

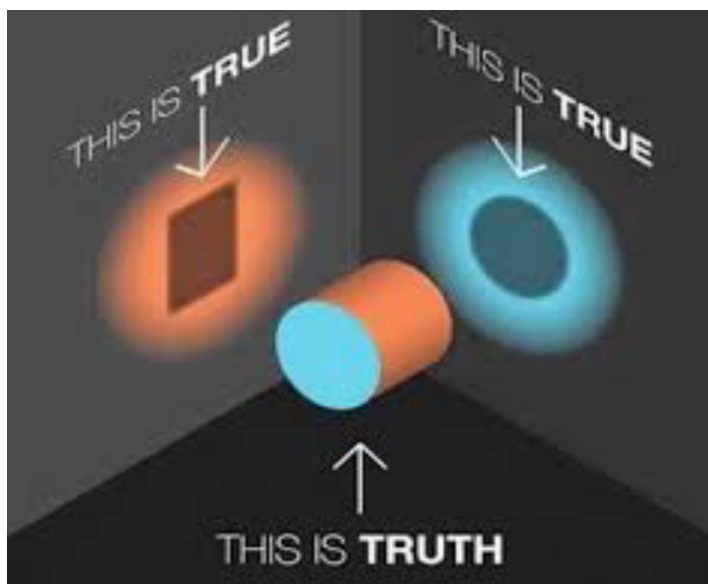
# Or is it?

**"I believe that one of the best ways of getting at truth is reflecting with others who have opposing views and who share your interest in finding the truth rather than being proven right"**

Ray Dalio Author of Principles

Truth definition August 2018 *Robin Yourston*

**Purpose of this document:-** To enhance my understanding of truth and help others enhance their understanding of truth, so that we can make better decisions in our lives”



**Truth** *Noun*:- An accurate representation of reality at this time, based on the ‘Beliefs / Lenses / Perspectives’ (built through learning and experience), used to understand it.

- It may take the understanding of many representations / perspectives of what is ‘True’, to get the best representation of Truth (reality).
- Cognitive biases (*see below*) will distort representations and, time passing, experience may modify them.

There will be a best representation of '**my**' truth built from **what is true for me**, which may or may not be aware of '**their**' truth, built from **what is true for them**.

**'Our'** truth will only be created when the other perspectives have been assimilated.

The **Believability** of those you share perspectives with, is key in understanding what the Truth is.

“Believable people are those who have repeatedly and successfully accomplished the thing in question — who have a strong track record with at least three successes — and have great explanations of their approach when probed”. Ray Dalio

Please note also, that the True – Truth diagram above is not the reality. It is a representation

## **Know your biases**

A host of **unconscious cognitive biases influence much of your thinking and decision-making**. They evolved to help our ancestors act fast and effectively, but these days they often trip us up. Knowing how cognitive biases shape your thinking is the first step to consciously controlling them. Here are some to look out for, become aware of:-

*Anchoring* – Focusing on one factor, often the first encountered, when making a decision

*Clustering illusion* – Seeing phantom patterns in random events

*Confirmation bias* – Preferentially seeking and recalling information that confirms your preconceptions, reaffirming the belief held, “I am right”

*Attentional Bias* — This is the tendency to pay attention to some things while simultaneously ignoring others. When making a decision on which car to buy, you may pay attention to the look and feel of the exterior and interior, but ignore the safety record and gas mileage.

*Congruence bias* – Testing ideas by seeking evidence that supports rather than refutes them

*False Consensus Effect* — This is the tendency to overestimate how much other people agree with you.

*Endowment effect* – Valuing things more highly simply because they belong to you

*Fundamental attribution error* – Attributing people’s behaviours to their personality, not the situation

*Halo Effect* — Your overall impression of a person influences how you feel and think about his or her character. This especially applies to physical attractiveness influencing how you rate their other qualities

*Functional Fixedness* — This is the tendency to see objects as only working in a particular way. If you don't have a hammer, you never consider that a big wrench can also be used to drive a nail into the wall. This could extend to people's functions, such as not realising a personal assistant has skills to be in a leadership role.

*Gambler’s fallacy* – Believing that past random events alter the likelihood of future ones

*Hyperbolic discounting* – Overvaluing what’s available now relative to what you can have later

*In-group bias* – Overestimating the abilities and values of your own group relative to others

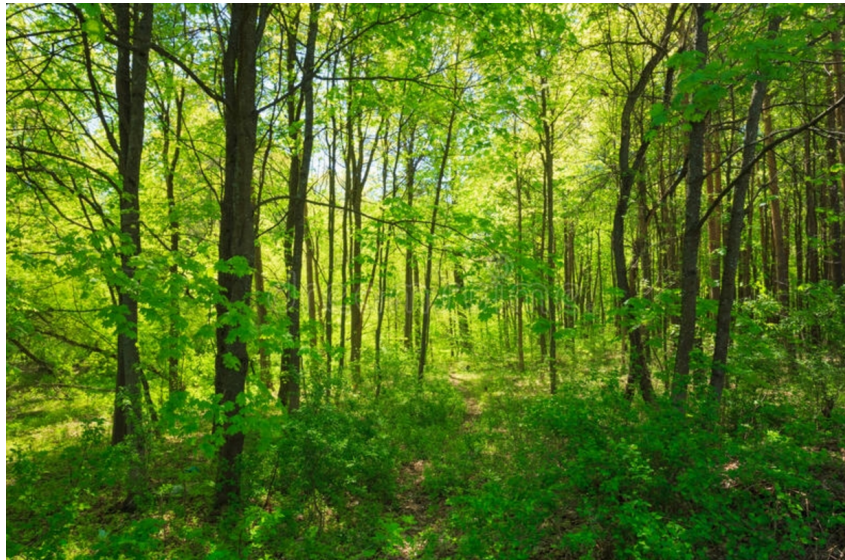
*Negativity bias* – Paying more attention to bad news and feedback than good

*Projection bias* – Assuming that most people think like you and hold the same beliefs

*Status quo bias* – Favouring decisions that will leave things just as they are

In addition, we all have our own implicit biases: prejudices about things like race and gender that affect our judgements of others.

