

Conflicting beliefs

Here is an example of how a person's beliefs can conflict with one another.

#You may believe that faith in God helps people become happy.

#You believe that it is right to be happy.

#You believe that you want to be happy too.

#If you believe science proves God to be a delusion, then it follows that its wrong to promote the doctrine.

How do you reconcile all those beliefs? There is a conflict between them. For example, the rightness of happiness contradicts the fact that it is wrong to promote belief in God. Also, it is not necessarily right to be happy if God exists for he might have reasons for sending you unhappiness. The beliefs need to be fitted together. How?

One thing is for sure, you can't risk being wrong over being happy.

But what if you believed

#It is wrong to debunk God for it will make people unhappy.

If you think you have all these beliefs it does not follow that you really do have all of them. If your beliefs contradict one another it follows that one of them at least must be an assumption not a belief.

If we believe in God and consider it essential for happiness then it follows that the real God for us is our belief in God! We are then atheists with benefits (assuming happiness really is impossible without belief in God!)

Socrates had an outstanding way of handling people who believed absurd things. He questioned them until they admitted believing that they would not have wanted to admit. Then when they said, "I don't believe that rubbish," he was able to tell them that they had just said they did. Was his approach manipulative? No - it only helped unravel their thinking until the contradictions became apparent. What is manipulative is to leave people in their incoherent belief system.