

Belief, Faith and Instinct: re-defining the transitions from fearful resistance to sensitive reality.

In this article I want to explore these three terms: belief, faith and instinct and see how all of these enter our lives in many ways. I will try to really look at what we mean when we say these things. Many people will use faith and belief interchangeably, but I want to make a clear distinction between the two terms and in this article I will qualify why.

Belief:

Belief can mean many things to many people. In this article I am making the following definition about belief. I feel that belief is primarily mind-based. It is a situation where a person or group has an intellectual reason or argument to believe something to be true. In a sense it is based in the mind. It can be logical to some and that same logic can seem totally illogical to others and as a result it is something that can move within a person's life. Belief can shift from religion to science, from politics to anti-politics, from science to religion, from one set of rules to another. A convincing argument can change a person's belief, it can alter their way of doing things on a day to day basis because they have a belief or don't. It can make people do extraordinarily unnatural things. It often has a plan of action or "way". Interestingly, belief dies when the brain does, or belief can be knocked out, for example in deep sleep, in unconsciousness and in death, belief cannot be held. A person can forget their name (i.e. belief in them having a name), in certain illnesses where brain damage is present a person may totally lose all their previously-held beliefs and become someone completely different to those around them. All these things are held within the expression of "belief". Belief in one thing or another is what takes up most of our time as humans, whether it is belief in a partner's fidelity and adherence to "me", or belief in the progress of the modern age, or belief in the total annihilation of the human race due to its mad behaviour...all of this is a belief. Also belief is personal and held onto by the individual, even if it is within a group, each individual is "responsible/ accountable for their own beliefs". Science and religion are exactly the same on this scale, both are belief systems that are convinced by themselves...except that religion sometimes has another trick up its sleeve....Faith.

Faith:

Faith is often considered as being connected with religion, but actually it has no religious connotation. It also has nothing to do with belief, although many religious people or in fact science-religists such as Richard Dawkins or Brian Cox would have you believe otherwise. However, faith often has attached to it many beliefs but they are not the same by nature. Faith is not based in the head but based in the body and the heart, it is actually a feeling throughout the body, or a sense, or even an echo of a sense that has long since been forgotten...but nevertheless faith is a feeling in the body. It is something that has no questions attached to it but it is exceptionally rooted in the body and irrefutable to the person who feels it. It is by nature without cause or reason and it is clear that some people feel it and others don't. Those who do feel it

seem to be stronger, healthier and generally more well-adapted to life and to need less in their lives than those with purely belief systems who simply are more traumatized, and often very frightened or sick people. People with faith tend to have less problems overall in that they are better able to deal with whatever comes their way. Faith is something that is also a constant. It doesn't go away in unconscious states, even when the mind goes the feeling is often still present in the body. This is my definition of faith, it is not how people often use it as exchangeable with the word belief. Faith can't be explained the way a belief can be, it isn't something that can be learned or got hold of, it can't be taught, it is a strong feeling, this is all. It is also within everyone although most people will sneer and suggest that this too is a belief. That aside, this quality of faith is very much universal, it has no opposites. Faith doesn't come and go, although it can be hidden for a while and then re-connected to. The finding of faith is actually something that means the "re-remembering" of faith that was present in childhood, all children have faith. Faith is Unknown, it can't be explained or described. Faith is mysterious and impossible to pinpoint and as such it is more difficult to say "my faith" than it is to say "my belief", the "my" aspect is waning in faith. Faith is akin to a process of the dissolving of beliefs, i.e. beliefs dissolve into faith.

Instinct:

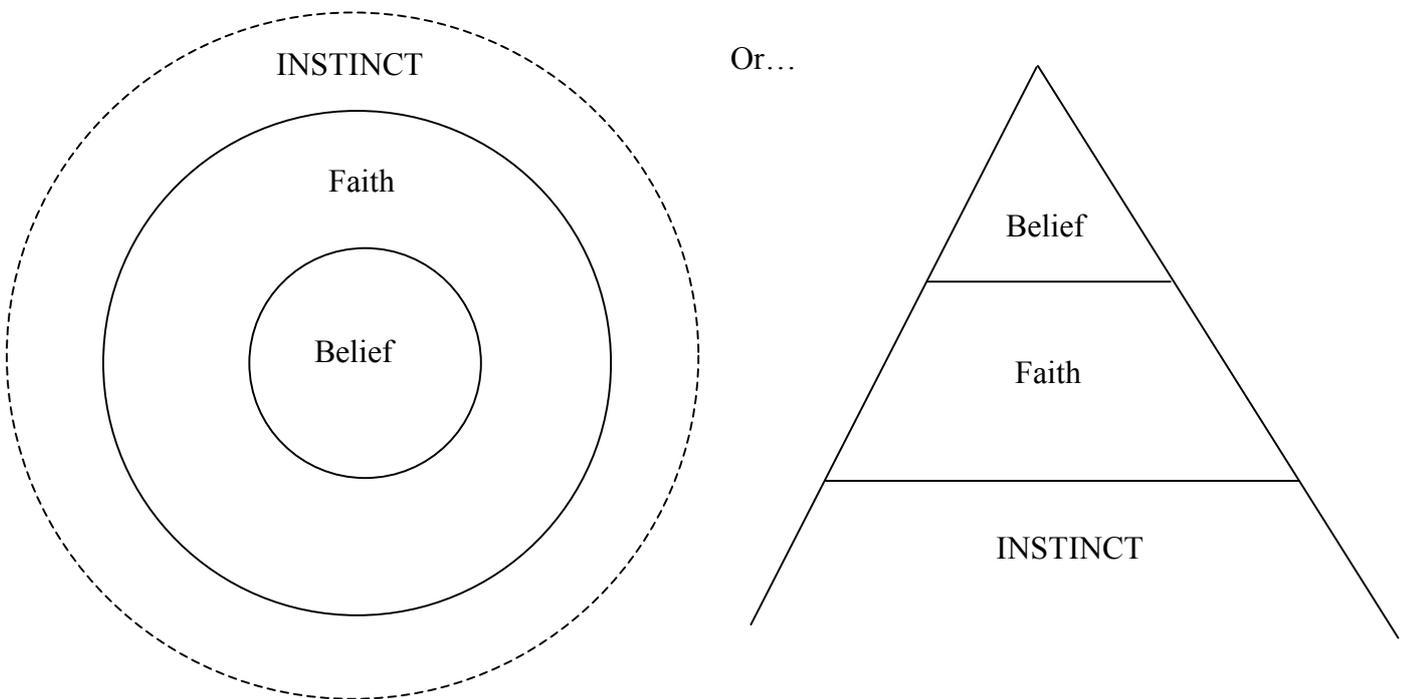
Instinct is the origin of the feeling of faith. It is again completely wordless, as is faith, however it is not a shadow of something past but a timeless changing sense of being. It is no longer about an individual holding an idea or "belief" as beliefs are very personal, and it is no longer the feeling of faith of an individual who senses it. Instinct is beyond the known. It *is* actually the Unknown expression, it cannot be identified in word or deed and as such it is the root of faith. While faith is very often an echo for a person, a feeling that is in attune with something Unknown, instinct is that vital energy which was the origin of the echo, the voice or expression of life itself.

