

## **Does it do exactly what it says on the tin? - Questioning and seeing past the advertising hallucinogen.**

In modern society we are constantly bombarded with advertising and propaganda in all facets of our lives. We are seduced by labels and commercial goods, drawn into ideologies of political and altruistic groups who debate about how to save the world or change it for the “better”. It doesn't matter how large the organization, how many people are involved, how “serious” the issue, or what the size or nature of the “problem” being “tackled” is, none of that has fundamentally anything to do with you. Whether you are being urged to be an environmentalist, or to join any political party, or persuaded to be an osteopath or acupuncturist, or anything which “means” something to the world, the result is you've got a label. In western medicine there is a focus on giving the diagnosis, even this is a label of “what it is”, and this can in fact create terrible problems if adhered to. If cigarettes had “this is great for you” written on the side, many people would smoke more.

Authorities such as doctors, environmental experts, advertising standards agencies are only necessary if we have lost touch with our innate senses, but even then we are on difficult ground because if those so-called authorities have too or have another agendas such as power and control involved in their approach, this is called the blind leading the blind. This is why the simple 5 senses are the key to our dilemma. We know when the oven is hot, when food is too cold, weather the air smells good or not, when the feel of something is pleasant or not, but this is overridden because we are within the hallucination of the advertising of someone else's ideas, persona, ideals or morality. There can be no such thing as an “international” consultant, doctor, global environmentalist/teacher, because no person can be in several places at the same time, they can only be here and now. Nobody has ever been in Venice, there is just a gondolier and water, no-one can “save the children”, there is just this room and a child, no-one can create world peace, there is just this table and a family. When we localize to what is actually going on in the senses there is no 3<sup>rd</sup> person altruistic venture occurring, just what we are doing right now. Here time doesn't exist so there is no future and no past and also no “me”. Advertising promotes the opposite, that some time in the future you will get there or be bigger or be something exceptional or have a great look or a great life or a great taste... but ONLY if you follow this direction.

If we adhere to and blindly follow the advertising ethos of this is “nice” or that makes you “feel good” then the question has to be “does it?”, does it really do “exactly what it says on the tin” and if not then simply don't buy it, both literally and metaphorically! This pertains to all aspects of life where there are authority figures explaining that you should feel this or do that. If one is actually in contact with the senses, it makes no difference whether the greatest grand Tai-chi, Qi-gong master tells you your whole life is upside-down and you must become a Japanese monk in order to solve your problems, unless you deeply *feel* a resonance with this, then it is simply not relevant for you and in fact something else is going on, often a power game. Even if the so-called teacher says a person is completely shut down to advice and within their own world, this is misleading and inaccurate because if one is totally cut off from sense we simply can't live and

breathe. There is always a sensitivity and from within this so-called enlightened authority is recognised to actually be a red-herring. If indeed an authority really does know something there will be no necessity to convince anyone of its expression, it already is what it says it is which can be easily seen, it's not hidden under the carpet. While it is possible for a person to be so cut off from sense that they don't "know what's good for them", in this instance the only way to "help" is to simply ask over and over again "how do you feel?" not decree that "this is what you must do". The former shows clarity, the latter shows ego with intent to control, in which there is no healing possible, there is simply its own resistance and intolerance bouncing back.

Whenever we warp from sense it creates an opportunity for another authority to take over. The whole nature of the principles of natural healing are based around not doing this but actually re-kindling a person's innate sensitivity, it has nothing to do with them "taking responsibility for their actions" or "getting them to do it themselves", it is simply that in reality all there is are the senses, we have just forgotten all about them. If we look deeply we find there is no-self pulling the strings of the senses we experience every moment, it's all happening as One natural experience, to no-one, without choice or requirement, but it *is* happening. Whenever we engage with an authority we can easily forego what we feel, instead listening to something which very often will be skewed in all kinds of ways that have nothing to do with the predicament you are in, unless that person sees the much broader picture than just the story of "your life" and "how you should live" based upon that.

Anyone who intentionally assumes a position of authority wants to control or establish his/her standing in the world, they have something to prove to themselves or others, often making a huge song and dance about it, which is commonly called advertising. This may take the form of exclusivity, i.e. their product/service is unattainable for the "everyday" person because of its quality, or it may be all about quantity. Either way both expressions are about ego. McDonalds or Prada, there's no difference. Advertising and sales are about tantalizing, suggesting you can be x, y or z which is always a step closer to "happiness" if you use this product, do this course, listen to this authority, meet this doctor, it's all about do, do, do. Sense is just the opposite, don't *do* anything.

