

Truth - Lies - Beliefs - Opinions 2021

Why do people, lawyers, and politicians lie? Lying is the most expedient means to achieving an end goal. Lying exploits human ignorance pertaining to the truth about any subject. Lying is used to create myths or total untruths about a topic or even worse to influence people to make the wrong decisions in life.

My father was a pathological liar. He became so accustomed to lying that he would lie when the lie served absolutely no purpose. More puzzling to me... his lies were easily disproven. Thus leaving his family and friends scratching their heads to why he would lie and what reason my father had for his deceptions.

Living with my father throughout my lifetime I think I gained some insight into the mind of a compulsive liar and why someone chooses to tell lies. Believe it or not, their lying makes some sense, when you look at it through their eyes.

The number one reason people lie, when it just doesn't matter, is because they actually do think it matters. While everyone around them thinks it is an inconsequential issue, the liar believes it is critically important to him or what he wants.

Telling lies over and over repeatedly gave my father control. Time after time my father would tell lies because he was trying to control a situation and exert influence toward getting decisions or reactions he desperately wanted. The truth became inconvenient or inconsequential because the truth would not immediately get him the immediate result he wanted.

I caught my father in lie after lie throughout the years I knew him. I truly believe my father believed if he told the lie enough times it would somehow become the truth. On occasions I confronted him about his lies and why he was lying. He would simply tell another lie to cover his other lie or explode into total rage and anger; turn his back and walk away. My mother told me he would tell lie after lie because my father was worried about losing the respect of those around him and his family. Incredibly the exact opposite would happen with each lie my father told. This was the exact reason I lost respect for my father... his lies. My father wanted people to like him, to be impressed with him, and for others (outside of our family) to value him. In essence my father worried that telling the truth might lead others to reject him or to perceive him in a negative light or weak.

I remember when I was young and first watched the Disney movie Pinocchio. Pinocchio lied and with each lie the lies grew... as did his nose. Pinocchio would tell a little tiny lie, but then had to cover that lie with another lie. One lie after another until the lie became a huge unstoppable snowball going down the hill. I can say the same about my father. I would confront him about a little lie but he could not and would not ever admit *anything* because this admission would create the potential for his entire house of cards to come tumbling down. As I learned from my father... if a chronic liar admits to a single lie... he feels like he is admitting to being a liar... thus the person confronting him or others would have a reason to distrust him.

The very reason I started journaling as a teenager was because of my father. My journal helped me organize my thoughts, my daily events, my feelings about certain experiences retrievable for the future. My father had told me so many lies I actually started believing his lies. My journal was my source of the absolute Truth to refute my father's lies. Unfortunately my father's lies were not lies to him so in fact what I did to refute his lies did not matter.

Let me explain. Our memories of things that happen to us in life are quite unreliable. Our memories are influenced by many things that change over time and because of that our

memories are reconstructed each time we think about them. When asked about a past memory we feel pressure to recall a moment that may not be as crystal clear as we would like it to be... thus we feel pressure in reconstructing that memory, our memory becomes simply unreliable. Like myself trying to recall a person's name I hadn't seen for a long time or knew only briefly. I blurt out "Hi Dave!" when in reality his name was "Don". A chronic liar is like that... they feel so much pressure in the moment and because their memory is simply so unreliable... they say something they genuinely believe at that moment is the truth, but in truth it becomes a lie. In the case of my father his memory was constantly overwhelmed by stress due to his past lying. Because of his perpetual lying, my father seemed to be existing in a completely alternate world that conformed to his moment-by-moment beliefs and needs.