Using these definitions we can see that belief is exchangeable, it is superficial, it is the expression the mental or ego-centered state of the human being and is the process of creating ideas that often will be conflicting and using the head-only approach to express life. All traditional dogma and religious ideas share the same expression at this level, as do scientific dogma and ideas. It is a war amongst many individuals.

Faith on the other hand is a feeling that draws people to a sense of wonder and unity. It is the fossil of instinct, the relic that one holds onto because somewhere you know it is important but have forgotten why or what it means. But it means something very deep indeed, it draws people to seemingly illogical tasks and doing seemingly crazy things because there is a drive that wants to get into faith, wants to move inside of it. As a result faith and beliefs often happen together and a person's faith can be lost in their beliefs. This is expressed in all kinds of altruism. The once-simple old feeling is lost in a myriad of directions. Examples of these are the humanitarians of the world who go into deep danger to help out, or who experience suffering and go headlong towards it. It is not that they want the suffering but they are responding instinctively to something. Then belief systems take over and they find themselves in a new role. Mother Teresa is an example, there are many others.

Instinct on the other hand is much more immediate and directly present than faith and its explorations, it is right here and now in the midst of where it is and is responding directly to what it finds. There is no plan, no calling, no feeling of seeking for faith or its origin, for instinct is its origin. It is the immediate response that in one moment can be defence of a child or defenceless person and in another moment can be totally killer-instinct in defending territory or hunting for prey. It is the expression of the animal nature and the true genius of the human being.

As we have lost instinct some of us have faith and when there is no faith there is the desert of beliefs. In the desert of beliefs all we have is whatever the mind can come up with next. The imagination based solely on the mind can be very inventive, but almost always it is an expression of suffering. The important point to notice is that these three are not separate but one within the other:-



No matter what we do we cannot get away from instinct, it is our foundations, and so the echo of faith might reach the head, but the head is very often filled with belief. When belief rules a system, then a person is very often at odds with their instinct, they do things and attempt to engage with /dominate things in a way that is deeply unnatural, as a result the instinct of the body is to die. For example, infertility on the grand scale is nature's prevention of humans who are focused on the mind as primary, it is nature's process of ending a direction that cannot be sustained. In order to continue living human beings require connecting to instinct and very often faith has to come first. Faith is the remembrance that instinct exists, it is the in-between place between head and feet you could say, between the colonialism of the mind and the tribalism of the body, or the direction of the head which is up and out and the direction of the feet which is down and in. As expressed with such genius in Daniel Quinn's "[Ishmael](#)", one of the greatest books ever written in my opinion, the key difference between belief and instinct can be seen: the colonial mind's way of viewing the planet is "The world belongs to humans", versus the instinctive non-

verbal experiential state which turns this view inside-out “the human being belongs to the world” or even ...“The human being is utterly one with all things”.

This reverse nature of being in Instinct makes it a rarity in modern culture when fully expressed in the human, U.G Krishnamurti and a few others being exceptions perhaps. However there are many people with faith who act on this with the various beliefs that go with it. We are not to blame for any of this, as we have no power; we have no choice to make it this way or not. All that is happening today is that we gradually begin to feel how harsh the world of heady belief is, then slowly sink down again having understood this, back into the place we came from, back eventually into the Eden we left. While it is impossible to just jump into a new reality tomorrow where the realization that all of the tribal peoples of the world really were the most “advanced” expression of humanity, it is possible to follow that sense in whatever way draws us closer and closer generation by generation back to our origins. It is not a going “back” but rather it is a “return” having come full circle. It will take as long as it took to get into the trauma of modern life as it will for it to fall and for there to be a complete return, it needs to be a completed wave. It is not a choice but simply a feeling of turning away from what does not “work” for us human-animals and instead a “following of our feet” (the true meaning of the word “Tao” in Chinese philosophy) on a trajectory that brings ourselves and our children a little closer to what we know to be our origins. When beliefs become disillusioned through naturally ripening, then only faith is left and when faith moves us and we follow, all that is realized is that our instincts were always drawing us homeward.

David Nassim
12/2/2014