

# What is the Truth, Anyway?

Some Jehovah's Witnesses came to my door and opened the conversation with, "What's the most important gift you can give some one?"

"Easy," I thought. "The truth."

"Interesting," the young woman said, "we haven't heard that one before."

I can't say I was genuinely surprised; it's not a very popular subject.

This is where the world is, philosophically. You can make it your job to visit people's homes and ask such an important question, and never get this answer. We see people everywhere spreading the word of their various gods, but the idea of spreading and discussing the truth isn't so common.

**So it's no wonder that when we try to have a conversation about the truth and validity of moral principles, or the hypocrisy by which the world sees children, we're wading into territory that most people are perfectly comfortable ignoring.** It's not uncommon for us to talk to people who will scream at their kids, or take their toys because the children aren't more helpful around the house, but who are certain that paying them to do chores meets the definition of **coercion**! In a case like this, the truth is literally a click away: [dictionary.com/browse/coercion](https://www.dictionary.com/browse/coercion)

It's easy to define coercion, to define aggression, and to see that the NAP offers a tidy summary of them. The NAP simply states that initiating force upon one's body or property is an act of aggression, and that aggression is wrong. People may have their disagreements, which we want to hear, but this is not a very complex principle to understand and argue for. I know some under-five-year-olds who make the case quite succinctly: "Ok just don't break it, and give it back when you're done... because it's mine."

**The hard part isn't understanding the truth of the principle, it's getting people to look at it in the first place.** Being a living example of someone who adheres to the NAP is an obvious first step, but any further strategy for winning hearts and minds is itself a life-long exploration. But with the current state of things, with people's fuzzy relationship to truth, consistency, rationality, it's selfish to simultaneously know it, enjoy the fruits of it, and withhold it from the world.

And that's why we can say, "We didn't chose NAP Parenting, it chose us." The truth of the principle, and where it is most often disregarded in practice, and where we can have the greatest effect in spreading peace, are all out of our hands. So the order of the day is to dust off those dictionaries, get familiar with the concepts of life, liberty, and property, of

aggression, coercion, and theft, and take the message where it's needed most, starting with the people in your life who already listen to you, and then beyond. The cure to any affliction will require some courage and will cause some discomfort, let's not be deterred by either.