My father would tell a lie so convincingly that the person hearing his statement would actually believe he was telling the truth the majority of the time. A personal example: My father gave me a ring after my mother had passed away. He stated that the ring once upon a time belonged to his mother or my grandmother. It was a ruby ring worth thousands of dollars. The ring given to me was to match in value a gift he had given to my brother. Deep inside I did not believe him so I had the ring appraised by a reputable jeweler. The jeweler's exact statement was, "The ring was cosmetic junk and the box the ring was in was worth more than the ring." The jeweler felt so bad for me he never charged me for the appraisal. Afterwards I asked my father about what he had stated as fact concerning the ring not disclosing I had had the ring appraised. My father would tell me the exact story (lie) over and over again about the ring reinforcing his perceived Truth. My father had to have known his statements about the ring were in question by the very fact I was questioning him about it on multiple occasions. I had to wonder what item my father had actually given my brother that was equal to the thousand plus dollar ring I had received? I learned that liars hope they can make something come true by saying the lie over and over and they themselves believing has hard as they can in their own lie to justify what they say and to make others believe what they are saying. Unfortunately in our father-son relationship even when my father would tell the Truth I still believed it was a Lie.

I would like to think the majority of people are to the most part honest. I would like to believe that most people tell the truth most of the time. Our very capacity for language is built on an assumption of honesty. We speak words because the meaning of those words is a constant thing. If words and phrases of words were not constant the very idea of communicating factual ideas would be impossible. When individuals use words to deceive, to blatantly change facts, to create deceptions... we each need to ask ourselves, "Are you lying?" or "Why are you lying?" Keep in mind a liar is totally motivated by not being seen as a liar and this question paints them into a corner.

I have learned that understanding the motivations of a liar is valuable to one's sanity and perception of the truth. Because of my father I understood exactly what our former President Donald Trump was trying to accomplish with his lies. First we have to be honest with ourselves and seek out the truth. The truth is not scary and the world will not end when the truth comes out or is discovered.

Which brings me to the question do scientists lie? Scientist are driven by the quest for truth. There are lots of careers that make more money and include better working hours than that of a scientist. Scientists have the deepest motivation to uncover the truth and indisputable facts about the world and the universe we live in.

A scientist seeks scientific truths based on using a methodology called the scientific method. A true scientist who lies or tells an "untruth" on a topic would be contradicting their deepest goal and be discredited by their peers. Thus any scientist must.. has to be credible. That goal of credibility is upheld by competing for recognition from their scientific colleges and other

relevant communities of experts. Typically a scientist will publish their novel claims in journals and those journals are reviewed by their peers. This community of peers, scientists or doctors is relentless in trying to disprove or challenge new truths as false. When the finding can not be proven False: the finding then must be True. The basis of trusting science over conjecture or belief or opinions.

In this day of fake news and conspiracy theories, it is difficult for the average person to know the truth about anything. This is ironic when you consider that we live in an age of instant communication made possible by the most technological integration of science into our society that has ever happened.

So how do we know the truth?

It is a question that mankind has been asking for thousands of years and yet we still struggle for an answer. Our world is more polarized than ever before. As individuals we are diametrically opposed to each other on virtually every issue that matters. Climate change, immigration, Republican vs Democrat, racism, COVID inoculations, censorship — you name it. This polarization has become so extreme that we not only hold different opinions but also believe in “alternative facts... even outright lies” more than we do the truth. ***The one thing we can all agree on is our growing inability to agree.*** Yet... we tend to overlook the often-astounding level of agreement that does exist “between” the extremes. The opposite ends of the opinion spectrum are not separated by a gaping chasm of emptiness, but instead by a vast majority, an unspoken consensus of the Twitter-averse or Facebook-averse majority. Those that believe in science - truth and not the “alternative facts” which we are exposed to daily by any and most sources of media.

Take the climate crisis, for example. Often portrayed as the most divisive issue facing our world and humanity today. But in reality there is an almost unrivaled consensus about climate change. Between 80% and 90% of people worldwide acknowledge that global warming exists and is caused by, or partly caused by, humans activity. (Source: YouGov study of 30,000 people in 28 countries and regions.) In Europe 93% of the respondents believe that climate is a serious problem and 75% believe we are facing a “Climate Emergency”. (Source: EU Barometer and the Guardian, poll in 8 countries.) Even in the United States, where former President Trump and the Fox News have been relentlessly peddling climate skepticism and conspiracy, still 80% of U.S. citizens still regard climate change as a real threat to the country’s well-being and 60% even list it as a top concern. (Source: PEW Research Center.)

