

What is truth?

Every single person has something, an idea, a belief that drives them in life. No matter if it's money, happiness, power, recognition, faith, they all get motivated by something. For me, since I was a kid, most important was saying and knowing "the truth", how I call it. Later I realized that this is what motivates me in life, living by truth. But only a while ago I started to actually question myself and find out that I don't know what truth actually means. So how is it possible to want to live by truth but not knowing exactly how to explain what is it. That's why my question is **"What is truth?"**.

In order to answer to my question, I started an investigation, not like a Sherlock Holmes investigation, I wasn't able to find my answer just by looking at the question so I had to use more pragmatic methods for that. First of all, I decided to ask other people what they think about the meaning of truth, in order to see a general opinion about it. This is what I gathered from some friends, family and acquaintances:

- Truth is the opposite of lie.
- Truth is when there is nothing hidden.
- Truth is what you ultimately get after investigating something, like a result that is accepted as truth.
- Truth is made by people, just how people make history and culture.
- Truth is what you believe in, as long as it doesn't hurt other people.
- Truth is what it result from when you use logic tools to demonstrate something.
- Truth is knowledge.
- Truth has 2 parts: the logic truth, like the truth that we die if we don't breathe, and the subjective truth, where what you believe in is truth.
- Truth is about facts and reality, I don't consider abstract things like "God" being a truth.
- Truth is what you want it to be, as long as it doesn't change things in a way that might hurt people.

After reading all of these definitions carefully, I realized that there are 2 different patterns among them. Even if the definitions varies, all of them can get into two categories: first category, truth is about logic and objective facts and the second one, truth is about belief, more subjective. People's definitions helped me understand that even if I don't have my own straight-forward answer about the question, my opinion about it can be found in both categories, not only one.

The Bible says, "You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32). Truth for me is indeed, more than knowledge. Truth makes me feel alive and free. And freedom for me is important. I do agree that truth is in all the objective things, such as is truth that snow is white, but I also believe that truth is more than the logic that everyone can see or agree on. Truth is also subjective, for example it can be in same time

true and false that God exists, depending on who you ask. A God's believer will tell you that yes, it's true that God exists. An atheist will tell you that the truth is that God doesn't exist. Both of them are right in the same time. Truth is different when it comes to beliefs.

A historian of World War I once wrote, "It is only by studying the minds of men that we shall understand the causes of anything." So in order to understand even more deep and try to answer my question, I asked again some people to give me examples of a situation that they know about that is considered by them true. Here are the results:

- When I was in high school, my teacher had an investigation about who broke a chair. I was the only one that knew who did it. It was one of my close friends, and it was difficult for me to say the truth, even if I knew he did it. I had to choose between saying the truth and friendship. I chose truth and I felt relieved when I said it.
- My mom was working in a big IT company. Once she was asked to do something that was wrong and illegal. She could do it, none would notice it but she did not do that. She went to the boss and said what happened. I like how my mom is able to always follow the truth and be honest.
- I told my sister that Santa Claus doesn't exist. It is true, but it didn't felt good to tell her that, even if I did it to help her, she was already too old to believe in Santa Claus.
- Is true that is lost weight. I went to gym a lot and you see the difference of my body before and now.
- I used to not believe in things like "karma", even if in my culture everyone believes in karma. But not I know karma is true, after I had a couple of events that were "action-effect" related. For example, once I stole some money from my brother and when I went out to buy what I wanted with those money, I felt and broke my arm.
- Once I took a book from library and broke few pages accidentally. I could have not say anything, the lady from library never looks at the books but the truth was that I broke that book so I told her about it.

I analyzed the real-life examples I got and was able to see that most people see truth as not a lie. It's a basic definition of truth but I would say is the most efficient one. In my research for answering this question, I tried to look what are the "wise minds" saying about it. I read about many philosophers that had an opinion about truth and I found out that one of them has a similar vision as I do. His name is Aristotle, a classic Greek philosopher that lived around 350 BC in Greece. His writings cover many subjects including physics, biology, zoology, metaphysics, logic, ethics, aesthetics, poetry, theater, music, rhetoric, linguistics, politics and government and constitute the first comprehensive system of Western philosophy. He basically has opinions about many things and wrote them. One of those opinions was about the question "What is truth?". He talked about it in possibly most well-known paper of his, Metaphysics, and he said: **"To say of what is that it is not, or of what is not**

that it is, is false, while to say of what is that it is, and of what is not that it is not, is true". His idea is the base of what we call today "The correspondence theory of truth" which states that the truth or falsity of a statement is determined only by how it relates to the world and whether it accurately describes that world. I like and I rely on his opinion during my investigation because his opinion is very simple and start from a very basic and easy mechanism. Basically, **true shouldn't be false**.

Sounds not very complicated but when I look deeper in analyzing it, it is actually difficult to explain. So, if you want to know what is true, you should make sure that it's not false. For example, my cat is black, that's the truth. I know it because I can see my cat and I can see the color of his fur. If I will ask anyone else what color my cat's fur is, they will all say black, because that's how it is, the unchanged truth. If they would say it's white, that would be a lie. And that's how you can highlight a truth, by exposing the other side of it, the lie. This definition that Aristotle give reminds me of a story I heard once. It was about a student that asked his teacher how can I know something is actually true and not a lie. And the teacher answered: "Compare this with light and darkness. How you know when it's dark? Or what is dark? The absence of light." So that's how it works for truth as well, in Aristotle opinion. Truth is the absence of lie. Lie is the absence of truth.

Of course, this can be double face coin, as I said before. Truth is like a mirror for me. If you look at it, you will not look the same as how someone else looks at it. Because everyone is different in a physical way. Even twins will not look perfectly the same in a mirror. Human's brain is different from person to person as well. Everyone believes and thinks different. For someone is true that karma exists. For someone else, this can be a lie, "there is no such thing as karma". But none of them is wrong. Because, my conclusion from all my investigation and reading Aristotle opinion is that truth is made by people and as long as your truth doesn't harm on purpose someone or it is obvious by logic, then it is a legit truth. For example, believing is truth that you are allowed to hit people in face is a lie, because it affects other people and it's not socially accepted (and there is where laws are coming in, to stop humans from creating chaos with wrong ideas). Also, if you believe is true that Earth is a square, is again wrong and a lie because using logic and science you can prove this wrong. On the other hand, if you believe in Buddha, God, if you think that aliens are real, then this is truth for you. It does not hurt people around and it's everyone's **right and freedom** to consider those things as truth. I read opinions about the "universal" truth, that none should think anything else than the fact that there is only on truth: God. But this for me it's wrong, I don't consider it needed to have only an universal truth.

My conclusion after reading opinions and checking out famous people writings, is that truth is expressed in many ways, as long is the opposite of a lie and it can be two types of truth, the objective one that everyone can agree on and the subjective one that everyone can have a different opinion on. Now

I know that living by truth for me it means for sure finding my subjective truth.