

Unlocking the Power of Wonder

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Perhaps the most impactful revelation in perception that I have ever had was when I finally understood the scientific way of thinking. Because “scientific” often comes, understandably, with negative connotations, we could also substitute the words “rational” or “logical.” This revelation came fairly recently, even though I can see that I have been circling around it for decades.

This understanding is simple and actually obvious, but in practice, it is often difficult to follow. To be succinct, the message is: We do not have to understand what is true to know something isn't true. A corollary principle is that when a claim is made, the validity of that claim has to be investigated. Science, logic and rationality are based on the premise that clearing away what is not true does not depend on knowing what is true. You don't have to know why rain exists to know, through careful investigation, that it doesn't come from elephants peeing in the sky. This approach of discerning what isn't true is the path to truth, knowledge and, as I am going to argue, unlocking the power of wonder. In today's world, this path is also excruciatingly difficult.

We are surrounded by, almost swimming in, a mountain of claims. Viruses are real things and cause disease, the atom is made up of a nucleus and orbiting electrons, nuclear weapons pose a threat to humanity and life on earth, we are the most advanced civilization technologically ever to exist on earth, we are formed through evolution based on mutations in our code

known as DNA, ribosomes are the sites of protein synthesis in our cells, and on and on and on.

During the past few years, I have spent the better part of my waking hours, when I'm not gardening, cooking, or taking care of animals, investigating the validity and accuracy of these and many more. In each case, the clear findings are that the claims are not proven by the known evidence and facts. Often, it is easy to demonstrate the evidence. But then comes the key element, the questions that sabotage the power of wonder, often unspoken by the listener: "Well, what does cause Covid then? Why do I look like my father? Why didn't I learn about the pyramid builders in college?" and on and on. Then comes the disagreement, the accusations, the war-like mentality, and connection and understanding fall apart.

Why does this happen over and over again, particularly with loved ones, as well as members of one's "tribes" or groups? Although many possible answers to this important question exist, a simple answer is, we men and women haven't learned how to be in the unknowingness of life. Once we see that many taken-for-granted claims are, by and large, distorted fantasies, particularly regarding what passes for "science," we are left in the place of not knowing, and for many, for a variety of reasons, we feel profoundly uneasy. We wonder what the consequences of adopting this new understanding will be for us, both inwardly and outwardly. Will we be ostracized from society, kicked out of the clan or tribe, lose all connection with all our loved ones? Will we lose our job or livelihood, will we die – both literally and psychically? These are real questions, and we get scared. We lose our nerve and succumb to fear; we lose the ability to unlock the power of wonder.

To unlock the power of wonder is to see and investigate each claim, to search for the foundational principles or observations that will affirm or refute them. If the claim is that three dots on a page are in a straight line, you don't

need to consult experts, you need a ruler. Once you have verified the falsity of the claim, you allow yourself to stand in the unknowing stage, in the “I wonder, then, what is true?” Here is where the magic and power lie. It is as if the angelic or spiritual world sees your efforts, your courage, and then sends an insight that lights your way. Sometimes, a new understanding presents itself, or a new friend, living situation or job appears.

This path is a true practice in every sense of the word. We are not used to being rigorous in how we see the world, in examining core beliefs. It is painful, and it’s supposed to be. But it also brings a sense of freedom and sovereignty. Once you start on this path, my guess is you will begin to experience the joy and gratitude that is our birthright. We are free men and women. All we need to do is free our minds from delusions, and what opens up for us is profound. Try it, it’s fun.

Tom

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