Opps here is a commercial break: Sean Hannity on the “Climate Hoax”.

All of what I wrote in the prior paragraph on climate change are only opinions or beliefs supported by research centers, study groups, talk show hosts and polling groups... not by actual scientific research directly dealing with the true facts of climate change. Were the statements “Alternative Facts or Lies?” No... only a general consensus of people’s beliefs due to our exposure to our modern world and inconclusive data gathering. ***Not absolute scientific truths.***

The paragraph I composed about Global Climate Change should have been the following: The Current warming trend of our Earth is unequivocally (a Fact not an Opinion or Belief) the result of human activity since the mid-20th century and is proceeding at a rate that is unprecedented over millennia. (Source: NASA Global Climate Change.) Earth-orbiting satellites and other technological advances have enabled scientists to see the big picture by collecting many different types of information about our planet and its climate on a global scale. The body of data (recorded facts reviewed by peer scientists) which have been collected over many years,

reveal the signals of a changing global climate. Examples: With recorded increased levels of heat-trapping carbon dioxide and other gases such as Freon there is a direct correlation to the global warming we are experiencing today. As greenhouse gases increase so is Earth's atmosphere warming in response. A scientific, proven Fact by the use of satellites providing direct, global observations that fossil fuel emissions are heating the Earth. NASA published this abstract in the AGU (Advanced Earth and Space Abstract) March 25, 2021 under the title Observational Evidence of Increasing Global Radiative Forcing.) 97% of climate scientists supported the NASA conclusion about Global Warming and its causes. I am only writing the essence or condensed FACT that was contained and backed up by scientific evidence researched by NASA.

Unfortunately we are taught from childhood we must believe everyone including our third grade teacher, our parents, our doctors, our policemen, and others in important societal positions about what is the TRUTH or FACT. What we are not taught is how to separate (Scientific) FACT from OPINION-BELIEFS from outright LIES.

I will use myself as a prime example. *At times we delude ourselves when it comes to our health and well-being. I passed out for about two to three minutes the first week in September of 2021. **My wife asked me if I was having a heart attack.** Of course I said NO! I was in denial of any facts. I had none! As I found out by soul searching my deepest thoughts from that night: "It takes a lot more information to make a person believe something you absolutely do not want to believe is possible!" My assessment of facts was flawed. I used only my OPINIONS or BELIEFS. Simply because I had not one Fact to base my Opinions on... in short I was Lying to myself. It took me another eight days before I was confronted with another reoccurrence of my chest pain and almost passing out. This time I did not delude myself when it came to my health and well-being. My wife's question from eight days prior echoed through my head. I admitted myself into Urgent Care. Urgent Care admitted me into Emergency Care via ambulance. Resulting in a deluge of OPINIONS from my attending Doctors. Opinions or assumptions from my description of my current condition and physical state. More important neither the doctors nor I had any Facts or direct evidence of what was wrong with me.*

*Doctors used the "Scientific Method" as means by which they "diagnosed my heart attack". First they assumed with no scientific evidence I was having a heart attack from my symptoms or my observations. Just in case scenario. At each step the staff gave me a COVID test which had nothing to do with my heart or did it? The first group of doctors gave me copious amounts of Aspirin, a tablet of nitroglycerin and an immediate chest X-Ray. Nothing conclusive was revealed from my chest X-Ray. I was then admitted into Intensive Care. Blood was drawn every four hours to see if had an enzyme called troponin. This enzyme goes into your blood soon after a heart attack and stays in your blood after other heart enzymes have gone back to normal. So for all intent and purposes the **Doctors were using a Scientific Fact** to base their "Opinion" that my heart muscle was not injured from a heart attack and my heart was getting enough oxygen. Next I had to stay overnight and fast with no liquids or food for at least 14 hours. My next test was a Nuclear Cardiology Scan where I was injected with a nuclear isotope into a vein so the scanning device could observe my heart in a resting state. A 30 minute scanning process... once it began. Then I was instructed to step onto a tread mill and get my heart rate up to 126 beats per minute for at least one minute. Immediately I was once again injected with the nuclear isotope. The second 30 minute scan was to view what parts of the blood were not flowing to the different parts of the heart. **Fact:** With this test a doctor can diagnose coronary heart disease and check for damaged or dead heart muscle tissue from a previous heart attack and assess how well my heart was pumping blood to the rest of my body. The highest score I could get was a 65%... my score was 65%. **My diagnosis of FACT was that the Stress Test***

