

Free Will in a Deterministic World

A popular idea is that human beings have free will. The ability to choose their own actions from moment to moment. People can plan ahead, often for many years in advance. We plan for holidays, we plan for retirement and some people even plan for their own funerals. Many web sites, and hundreds of books and courses, take this idea even further and say that we can (or do) CREATE our own experiences. That is, we not only “plan” and work towards achieving our goals, but we actually create ALL of our experiences, either consciously or subconsciously.

Given that we believe that we make choices, every day, every hour, every second, how many possible tomorrows must be available, on a world-wide scale?

This number must be unfathomable. Science suggests there are an infinite number of parallel universes co-existing at the same instant. Masters tell us that we simply choose the one that we want to experience – Ask God, knowing that the answer already exists, and you shall receive.

What about prophets and predictions? In a world of infinite variables, how could it ever be possible to predict something more than a few minutes in to the future? Some people would argue that this has never been done. For the exact reasons outlined above. However, just because we don't understand how something can be done shouldn't negate the evidence, if there is any, and there are tones of examples. Much more than would be required to hang a man, but not enough to convince a skeptical scientist.

The prophets in the Old Testament were always predicting events to come and they were usually right. We can't confirm that the prediction came before the event or even that the events actually took place as described. And, these predictions were well known in advance and taught from generation to generation, so people were “looking” for a result, which they may well have created in order to prove themselves correct (something we do all the time).

If you go to a medium or psychic and they tell you that you will meet someone and be happy, well that could be planting a seed or even be so general as to apply to everyone.

Just like UFO sightings, ghost stories and disaster predictions, there are so many good ones, that the likelihood is that something is going on, beyond the psychology of the human mind – or, may be that is all that is needed – the human mind!

John's book of Revelations seems to be pointing to a period in time that could not have existed before now, but is recognizable here and now. The Mayan calendar ends in 2012 and a new beginning is in the process of being created (if we don't destroy ourselves in the process).

How do I get from here to the magic show story?

There doesn't seem to be a way to confirm that we can “predict the future”

... the Magic show ...

Mr. and Mrs. Light take their 13 year old son to see a magic show at the theatre. It's a famous magician but Mr. Light isn't going to be fooled. He's spent his life studying magic and knows a thing or two. Mrs. Light is less interested. In fact, she already knows what to expect. She knows that her husband is going to sit there the whole night smug in his knowledge that he knows how everything is done. Not only that, he will spend every minute he can, telling all around him how the tricks are being done. There won't be much detail of course. He doesn't really know how it is all done, but he has practiced magic for many years and impresses the kids and understands the principals, so, compared to most people in the audience, he is a master.

What is the boy expecting to see and how does he feel about his father always telling him how it works, how things really are?

As you might expect, he has mixed feelings, but he is proud of his father and feels quite special as he begins to see how tricks are done, for himself, even tricks that his father hasn't explained to him before.

He knows his mother isn't impressed by his father's "knowledge", or at least not when he "spoils" it for everyone. "Shut-up, you are ruining it for everyone. Just watch" she would say.

So, they find themselves in the middle of the theatre, with quite a good view of the stage.

They sit near the aisle and the boy hopes to have a chance to go up on the stage and help with a trick. Mr. Light would never go up. He's here to see how good the magician is. How skillfully he executes the process, both the slight-of-hand and the manipulation of the audience. Mr. Light knows that 90% of the task is creating an illusion for people to partake in, and he's going to be interested in how well this chap performs his task.

Mrs. Light has no real interest one way or another. It's just harmless fun, just entertainment. She has no clue how the tricks are done and doesn't really care one way or another.

Jack, the boy, notices a girl he knows from school. He likes this girl, so now he has an even stronger reason to want to take part in a trick. He's going to impress her!

Before we enter the theatre we know what is about to happen. We know that we will be shown illusions that we take part in, in our own way. We even know what the outcome of these illusions will be. We know that when it is all over, we will leave the theatre and go home, none the worse for our experience. We also know that everyone in the theatre had a different experience. They had the experience that they chose to have.

So, what is the point? If we all know what the outcome will be. If we all know that it will be an illusion that we take part in. If we all know that we choose to enter the theatre and that we will all leave by the same door and go back home. Why do we choose to do it? Do we even choose?

It's all about the experience.

Jacks mother could tell Jack what it was like the previous time that she went to the theatre, but how good would that be. Jacks mother knows very little about what was really happening and can't explain how it worked. She could however explain that it doesn't really matter what was happening or how it happened. But the boy would still want to have the experience himself.

Jacks father could show Jack similar tricks. He could explain how they work. He could teach him how to even do some of the tricks himself. None of this would stop the boy from wanting to go to the theatre and experience it for himself. In fact, the stories about the theatre would simply increase Jacks eagerness to "be" there.

Our soul wants us to "Be There" and "Experience" our true nature, our oneness with all of life. It doesn't matter if there is just one story to experience or if there are an infinite number of different stories. It doesn't matter if we already know the plot and the ending. We come from a place of all-knowing and all-oneness and we enter the theatre in order to experience part of that oneness that we can only "know" but not "experience" except from a place of separation, even if that separation is simply a self-constructed illusion.