THE CENTERED MIND

What the Science of Working Memory Shows Us About the Nature of Human Thought

PETER CARRUTHERS

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS


The centered mind has long been one of our foremost empirically informed philosophers of mind. In this book, he presents a persuasive account of the mechanisms underlying conscious thought and reasoning. Carruthers integrates a wealth of empirical work in the cognitive sciences to develop a novel conception of working memory as the heart of conscious thought and reasoning. Philosophically sophisticated and steeped in psychology and neuroscience, The Centered Mind is essential reading for philosophers and cognitive scientists concerned with the nature of consciousness and the nature, powers, and limits of conscious reasoning.

—NEIL LEVY, Oxford Centre for Neuroethics/Florey Neuroscience Institute, University of Melbourne

Although the stream of consciousness seems intimately familiar to us, its underlying nature has been an enduring philosophical and psychological mystery. Carruthers presents a clear and deeply original solution to this mystery, drawing together a massive array of empirical research in support of an attractively simple sensory-based account of conscious thought. He takes bold positions on a wide range of related issues, including the line between mental activity and passivity, the relationship between working memory and reflective thought, and the gap between our intuitive impressions of our conscious states and the real contents of those states themselves. For those who are curious about these questions, The Centered Mind is a terrific and accessible guide; for those who are already specialists in conscious thought, this book sets the agenda of future research.

—JENNIFER MADD, University of Toronto

Jacket image: Study for Circles in the Circles, 1923, by Wassily Kandinsky.
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The Opacity of Mind
An Integrative Theory of Self-Knowledge
Peter Carruthers

The Architecture of the Mind
Massive Modularity and the Flexibility of Thought
Peter Carruthers

Consciousness
Essays from a Higher-Order Perspective
Peter Carruthers

PETER CARRUTHERS is Professor of Philosophy at the University of Maryland. He is the author of numerous articles and books in philosophy of mind and cognitive science, and has co-edited seven volumes of interdisciplinary essays in cognitive science.