did not detect any blockage in my heart arteries... BUT normal results do not rule out the possibility of a future heart attack due to the severe angina or chest pain I experienced twice and from me passing out. As the Doctor stated this is because a plaque can still rupture, form a clot and block an artery. **Fact:** I was monitored with an ECG or Electrocardiogram machine within ten minutes upon my arrival in the ICU. I was monitored with the EKG for the entirety of my stay in the ICU. **Another Fact... the ECG or EKG showed no signs of an irregular heart rhythm.** Finally my doctor scheduled me for a Cardiac Ultrasound to see if there was any damage to my heart due to my high blood pressure or hypertension. As explained to me after any cardiac episode some of the muscles of the heart may be weakened. The Cardiac Ultrasound would see or detect heart defects, heart valve problems, pumping strength or areas of the heart that were not operating correctly. **Fact: My heart "seemed" normal. Final Facts or Conclusions:** The doctor concluded that I had a non-cardiac event. Chest pain not caused by a heart attack or by heart disease. Doctors final thoughts from my tests were possibly for me to have my neck carotid arteries checked if I did in fact have another event of chest pain (angina) and/or if I passed out in the future... **emphasizing that my clinical problem was not a heart attack, but to treat it as if it was.** In addition the doctor stated that my angina events may be related to my extreme back pain or even from a virus. From the FACTS given to me from the Scientific testing... thanks to my Doctor's advise... **I have been treating my non cardiac event as if I had a heart attack.**

Where is this all leading? I was presented with FACTS. So, consciously or not, I have to be absolutely careful not to twist the FACTS. Trick myself into believing that the Facts are not relevant as they were presented to me in the hospital. My hospital room mate in the ICU dismissed the FACTS presented to him by the Doctors that had operated on his heart the night before I was admitted. He dismissed the Doctor's findings by stating to Doctor's face, "You fucking doctors are all idiots. I am going home today whether you like it or not!" The Doctor responded that if Jim didn't have the final operation to completely correct his heart attack he had a good chance of passing away at home if released from the ICU. My room mate was released from the hospital with a note written on his chart. "Patient refused further life-saving treatment." Jim, my roommate, was in complete denial of the FACTS presented to him by his doctors. Jim didn't even try to form a correct OPINION about his diagnosis. Instead Jim simply LIED to himself and had himself released from the hospital about an hour before I was released. Jim then went home to smoke his cigarettes and to resume his life as an alcoholic and probably die as a result of his action just as the Doctor expressed.

"A MAN WITH A CONVICTION is a hard man to change. Tell him you disagree and he turns away. Show him FACTS or figures and he questions your sources. Appeal to logic and he fails to see your point." — **Leon Festinger**, Stanford University psychologist

People simply reject the validity of scientific Truths (any Truth) because a conclusion of the Truth contradicts their deeply held view-belief-opinion and thus people ignore the inherent risks they are confronted with... even if it will cost them their lives. **I think that the most dangerous thing in the world is a person telling the Truth.. even more dangerous are the lies we tell ourselves listening to that person's Truths to justify our Opinions-Beliefs.**

