

### **Are All Lies Malicious?**

If a religion's leaders teach doctrines that contradict one another...

If the flock they guide is easy prey to religious stupidity and superstition ....

If the religion has divinely revealed books that it cherry-picks from ....

If the religion ignores science and does not urge people to investigate in case the religion is not the truth....

If the religion shows no sign of being any better than atheists and secularists and witches ....

When there is plenty of examples of religious charmers suffering for lies - eg Joseph Smith of the Mormons ...

THE RELIGION IS BASED ON DELIBERATE LIES. What else would we be supposed to think?

It is said that lying is bad for it opposes the truth and what is real. It leads to people being put at risk of being hurt. If the truth is distorted that gives you a distorted view of the world and what has happened. If a lie does not hurt the person you lie to, its leads to problems for other people. It can lead to the truth being buried forever.

The Liar has an advantage over the person they lie to. Thus it is safe to assume that because of this advantage, lying takes place a lot more then it would if liars were not getting away with it.

We have a truth bias - we tend to believe what we are told. Why is that? Here's why.

People do not have the information or the skills to check out most of the things they are told every day.

We tend to be lazy about thinking.

Having evidence that you are lied to is not necessarily the same as being able to prove it. There will always be doubt and that boosts the amount of lying that goes on.

People tend to only expose themselves to information that fits or supports what they want to believe.

Most of the things we are told are not that important. If your friend lies about having had a shower this morning, who cares?

We are biased towards believing others DESPITE the fact that we engage in deception frequently. We put on a fake smile. We wear clothes to make us look deceptively good. We lie a lot to ourselves and to others.

Nature has programmed us to basically conform to what the people we are close to and live among want of us. We won't always conform but generally we will. Thus we will generally tend to believe what we are told.

We are not all programmed to conform to the same extent. And the degree of success the programming has for me can vary from year to year.

People want to believe the lies they are told that flatter them. They want an inflated ego - but such an ego leads to fear. There will be feelings of vulnerability in the face of anything that threatens to expose the facade.

People want to believe those who lie to them that they have the solution to their problems.

They do not have the time to investigate.

Its unrealistic to expect people to even want to check out most things they are told.

The person may choose to forget that they were lied to.

We tend to think that people only lie for some tangible benefit - we forget that lying is mostly engaged in by people seeking some psychological benefit. This error encourages us to rationalise it when a person lies to us. "I must have misunderstood. He had no reason to lie to me. He didn't do it for money."

If we think we know somebody is showing the signs of being a liar, we only think or assume it. We cannot be really sure for we have made mistakes in trying to read people. The liar has the advantage there too. If the liar has the disadvantage, it will not last. We will soon learn that we cannot detect a liar from their behaviour.

We don't have much of a chance to play, "Spot the liar!"

People who are influenced by the liberal and relativist view, "Each person has his or her own truth. If you believe something its true for you," will develop weaknesses in perceiving that something is a lie even if it seems obvious that it is. And there is heavy pressure on people these days to claim that nobody has a right to tell anybody else they are wrong or what they said was false.

People who are bullied by those who say, "Do not judge", will be taken in more easily by liars.

So the liar has an advantage. The liar is not that likely to get caught out. And even if he or she is, there could be a way for him or her to do one of the following,

# Make the victim of the lie think it was a misunderstanding.

# Downplay the lie or its nastiness or importance. People tend to think they are not liars when they lie spontaneously or as a knee-jerk reaction. They may think that of others too.

# Make people unable to make up their minds if it was a lie or not.

# Make the person lied to insecure and forgiving by making them see they tell lies too.

# The liar will feel empowered if he blames his victim for being deceived. People tend to think that if something bad has happened to them that they must blame themselves, "What could I have done differently to avoid that?" The liar may try to take advantage of that.

The person who lies about unrepeatable events such as miracles has the strongest Liar's Advantage of all.

Most people will feel a little bad at least about telling a lie.

If they believe in God, they have something additional to feel bad about. They have to feel bad about doing what he does not approve of.

A lie always intends to harm.

It intends to hurt the truth. To hurt truth is to hurt people.

We hear that some people do not lie to hurt people but because they are afraid and insecure. That is still hurting others - it is trying to hurt a person because you don't feel good about yourself. It suggests that you do not trust them and you see them as posing some danger to you.