Instead of engaging with the logos and sensationalism the key question is "what do I feel", can you sense the quality, the strength of the materials, the actual feel of them on the skin, the taste of the food, what it feels like as it's ingested. Something that purports to be brilliant and may even look good from the 3<sup>rd</sup> person perspective (i.e. in the mirror), can actually feel tight, ill-fitting, irritating; foods that are supposed to taste great, procedures or health treatments claiming to make you feel/look like a million dollars... when ingested or experienced do they feel good or do they make the stomach run a little, do you feel slightly muzzy-headed afterwards? Do you feel stronger or does it make you hyper and over-stimulated? Any or all of these are possible and are in fact the truth of it, not the hype, so... what do you feel?

The same is true with partners who are supposed to be right "on paper" or any relationship be it between student-teacher, parent-child or patient-doctor, instead of

focusing on their “good reputation”, “big wallet” or “big presence” or on the fact that they have studied for many years and therefore must be an “authority”, meet someone and see what the initial contact is like, feel what it’s like and get a sense of who you’re engaging with. You can actually tell from the very first handshake and the very first words which are spoken, it’s all in the initial connection. This is also the nature of true diagnosis, where there is a listening or an openness of the senses. Listen with the ears but also with the eyes and the tastes and with the touch the whole body all together, this openness instantaneously triggers an absolutely true or righteous (as opposed to “self” righteous) sense of whether something is really deep or superficial, whether it has true strength or if this strength is fabricated and is actually based on fearfulness, this is to sense without judgment.

A famous phrase in Eastern medicine is “The bigger the front the bigger the back”, meaning that if something advertises itself with a lot of front, very often there is something hidden behind which it’s trying to cover-up. Of course to some extent we all do this because this is the nature of the “self”, which is the mask on the surface of direct-reality, but as we know this can be so thick and unwieldy that with some companies, banks, teachers and authorities when they say “ministry of Peace” actually what is meant is the “ministry of War” and when they say “this is what you need” it is usually completely devoid of essence.

Mis-directions like these are totally unlike expressions of wild-nature even though they can seem to be doing something similar, for example the chameleon or other animals which can blend with their environment, tantalize and “trap” their “prey” through disguise. This is sometimes described as a hateful situation of guile, where wilful intention is used in order to “trap and kill”, but actually that is anthropomorphism, these creatures are utterly free and simply are an expression of nature as it is, simply a magnetic field of interaction. The animals devour each other and as such transform and reproduce and change as one magnetic field merges with another, they are drawn into an engagement where death is not feared, there is no a pre-meditation or forward-planning, simply instinctual behaviour. Companies and authorities are a very different kettle of fish, in that there is both pre-meditation, a warping of the natural human expression and it is a situation where no-one wins - the consumer doesn’t gain from the vacuous product, which simply obscures or buries the truth deeper, neither does the company gain from getting bigger or having more money, it just exaggerates its own pathology of divisiveness and strengthens an already hardened, brittle and bitter fighter’s front to the world, this is not a gain. Gain and loss are within a never ending loop of dualism.

The original energetic activities of natural humans who lived simply has now been warped to the idea of a thing called “money” that no one actually has except for a number on a screen, that's the actuality of it. The “matrix” of madness overlays the natural-human child-like essence throughout our existence only acknowledged in the most primitive of activities which have to go on no matter what like periods, passing urine and fasses, eating drinking, sex and having children and other functions which are now put to the bottom of the rung of “importance” in a day, the head rules, and so modern medicine is

mind to body, ancient understanding however was always bodyspirit sense to mind always knowing that the mind is the secondary organ and the body the primary.

