

"I understand the mechanism of my own thinking. I know precisely how I know, and my understanding is recursive. I understand the infinite regress of this self-knowing, not by proceeding step by step endlessly, but by apprehending the limit. The nature of recursive cognition is clear to me. A new meaning of the term "self-aware."

Fiat logos. I know my mind in terms of a language more expressive than any I'd previously imagined. Like God creating order from chaos with an utterance, I make myself anew with this language. It is meta-self-descriptive and self-editing; not only can it describe thought, it can describe and modify its own operations as well, at all levels. What Gödel would have given to see this language, where modifying a statement causes the entire grammar to be adjusted.

With this language, I can see how my mind is operating. I don't pretend to see my own neurons firing; such claims belong to John Lilly and his LSD experiments of the sixties. What I can do is perceive the gestalts; I see the mental structures forming, interacting. I see myself thinking, and I see the equations that describe my thinking, and I see myself comprehending the equations, and I see how the equations describe their being comprehended.

I know how they make up my thoughts.

These thoughts."

— **Ted Chiang, *Stories of Your Life and Others* (Quote from "Understand")**