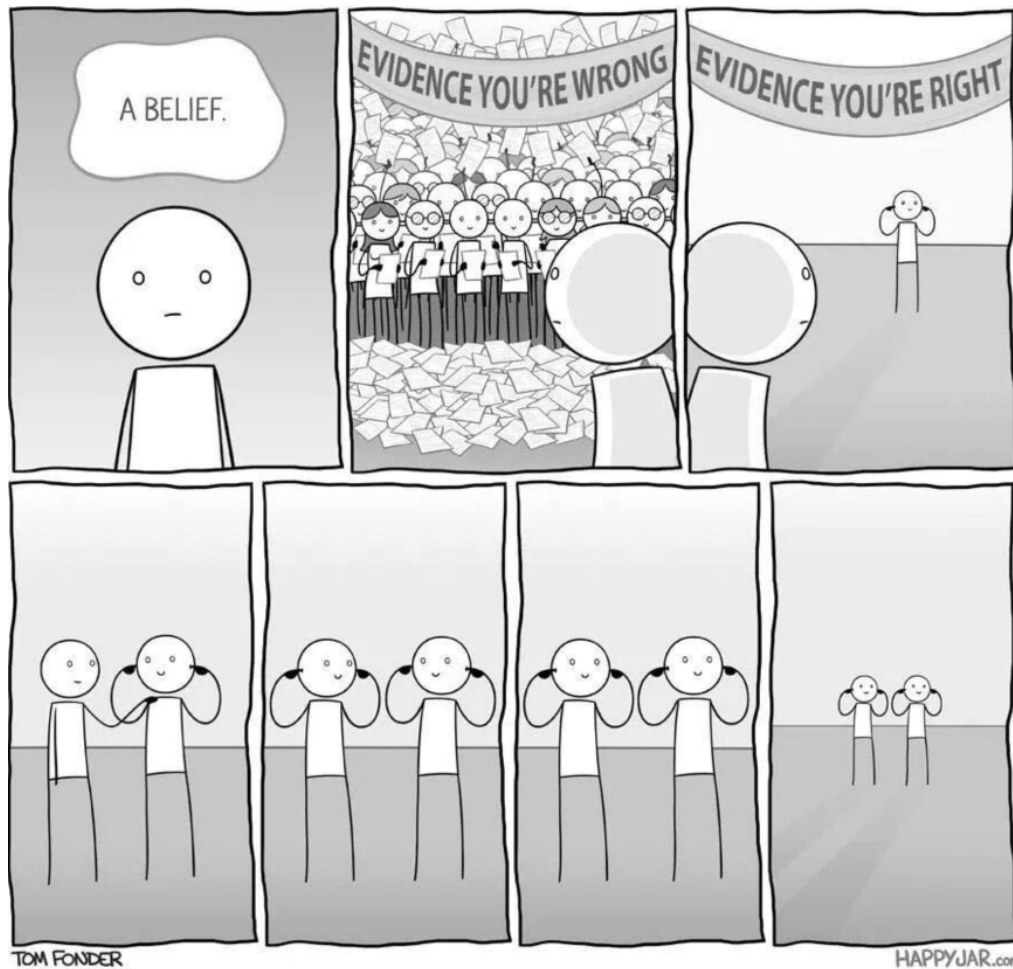
Perspective is key and a whole / inclusive perspective illuminating **'the truth about reality'** will form a much more comprehensive understanding, from which to make decisions.



A Landowner had a large forest and wanted to understand exactly what it was she owned, so she asked a Forester, an Accountant and an Artist to spend time in the forest and then report back. The Forester reported about the diversity of trees and growth of the forest, about how the Landowner would have to get the brushwood cleared to prevent fire, and allow the young saplings to emerge and grow to keep the forest sustainable. The Accountant reported on how much money could be made by cutting down the trees and selling them, then replacing those trees with quick growing fir trees, that would create a great return on investment. Finally the Artist reported back on what a beautiful place the forest was, how the light and colours would constantly change, oh and the shapes are amazing, also constantly shifting, she said, I would never tire of that environment and its beauty would be a constant challenge for me to capture. Three very different perspectives on the forest, all 'true' of course and they are not the reality of the forest. They can of course be used together to create a more comprehensive representation of reality, much broader than one perspective alone and still it will not be the reality of the forest. It will be a representation of it, in the way that a menu is not the reality of the food. It is a piece of card / paper / words on a screen.

In Neuro Linguistic Programming (NLP) there is a presupposition, "We map reality according to our beliefs; the map is not the territory"





1. I have a belief
2. A lot of evidence counter to my belief
3. Someone agreeing with me
4. I connect with them
5. We link around our commonly held belief
6. 'Yep we are right!'(once you hold a belief, you will always find evidence to back it up, otherwise it would be stupid to hold the belief and I am not stupid)
7. We are together on this and certain.



*Perhaps a time is coming when we will listen to each others' perspectives and together, seek Truth.*