Of course none of the above situations are good or bad, they commonly happen every day. However in the massive majority of all expressions of the universe and nature outside of the human-condition of “Self”, there is a sensitivity to what’s actually going on. Life is sensing itself, Oneness, a sensory organism, an expression of feeling and connection. The Tao Te Ching points out the following:

## Chapter 12

*The colours of the world when attached to, blind one;*

*The sounds of the world when attached to, deafen one;*

*The flavours of the world when attached to, injure the palate.*

*Racing around and seeking/hunting*

*Makes the mind go wild with excitement*

*Precious things hard to come by*

*They serve only to burden one.*

*Hence the Natural-human is guided by instinct not the mental-emotional idea/perception*

*Therefore he discards the one and takes the other.*

From this we can understand that the sense can very easily be altered or be deluded into attachment or what we could call hallucination. Today’s advertisers are not just to be found in the consumer industry but they are ourselves, our 3<sup>rd</sup> person projections of “self” into the world whether it be through social networking or any interactions of “self”-promotion, all are part of this view of “me” from outside of myself. In fact we are taught this view from a very young age, so no wonder these things have occurred, but in fact the 1<sup>st</sup> person perspective from me looking through at the world from this central point of stillness at the core where “I” am headless, reminds us of the background of “my” world. Here in fact “I” am not the authority, instinct and sense are, not the ideas or perceptions of others, the direction is always back to Centre. If the teaching is true it draws us with a loving dissolution of tension and a deep intimacy of connection, a cool non-anxiety-provoking impersonal-ness, back to the truth of our senses. The process of “choosing” this way or t’other, is not something done by “me”, but is utterly and immediately known through the vessel of the body which knows its own direction, like a radio picking up a signal or a receiver open to the universal movement.

For those of us who naturally yield to authority because that is our function, it is vital to know whether the leader is directing through “self” or through a broader angle, and the latter is very rare in today’s world. Most often a leader who says he “knows the way” is self-promoting, wanting to show off his talents and be in a position “above”. When there is true authority it is recognised, because it is not expressed through a personal communication or emotion-attachment, it is simply just what needs to be done. Hence for those naturally in service it should be clear that being this expression means in-service to nature, it is fidelity to nature and anchoring to this is our authority. If this draws us to a figure who leads, so be it, it it draws us away then this too is true. The nature of nature is that leadership is expressed through the leader not because of him/her, and as a result no

words they may say make any difference, it is a felt sense that is real in the interaction. If there is a true connection then the nature of the relationship will neither be abusive nor about a singular perspective, but instead will see the overall picture and will provide connection holistically to all involved. This is the nature of true-relationship, though this is a misnomer for in fact there is only One thing going on. Leaders become dictators if they attain dizzying heights of authority or have it conferred upon them by people around them, and are subsequently allowed to run riot. This is simply an insensitivity and resistance of the leader/advertiser as well as for those who follow to the natural-order of nature.

When advertising “works” it does so because the people it’s aimed at are off-balance, they are bewildered and can’t sense the core compass direction within which the truth is obvious. When sufficiently bombarded externally this may often cloud their sense and then they are zombified. In this state they will feel the need to identify with that authority which is when the authority itself increases its price to demonstrate its power and the zombies follow without question. The zombification is really a de-sensitizing, a domesticating or drawing-out of the wild-spiritedness of nature. However, wild doesn’t necessarily mean aggressive, for a snail is wild. When there is an allowance and realization that authority can only come from natural charisma, it can’t be sanctimoniously learned, bought or sold, then it becomes clear to people that this quality is true, not fabricated or puffed-up, there’s no façade, any front that does exist is like the chameleon, a natural one, which is what it is without pretension.

This is simply a situation of ripeness which is occurring all over the world that ultimately breaks ties with authority and enters an anarchy, which is to say without a monarch or ruler. It means that nature takes the ruling expression as an overall compass direction that is known at a deep level to the senses and can’t really be described verbally. “Self”-appointed authority is only part of the last few thousand years, before this there was and no such thing and life was much more in relation to nature and to the seasonal changes as being the direction for life. Instead of thinking about how “I can change the world”, in the 1<sup>st</sup> person perspective things become far less ambitious and relate to the mundane events of life, without authority. Humans need far less than they think they do, and so in the movement back to Centre, the very simple things becomes important, the senses become heightened and clear, there is no requirement for a doctor or a politician to tell you what’s what, because it is simply obvious.

You can’t trust your senses because you *are* your senses. So it’s not about trust or faith but about letting go and becoming, which is a ripening process and takes its own time. Douglas Harding’s expression, through his most brilliant experiments, is a very clear pointer to these obvious senses especially the visual: <http://www.headless.org> So instead of blind adherence to “it” doing “exactly what it says on the tin”, no matter what the tin is.... let’s simply ask the question ...does it?

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