

SEEKING THE TRUTH

Interview with Eric Fromm



Interviewer: Well how are you Mr. Fromm?

Fromm: Great, glad to be here.

Interviewer: No problem, I should be the one delighted to actually have you here for an interview

Fromm: No no, I'm no one special.

Interviewer: According to the Philosophy: Question and Theories class online you have had quite an influence on philosophy and the subject of the truth.

Fromm: Well I dabble in that subject.

Interviewer: That's good. Let's start off by talking about your life a little bit.

Fromm: Okay

Interviewer: What would you say, be your goal in life?

Fromm: Hm, to start, I have always "wanted to understand the laws that govern the life of the individual man, and the laws of society-that is, of men in their social existence. I tried to see the lasting truth in Freud's concepts as against those assumptions which were in need of revision. I tried to do the same with Marx's theory, and finally I tried to arrive at a synthesis which followed from the understanding and the criticism of both thinkers."



Interviewer: I see, now I have here your first book that you write I believe in... 1941?

Fromm: Ah yes, Escape from Freedom.

Interviewer: Yes, can you explain to the viewers what the initial concept of this book was about, to those who haven't read it?

Fromm: Well basically freedom is something that people often seek when being oppressed. Based on my own experiences, I argued that "freedom from the traditional bonds of medieval society, though giving the individual a new feeling of independence, at the same time made him feel alone and isolated"

Interviewer: So you are saying freedom is a double-edged blade?

Fromm: Pretty much, we can all state that freedom is definitely a beacon of light. If we sit here and go on a list about communist countries then freedom can be equivalent to food. But freedom itself, when given enough, can actually cause you to be alone. For example, students in Toronto, Ontario are given freedom but there are still students out there alone. They cut themselves, or commit suicide or get bullied. What people seek can be just an illusion.

Interviewer: Is this what you would call the truth when it comes to freedom?

Fromm: Now truth is different subject, truth can be applied to could be as simple as pencils are used for writing. I'm guessing this is where the juice of the interview is supposed to be?

Interviewer: Yes, yes it is.

Fromm: Nice Segwav.



Interviewer: Haha, thank you. Let's just start off and state your interpretation of the truth in the simplest terms.

Fromm: Well firstly, seeking the truth is a journey. Some people out there doubt what certain truths are; some people are willing to accept what the community calls the truth but never explore the nature of it. Seeking the truth, like freedom, can be a double-edged blade. What you discover at the end of the tunnel can be truly dissatisfying and what you learn to be the truth can take weight off your chest.

Interviewer: So to say, how would one face the truth if it is so "bad"?

Fromm: "There is only one solution to [the human condition]: for one to face the truth, to acknowledge his fundamental aloneness and solitude in a universe indifferent to his fate, to recognize that there is no power transcending him which can solve his problem for him. Man must accept the responsibility for himself and the facts that only by using his powers can he give meaning to his life. If he faces the truth without panic he will recognize that: there is no meaning to life except the meaning man gives his life by the unfolding of his powers, by living productively; and that only constant vigilance, activity, and effort can keep us from failing in the one task that matters-the full development of our powers within the limitations set by the laws of our existence. Only if he recognizes the human situation, the dichotomies inherent in his existence and his capacity to unfold his powers, will he be able to succeed in his task: to be himself and for himself and to achieve happiness by the full realization of those faculties which are peculiarly his-of reason, love, and productive work."

Interviewer: Interesting. So you could say in other words, to face the truth, one must acknowledge the negative aspects of what you are seeking?

Fromm: Basically, if you look at every negative possibility and then attempt to figure if it is a lie or the truth. One should be able to figure out the truth.



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Interviewer: Confusing, but understandable.
Alright well Mr. Eric Fromm, it was a delight
discussing the subject of truth with you today.
The audience and I thank you for giving us the
opportunity to enjoy your presence and
knowledge here.

Fromm: No problem, it was quite wonderful.

Interviewer: Alright folks, I am here with Eric
Fromm and we just discussed the solution to
failing at accepting the truths in life. I am *beep*
and we are out.

INTERVIEW WITH ERIC FROMM

