

What I Know and What I Don't Know



Send him mail. [f](#) [t](#)

“One Improved Unit” is an original bi-weekly column appearing every other Monday at Everything-Voluntary.com, by the founder and editor Skyler J. Collins. Archived columns can be found here. OIU-only RSS feed available here.

I’ve found myself getting frustrated lately due to assumptions I’ve made regarding my convictions, mostly religious. I’ve gotten ahead of myself and wound up confused and dissatisfied with where things were going. It’s time to take a step back and reassess my knowledge banks; to really dig into my mind and categorize everything (okay, a fraction of everything) into two lists: what I know, and what I don’t know.

What I Know

I know that I am alive. I know that I am a male member of my species. I know that I have been alive for almost 30 Earth years. I know that I have two parents and four siblings. I know how long each of them has been alive. I know that I attended every year of public school. I know that I was baptized into the Mormon Church after my eighth birthday. I know that I graduated from a public high school with a 3.0 average. I know that my first job was fast food. I know that I accepted the teachings of the Mormon Church and became worthy to enter their temples.

I know that my wife was born and raised in Mexico City. I know that she attended public school. I know that she moved to Chicago in 1999. I know that she moved to Salt Lake City in 2002. I know that we met in 2003, and got married in a Mormon temple in 2004. I know that we had our first child, a son, in 2005. I know that we had our second child, a daughter, in 2009. I know that we decided to unschool and parent our children peacefully in 2011. I know that I published my first book in 2012.

I know that I have never had an experience with the supernatural. I know a lot about the doctrines of the Mormon faith. I know a little about the larger world of religion. I know a lot about economics. I know a little about the larger world of science. I know a lot about libertarianism. I know a little about the larger world of philosophy.

What I Don't Know

I don't know all of the details of my conception and birth. I don't know all of the details of my early childhood. I don't know the details of my parents' and siblings' lives. I don't know the details of my wife's life. I don't know all of the details of my children's lives.

I don't know a lot about the larger world of religion. I don't know a lot about the larger world of science. I don't know a lot about the larger world of philosophy.

I don't know if God exists. I don't know if I am the spiritual offspring of deity, as the Mormon faith teaches. I don't know if Jesus Christ was the son of God, or that he was resurrected. I don't know if the Bible contains books written by true prophets of God, or containing true events. I don't know if the Book of Mormon is as Joseph Smith described it. I don't know if Joseph Smith was a true prophet of God, nor any of his supposed successors. I don't know if the Mormon Church is God's true church.

Final Thoughts

This was an exercise in mental clarification. There are many things that I know, mostly based on having experienced them; too many to fit into a short column. It would probably take volumes to list every single piece of knowledge I have, but even more, thousands or millions more, to list every single piece of knowledge I don't have. There's even knowledge, I'm sure, that I can't have, or don't have the ability to obtain (I can't experience things in *your* body, for example) or even comprehend. I think however, that most things I can know, one day, be them experiences or facts, natural or supernatural (keeping an open mind, of course). I don't know how long I will live, but I know that I can work on knowing more things, and hopefully my life won't end too soon.