People may ask, "Do I look good?" To spare their feelings you will tell them they do. Why not respond that they look fine? That is a sensitive way to tell them that they could do with improving.

People ask the question feeling that they want to be reassured and told they look good when they don't look that good.

From this we see,

They want to be fooled.

They want to make you at least partly responsible for any bother they will get into over your lie.

They want to deceive themselves - it is illogical to seek comfort in getting somebody to pay you a false compliment.

They don't worry enough that they are encouraging you to feel guilty about the lie.

They want to be insulted by you implicitly, "You don't have the backbone to hear the truth."

They don't want you to tell the truth diplomatically.

If you tell people exactly what you think of them all the time, you will be considered to be a jerk. This is unfair for people should be big enough to face the truth. Thus society bullies people to lie. Those who want reassurance and not the truth are accessories to that bullying and participants.

Being lied to is never nice but do we think its nice to be told the truth all the time? We do not. But what is worse? At least with the truth we can learn and get tougher. So being told the truth though unpleasant is better than being lied to. And being told the truth in a non-confrontational way is fine.

If lying were eradicated we would have a very different world. There would be less on the internet - most web-pages are laden with lies. There would be no spam emails. There would be no anti-ageing creams advertised all the time that do not work. It would be a less interesting world. There would be no exaggerating. The world, despite the badness of lying, would not function without lies.

A lie is bad enough when told by an unbeliever. His intention to some degree is to hurt people. But for a believer in God its worse. The person tries to hurt the God of truth who forbids all lying. And if God is so perfect, it follows that we should tell the truth to please him. He deserves it. And if people are hurt by the truth that is a necessary evil for God comes first.

The lie may spare the feelings of the other person. It makes you selfish in the sense that you are telling it to avoid social inconvenience. And if we tell ourselves we are lying for the sake of the other person we are lying to ourselves. And to take away from another his or her chance to develop a thicker skin is always selfish.

There is no way you can be sure that a person talking to you is really telling you the truth. It is said that we trust people in spite of knowing this.

People who think they are really good at something say tennis will lie to themselves as follows when they fuck up a game: "I am a good tennis player. I was just unlucky."

Religious people think God looks after them. When disaster strikes, they reason, "God is taking excellent care of me. I was just unlucky." It is superstitious to think like that. If God is really that powerful, luck does not exist.

People think that if the other person does not make eye contact while talking that they are lying. But the person may simply be tired or uncomfortable. We can all think of times when somebody behaved that way and was telling us the truth. What if a person does have things they do when they are lying, eg pulling an earlobe? They may know they do that and they may use that to manipulate you. If they tell you something they don't want you to believe, they can manipulate you by pulling the earlobe.

Is it true that you can lie to, say, your lover because you are committed to him or her? No. You lie in spite of your commitment. You prevent your lover from knowing the real you every time you lie.

We love self-deception. Its good training to help us deceive others. The best liar temporarily feels as if he believes his lie and that makes it more convincing to the victim. The best liar must self-deceive and believe his own lie.

Cognitive dissonance is when we hold two contradictory things to be true and have to change how we think about at least one of them to reconcile the contradiction.

If you lie to yourself, you are contradicting yourself. You know what the truth is and you seem to believe that it is wrong. How can this be done? Psychology answers that it is done through cognitive dissonance. When you believe two contradictory things, what you do is you alter one or both of your beliefs to make the competing beliefs fit together better. Suppose a person has the urge to drink a lot. He knows he will enjoy giving in. He knows as well that in a few hours, it will trigger awful exhaustion and depression. But he still drinks. He does not alter his knowledge that he will enjoy giving in. What he alters is his knowledge of the bad consequences. He tells himself that maybe this once the after-effects will not be that bad. Or he may lie to himself saying, "This will be the last time I ever drink so the bad effects don't matter that much in that context."

When persons win an amazing prize, a prize to die for, they may feel that they got it because they did something good and its a reward. This is cognitive dissonance because they got it by chance and they know it and don't want to see that.

We know that driving a car is increasing the risk of us dying in a crash. But we still do it. We turn off the reality. It has been found that depressed people can be extremely realistic about life and their own shortcomings. Self-deception can comfort us. Many depressed people are rational and see how awful things are in the world. The rest of us go around pretending that its not that bad. Depressive realism is an interesting phenomenon.

The thought that we are not lied to much is comforting. We deceive ourselves into failing to see how many lies we are told daily.