Political ads, Red States vs Blue States, fears about COVID-19 shots, ideologies, anti-vaccine groups, politicians, worldviews, fake authorities and the list can go on of opinionators whom all have vested interests in trying to motivate each of us to accept or reject Scientific Truths over Lies and Opinions-Beliefs. An Example: In the 1940s and 1950s the use of seatbelts in vehicles aroused heated debates despite scientific research showing FACT on how seatbelts were so valuable in saving lives. Even with seatbelt laws in effect people used LIES and OPINIONS to justify their not using a seatbelt. I can use the same arguments from the seatbelt debate for

individuals taking one of the three types of Scientifically TESTED COVID shots. Seatbelts will not prevent an accident, but the majority of the time your seatbelt will save your life. The COVID-19 vaccine will not prevent you from getting infected from the COVID virus but it gives you a much better chance of saving your life by protecting you from experiencing more severe symptoms of the virus. A seatbelt does not give you a license to drive recklessly... you must still follow all safety precautions to decrease the chances of you getting into an accident. After getting your COVID-19 shot(s)... your being vaccinated does not mean you should stop wearing a mask and social distancing. Point being every opinion not based on Scientific Fact for NOT wearing a seatbelt or for NOT taking a COVID shot can be refuted easily.

Let me go through the top few MYTHS or LIES related to COVID-19 vaccines in the U.S.

1. MYTH-LIE: Young adults do not need to get vaccinated.
SCIENTIFIC TRUTH: Young people rarely get seriously ill with COVID-19 (some have died after contracting the virus) but can be asymptomatic and spread it to others who may die from exposure.
2. MYTH-LIE: The vaccine will give you COVID.
SCIENTIFIC TRUTH: Vaccines do not contain any live virus, thus making this impossible.
3. MYTH-LIE: The vaccine is unsafe because it was rushed into production.
SCIENTIFIC TRUTH: The COVID vaccine(s) went through every step from its creation, to the testing phase, to the manufacturing phase under Scientific Testing or Methodology. 60,000 people volunteered and participated in clinical trials determining the vaccines efficacy. As of September 24, 2021 388 million successful COVID shot have been administered in the United States with few rare side effects and minimal deaths due to the shot.
4. MYTH-LIE: Vaccines cause severe side effects.
SCIENTIFIC TRUTH: The COVID vaccine has very few side effects. The most common is a sore arm and a number of people get fevers, muscle aches, and fatigue that can last a few days.
5. MYTH-LIE: The vaccine isn't safe, and we don't know what is in it.
SCIENTIFIC TRUTH: Scientist and researchers know exactly what is in the COVID vaccine. A messenger RNA segment to stimulate your immune system to combat the COVID virus. The vaccine does not contain a microchip. The vaccine does not contain a live virus. The mRNA does not affect a person's DNA by cutting and splicing into it to cause mutations. The vaccine does not cause female infertility. The vaccine does not cause a man's testicles to swell and fall off. And metallic objects will not stick or adhere to the COVID vaccine injection site.

My Conclusion: If you would have asked me this question - "How do you change a mind?" - twenty-years ago, I would have given you this answer. As a former science teacher who taught the Scientific Method to my students I would tell you to rely on SCIENTIFIC FACTS and the scientific statistics and irrefutable data that back up the Facts and Data. After many discussions with my family and friends I have learned that issuing FACTS - SCIENTIFIC FACTS None-the-Less - to prove Global Warming is real, Trump really did lie to us as our President, ivermectin does not cure COVID, January 6, 2020 really was an insurrection, we did go to the moon, Trump did lose the U.S. Presidential election, that there is no scientific evidence of hydroxychloroquine ever preventing a person from contracting or developing or being cured of COVID-19... all are examples of provable Scientific FACTS. Please reference the scientific journals and data that confirm these FACTS.

But I am learning if Facts don't work, how do you ever change a mind - whether it is your own or your father's or a family member or your neighbor? We never want to admit to our mistakes. We will twist ourselves into positions that even a seasoned yoga master can't obtain to avoid admitting we were wrong using our opinion, lies and myths to justify our beliefs. I learned this very fact from my father. Here is the problem as I see it. When your beliefs are entwined with your identity, changing your mind means changing your identity. That is a really hard sell using FACTS which makes everything personal in what you believe about yourself or your family. The problem is that we chose to believe alternative facts, myths, others opinions if they support our pre-existing beliefs. If you doubt me think of the powers of confirmation we expose ourselves to on a daily basis. Fox News, CNN, NBC News, Rush Limbaugh, the doctor that agrees with our opinion...etc. Think back the last time you Googled a question. Did you meticulously read each link to get a broad objective picture? Did you see if the link was backed by Scientific Fact or Data or was it just an opinion? Was the source you used even credible? Or did you simply skim through the links looking for the page that confirms what you already believed was true? And let's face it, you will always find that page that supports your position or that person that agrees with you or that news program on TV that supports your belief in life if you willing to click through to Page 12 on Google or click the channel button enough times. Arguments and discussions are just that. If someone disagrees with you, it's not because they are wrong, and you are right. It is because they believe something different from you. Why do they believe differently? Because of what they expose themselves to in their daily lives whether it be LIES, OPINIONS, or THE TRUTH.

