



The Paradox of Perception

For a long time, I hadn't seen myself as a scientist, not in the academic sense, anyway. But I do grasp the essence of the scientific process. It's interesting how scientific theories, from the Theory of Relativity to Maslow's Hierarchy, all start with observation. They are embraced as theories, regardless of their nomenclature, unlike concepts tagged with the term 'conspiracy' (defined as a secret plan by a group to do something unlawful or harmful). This single word shifts perception, often associating ideas with the realm of the irrational or the extreme. Conspiracy theories are viewed with skepticism, seen as the ramblings of the deluded or the radical. It's a stark contrast, isn't it? My own theory leans towards the existence of evil, perhaps even personified. I call it the 'Evil Theory.' It's a controversial idea, but it's there, simmering in the background.

My mind likes to distill things into simpler forms. Take, for instance, a recent moment by my fireplace. The fire was dying down, needing just a bit of paper and a small flame to reignite. Despite having burned my finger on the hot log rack before, I went ahead and did it again, albeit more cautiously. Sure enough, I got burned, a minor injury but a burn, nonetheless. It was a risk I was willing to take, considering the low chance of serious harm.

When I shared this with a friend, she quipped, "That's the definition of insanity." That phrase made me think. If repeating the same action and expecting a different result is insanity, aren't we all a bit insane at times? It's a thought that makes sense to me.

But then, I pondered deeper. A minor burn is one thing, but what about actions that have more significant consequences? What if these actions harm your family's wellbeing or lead to severe personal loss, like in cases of addiction or other destructive behaviors?

There are two ways to rationalize this: either it's my doing, my 'fault,' or it's caused by external factors. This line of thinking often leads people to question the existence of an all-knowing, all-loving Creator. It's paradoxical – to be angry at something you claim not to believe in.

Focusing on the human aspect, we recognize two types of pain: that which is inflicted by external circumstances and that which stems from our own failings. In religious terms, the latter might be termed 'sin.'

What we choose to believe doesn't necessarily make it true, but it does shape our reality. It's no surprise then that depression and anxiety are rampant, spreading in ways that physical ailments like COVID never did.