* is outside reality as even this 20% of men have come to interpret it for themselves.

Men are convinced that they live within a reality that they can, if not master, then at least appreciate for what it is and accept its conditions. This “facing the facts” or “living in the real world” is what they pride themselves on, never realizing that it is a complete illusion generated by their own deluded consciousness. Men believe that clarity of thought is one of their particular gifts. They are delighted with themselves on their fine discernment and appreciation of factual evidence. They can cut through the clutter of the irrelevant and unessential to sharply delineate what is substantive and irrefutably true. Their clarity is the result of their dependence on their left-brain function as the major processor of information, however, and the left brain’s function is specialized and limited. It processes linear and sequential thought and that not very rapidly. When compared to right-brain processing, the left brain is practically at a standstill. Estimates are that the left brain processes seven to fifteen bits of information per second. The right brain, on the other hand (or on the other side of the skull), processes *billions* of bits of information per second—and all of it simultaneously. The point is that

where male expertise is concerned, there isn't a lot happening at the deep end of the pool. When you don't know much, what you do know seems both utterly clear and compelling.

As a man (if you happen to be one who is reading this), try to assess your sense of reality in general, how you look at the world, how it feels to you, how you orient your awareness of what it presents to the core essence of your being. Savor the energy of it, the power, the pure, essential, constellating intensity of your manhood in relation to the world around you. Then, allow a moment of doubt, a fleeting suspicion that it all could be a lie, a trumped-up façade you have created to justify your inherent confusion and insecurity. Deep down, you know that nothing is certain, that there is far more to life than you can even begin to understand, that you are a castaway in unknown waters, all but lost at sea, trying to look and act as though you have lightheartedly decided to go for a swim, but terrified of the unknown depths beneath you and what they might hold. If ever you needed *It*, you need *It* now. Recollect everything you have ever heard about *It*, everything you have ever read about *It*, everything you have ever learned about *It* from lectures, seminars, workshops, documentaries, testimonials, and group discussions. Suddenly, you realize that none of that was *It*, can never be *It*, and that, as a man, you have never even come close to getting *It*. You were too busy facing facts and living in the real world, de-mystifying and debunking the paranormal and mystical, and perfecting the techniques of being a professional. And while you were doing all that, you were taking the sublime, creative, transformational potential of your being and cutting it to pieces. You were intentionally, systematically making sure that you didn't "get *It*" as it is in itself, the pure, raw experience of *It*. This self-engineered dead-end is the result of your having got the whole equation back-asswards. You cling to the delusion that your cognizance, your directive assessment of the world is *prior* to *It*, and therefore that *It* cannot act except by your leave. You assume that nothing outside your acknowledged, familiar, stabilizing interaction with "reality" can alter your sense of self-in-the-world because you haven't allowed for anything outside of it, especially anything that existed *before* you could name it, categorize it, and file it in your male-outlook inventory. You were so busy playing in your personal sandbox that you failed to notice anything beyond its enclosure, and you certainly never asked yourself, "Where did all this sand come from?"

Your only chance to get out of the sandbox is when the sandbox falls apart and the sand spills out into unknown territory. Suddenly, the boundaries are gone, the unthinkable has happened, and you want your mommy. Suddenly, you have no place, no secure position, no recognizable location from which to cut *It* to pieces. *It* has invaded your space and become all, at once everywhere and nowhere. You have no safe context in which to play with *It* as you did with all your other toys. Now *It* is about to play with *you*. You have unknowingly fallen into a state of grace. All sense of self-determination has evaporated. It is a full retreat, an abandonment, not just of control, but of any inclination toward the semblance of control. It is total freedom.

Remember the athlete who is suddenly “in the zone”? He is there because of abandonment, because he surrendered to *It* and allowed *It* to direct his actions. He could only prepare his receptiveness for *It* and, at the proper moment, submit to *Its* inspiration. He allowed for the expansion of his being into a transcendental awareness. This is never typical guy stuff. *It* happens, but *It* is not something men consciously seek. For most men, to acknowledge the experience would amount to declaring publicly that they had been abducted by aliens. To do so would be to give up a vital element of their masculine identity, in effect, to be caught playing with dolls.

But then there is that final 5 percent—the men who do “get *It*”. These are the men who know *It* first-hand, who respect and foster *It* as a cherished dynamic of their being. They, of course, don’t “fit in” to the conventional masculine mystique. They betray their birthright. They have tasted strange waters and travelled in forbidden lands. There is an aura of the uncanny about them. The men who don’t “get *It*” sense that those who do are not to be trusted. They live in unauthorized dimensions. They have placed increasing reliance on an absolute trust in the unknown and surrendered with complete conviction to something they can’t name. As Richard and Iona Miller have noted in their book, *The Modern Alchemist*, “To surrender requires a receptive, feminine attitude, and a matrix for transformation strong enough to endure the unknown. Then, you may harmonize spirituality and instinct.” The men who “get *It*” have achieved that harmony. They are “in the zone”—and not by accident. They know the source of their power.