Our perspectives shape our Truths. You and I could read the same book, all the same words and the same notes from the same author, but come to different conclusions about what the book's most important message is — all because of our different experiences we each have in life. Because no one else has lived your exact life, no one will ever share your exact perspective.

Let me give you a direct example of perspectives: A majority of the healthcare professionals, including pharmacists and hospital administrators, who spoke in Wednesday's Senate Medical Affairs Meeting on August 30, 2021 stated they do not prescribe Ivermectin and Hydroxychloroquine to fight COVID-19, because current research and evidence does not show the two drugs to be effective from clinical data and trials. **** Fourteen doctors who attended the meeting said otherwise and vouched for the medicines using this reasoning or perspective. In one doctor's opinion was: *Why not use the two drugs... giving the families of the patients the satisfaction that the doctor or the medical professional has done everything and used everything possible to save the family members life, even though as a doctor he knew it will not affect the life or death out-come of the patient.* Another doctor stated he felt bullied to administer the drugs by family members due to their interpretation of Alternative Facts and misinformation given to the family members by various media groups. Dr. Cook stated to the Senate Medical Affairs Committee this, "But if 85 of those 100 patients will survive with normal COVID treatment, in essence those 85 people who get COVID are going to do okay anyway, then I can tell them here— take this chocolate bar (Ivermectin or Hydroxychloroquine) and give each of those 100 people a chocolate bar, and then 85 of them are going to think that chocolate bar made their COVID better... it is the way the patient thinks due to the misinformation exposure from today's media."

This doesn't mean you shouldn't try to understand other perspectives. In fact, the only way to get to some version of a whole truth is by piecing together other points of view and trying to surround your thoughts with what sounds right or Truthful to you and what does make total sense. Then see if you can back up your Beliefs-Opinions with published Scientific Truths.

Accept the fact that you'll often will have to do a lot work to piece together the Truth. And there is always the possibility you will fail in finding that Truth! That makes the task even harder because we do not like to spending a lot time to do that. So Please be open to other's Truths and get over the need to always be right or having to be right. Learn the power of perspective, and challenge what you think you know. Look for the TRUTH!

My heart doctor at Deaconess and I discussed COVID patients. She was in amazement of all the myths and outlandish reasons people decide not to have the COVID vaccine. What perplexed her most was if the individual decides to go against scientific facts concerning the COVID vaccine... then why is it those myth believers are the first to seek medical treatment for COVID? Emphasizing her dismay about people believing in "bullshit"; she shared this story with me. ***"Losing a loved one in the midst of this pandemic is a traumatic experience. If we lose someone suddenly, or if we were not able to be with them while they were dying, our grief responses are complicated by the traumatic nature of the loss. Survivors, especially those survivors who are parents of children, feel overwhelmed with thoughts of guilt over their loved one's death, especially if it is their child... their creation... their loved son or daughter. The emotional distress along with their other emotions of grief, including feelings of loss, emptiness, disbelief and distrust in other people (Doctors and vaccines) pale in comparison to the saddening emotion they experience when they realize it all could have been prevented with their taking of the COVID shot and possibly not sharing their disease with their children. All because the parents chose to believe in their own SELF OPINION, MYTH-LIES, and did not trust the FACTS-TRUTH presented to them by Science about COVID-19."***

In the end it takes work, courage and determination to see the TRUTH instead of the convenience of believing in Opinions, Myths and Lies. I learned this life lesson from my father.

Love Papi - September 24, 2021

