

# Episode Thirty-Three - More on The Implications of the Colorless Atoms

Post by "Cassius" of August 27, 2020 at 9:36 PM

## [Quote from Don](#)

I do not believe he meant that the truth of a fact can be determined by how we feel about it

Not trying to be smart here, but I think the answer is that that part of a fact which constitutes whether a fact brings us pain or pleasure IS determined by how we feel about it.

You're asking this is a different way but it's central to a lot of what we talk about and I see it this way - here's my proposed take:

just like how we see or smell or hear or taste or touch a thing is an irreducible primary that we can't go behind, so is the "feeling" we get when we react to something.

Yes indeed this is probably why primarily Godfrey's point probably raised this in your mind, because he referenced fracturing of society with the implication and my reaction being that it causes all sorts of problems that people experience pain and pleasure (they "feel") in an individual way that may or may not be fully "true" to all of the facts.

But that's EXACTLY the point and why the feelings are part of the criteria of truth! 😊

Just like what we see of something does not give us the full story of a thing (it may also have attributes of smell, taste, touch, sound) whether we feel pain or pleasure at the experience of the thing may not also give us the "full picture of it" -- and that's what i think you are worried about when you say "the truth of a fact can't be determined by how we feel about it."

But in fact looking at it from the perspective of how we see or hear or taste something, those too are individual experiences which are reported honestly to us by the senses, and there is no way to go behind that sensation - We have to credit them for exactly what they say to us, which is the point we're discussing nearby in [PD24](#), even though they don't give us the "full picture" of the object under consideration.

Whether the apple when we taste it gives us pain or pleasure is in fact only a part of our experience of the apple, but the pain or pleasure we feel is an irreducible primary just like its red color or its taste or its texture.

Nobody promised you a rose garden - nobody promised that you would be able to take a limited number of experiences of any type and add them together and get the "full picture" of the thing being observed.

So make the point more clear the point I would suggest:

Rather than: "the truth of a fact can be determined by how we feel about it"

We might reword : "the way we feel about something, which is to us a "truth," is in fact determined by how we feel about it."

Now someone might say that there are different aspects of what it means to "feel something" that need to be clarified, but if we analogize "feeling" to the five senses, it seems to me that the "we must take it at face value because it is reported honestly" rule is still in force.

And we're also being led astray because when we say "the truth of a fact can be determined by how we feel about it" we collapsing the word "truth" as it means some kind of almost godlike objective perspective which is absolutely correct -- when in fact we should never think of "truth" in that way given the contextual nature of our universe. That's an improperly idealistic view of the meaning of "truth" which should always be understood to mean "true as revealed to us by our human faculties."

Agree or disagree?

I see this as important because this is the immovable object which stands in the way of utopian ideas of universal harmony and the like. Since people "feel" differently about things, just like they see and hear and touch and taste things differently, there is no way there will ever be universal agreement on exactly what activities are desirable and undesirable in life. And I personally translate that into why Utilitarianism - "greatest good for the greatest number" - is not a workable description of a social goal.