Women instinctively “get *It*”. They may not try to articulate *It* as men are inclined to do, but *It* is an essential part of their femininity. Despite their outward attempts to compete with men on men’s terms, they have not been able to cut *It* to pieces in the masculine way. There is too much bleed-through from the right hemisphere of their brains. Their awareness flows too much from their hearts. They sense that “reality” is essentially paranormal and discontinuous. They feel the interrelationship of parallel dimensions. They are attuned to the “flicker” of a back-and-forth existence between worlds. Until most recently, they have been dominated and bullied by the fiercely single vision of men. They know best that most men don’t “get *It*”, and they suffer most from its consequences. To “get *It*” is to have trust that all is ultimately well and perfect just as it is. To “get *It*” is to draw the deepest knowledge from the heart rather than the brain.

Women can be misled. They can be duped and deceived. They can be bitter and angry, manipulative and vindictive, cruel and destructive, but they always remain betwixt and between. They are at home with ambiguity. This is conventionally thought of as “a woman’s right to change her mind” as if she exchanges one polarized certainty for another. Not so. She is not bound by facts as men see them. She does not rely on the stiffening stability of a male outlook inventory. She gives herself a lot more wiggle room than men do. And if she has her

aberrant episodes, consider the fact that she is usually living, either as a daughter or a sister, a girlfriend or a wife, with some Bozo who doesn't "get *It*".

This is not to say that there are no women who are natural-born predators, totally lacking in conscience, and who possess a criminal disposition. Both men and women qualify for these excesses in equal measure. What I am exploring here is the conventional norm of male and female character and behavior, but with attention to what is behind the norm, the deeper dimensions that frame the so-called gender gap, or "battle of the sexes". What is at issue here is differing states of being, different preferences and inclinations, not socially-defined identities. As far as the stereotypes are concerned, men are not *supposed* to "get *It*", and what *It* is that women "get" makes them overly emotional, flighty, and completely impractical. These are the roles created for us by social patterning. They are at odds and are meant to limit our freedom to be who we are. This is not an endorsement of role reversals. Being who we are involves being men and women as naturally as we are inclined to be. But with *It*, we can share common ground without limiting identities because *It* is beyond identities. Men and women have equal access to *It* when they stop playing codified gender roles. Men cannot define what a woman is or should be any more than women can define the nature of men. The prevailing habit of casting the opposite gender into roles, especially antagonistic ones, is pure delusion. We are a mystery to ourselves and as such are a mystery to others. We are oscillating possibilities.

Let's suppose that there is at least .01 percent of men who are reading this and who realize that it would be to their benefit to start "getting *It*". (Oh, hell, make it .03 percent; there is a bit of a shift going on.) What does a guy do? First lesson: stop thinking in terms of having to *do* something. *It* isn't something that gets done. *It* happens when something is un-done. Bruce Lee explains it this way: "The more aware you become, the more you shed from day to day what you have learned so that your mind is always fresh and uncontaminated by previous conditioning." A good beginning would be to allow yourself freshness of mind by living reactively, i.e., not living in a mental future of planning and expectation. Every detail, feature, or incident of daily experience can be an occasion for the miraculous if you don't, like Mussolini, set its limits ahead of time by recycling past experiences as the foundation of your reality. This recycling process is the source of the "same-old, same-old" quality of day-to-day experience. In fact, every possibility exists simultaneously prior to your choice of what that possibility could be. By not starting fresh every day and responding to whatever comes up in the moment with wonder and an openness to novelty and the unexpected, you are compressing your reality onto a two-dimensional plane of "been there; done that". You are eliminating any possibility that you will "get *It*".

Second lesson: stop looking at reality as if it exists independently of your perception of it. If you have adopted the "well, that's life" attitude, you have separated yourself from it. When you say, in moments of disappointment and resignation, "Life goes on", you are saying that you are the helpless participant in

a process that is indifferent to you, that life has an existence apart from yours and its own particular agenda. How can you know that? How would you prove it? How do you verify anything that exists outside of your own awareness? This would be a solipsism were it not for its trans-human nature. It is only your localized awareness that appears to be separate. Life doesn't happen to you apart from the way you look at it. Another dimension of your awareness is non-localized. The personal *you* is localized within it. The point is, stop taking everything so damned seriously. If you allow for the notion that you are pretending your life, then you can allow yourself to pretend it differently. It's your choice. Pretend that you "get *It*" and see what happens.

Lesson three: above all, drop your guard. Stop trying to process people, things, and events through your male outlook inventory. Reclaim your innocence. Your aim is to "float in totality" as Bruce Lee advises. "To have no technique," Lee says, means that "the unconscious is to be left alone to handle the situation." That's how you get into "the zone". That is how you "get *It*".

And stop taking everything literally. Nothing is what it seems. Everything is made up. Nothing is fixed or defined. Everything is figurative and symbolic. Knowing is a process that has no object. Anything is possible. As Patrick Harpur says in his book, *Daimonic Reality*, "Forgetting what we *think* is important may be a remembering of what *is* important." Let that be your operating principle—to forget what you think is important. Be vigilant in forgetting what you think is important so that your unconscious can be left alone to handle the situation. Get that, and you "get *It*". "To float in totality," Lee says, "to have no technique, is to have all technique." Without getting that, you can't "get *It*", and as a man, you are just SOL.