

# Prelude to Paradox: Delusive Ignoramus

by Mayo de Moûlmein

How does an immature ego try to stabilize itself? Why - by delusion and ignorance of course. A deluded person is limited in his perspective on life. This limitation is not the result of plain lack of information rather it is a defensive stratagem. He refuses to see anything which might threaten his identity so security is sought in blindness. The Ostrich with its head buried in the sand to avoid detection might be a better image for the ignorant man. In his delusion, he takes refuge in a narrow world and ignores everything outside it. He will not even look at the basic facts of life. One can sometimes catch oneself using ignorance as a defence. A

friend may draw one's attention to unpleasant truth, perhaps about one's motives or behaviour. One comprehends what is being said but then, at the same moment, turns one's mind away from it. This self-distraction is deliberate and is a manifestation of delusion. It also displays itself in the fixed view of life adopted by many who refuse to examine or acknowledge anything which lies outside the confines of what they presently think they know.

Ignorance does not always show itself in overtly stupid or unintelligent behaviour. It can be highly sophisticated and give rise, for instance, to very complex systems of thought. For igno-

rance is the basic poison, the root of roots. It is nothing less than our refusal to open ourselves to a wider sphere of reality. We know who we are, or we think we do. To move beyond ourselves is to step into the unknown which is deeply threatening to the ego. So we turn away, refusing to recognize the truth that was always there but which is now forcing itself upon our attention.

We seldom encounter delusion or ignorance in their raw forms. These usually hide behind a polite veneer. This can be observed in a person talking in a polite and friendly way, while the set on his face and the way he holds his body reveal an underlying hostility or fear of which

his is not himself fully aware. Often, if our contact with others threaten to bring such fundamental negative feelings into the open we break them off. In some people this can be observed quite easily whilst in other more confident personalities it is too deeply buried, seldom showing since the person is socially so well adapted.

It is of great importance that we learn to recognize the ignorance and delusion within us so that we can stop them dominating our lives. Being with other people often help since openly communicating our thoughts and feelings to those we trust not only give emotional re-

lief but helps us to perceive more clearly what we ourselves think and feel. Like our UPEI President Eliot once stated that his first lesson as a Freshman was to find "courage to tell of my ignorance," a very hard thing for a person to admit at any time. So should we all follow the same bright light at the end to the Educational Tunnel.

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